

What's on the Hryvna?

A parliamentary commission chose the illustrations for the hryvna based on an old monetary unit that was widely used in Rus'-Ukraine, and once again in the Ukrainian National Republic in 1918. The themes, as well as the designs, depict a series of landmarks and historical figures from Medieval Ukraine to the present.



Denominations - Front (F) and Reverse (R)

1 **F:** Grand Prince Volodymyr The Great, ruler of Rus'-Ukraine in the 10th century. During his reign, Rus' became a powerful Eastern European empire with strong political, cultural and commercial links to Byzantium and Western Europe. **R:** Ancient city of Kherson that dates back to the 5th century BC; It was here that Grand Prince Volodymyr accepted Christianity and in 988 made it a state religion.

2 **F:** Grand Prince Yaroslav the Wise, son of Volodymyr. He developed education, culture, legal order and international ties through dynastic unions. Under his rule Rus'-Ukraine reached its zenith as a European power. **R:** The cathedral of St-Sophia was built by Grand Prince Yaroslav in 1037. It included a school and an adjacent library.

5 **F:** Dedicated to the 17th century Hetman of Ukraine, Bohdan Khmelnytsky. He was an able military strategist, diplomat and statesman. He established the foundation for a Ukrainian State which was ruled by democratically-elected Hetmen or leaders. **R:** The Illinska Church was constructed in the village of Subotiv in 1653, in order to serve as Khmelnytsky's burial vault. This church is one of the finest examples of Ukrainian baroque architecture.

10 **F:** Hetman Ivan Mazepa, the great patron of culture and education. He tried to unify Ukrainian leaders and establish strong aristocratic rule. **R:** The Kyiv-Pecherska Monastery built in the XIth century was the centre of Ukrainian medieval culture. Here scholars wrote and translated religious and classical literature.

20 **F:** Ivan Franko, a prolific writer and political thinker of the 19th century who foresaw Ukraine's place "among the free peoples of the world." **R:** The Lviv Opera House, designed in the Renaissance style, is another example of the rich architectural tradition in Ukraine.

50 **F:** Features the prominent historian, Mykhailo Hrushevsky. He became the President of the Ukrainian National Republic in 1918. **R:** The Teachers' Building--an architectural landmark in Kyiv--was, in 1917, the seat of the Ukrainian government--the Central Rada.

100 **F:** Commemorates Taras Shevchenko, the leading Ukrainian writer of the 19th century. For his promotion of independent Ukrainian political thinking and his struggle against the oppression of Ukraine, Czar Nicholas I (First) had Shevchenko exiled. In banishment, he lived under the strictest supervision, prohibited from writing and painting. **R:** Supreme Council of Ukraine. This is the seat of the present day Parliament, the Verkhovna Rada.

See also the story "Hryvna, Ukraine's Elusive Currency" in the Fall 1994 issue of the Monitor.