

## **One World is not enough, or my Adventures with National Paradigm**

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I believe it was Fernand Braudel who said that any historian under the age of 60 is worth of little, if anything. The implication is that a key factor in professional growth for any historian, apart of what (s)he reads and writes, is a life experience. What follows is a short and, by definition, very subjective account of my twenty-some years' experience of dealing with national paradigm. This paradigm is believed to be an academically outdated and politically very engaged, and, by this token should not be used as a framework for a historical narrative. In short, it is a dead horse. But really is it?

A few years ago I received a letter from the reputable Blackwell Publishing House. They were initiating a new series of history of Europe, that would be made by dozens of books, each devoted to a separate European country. They suggested me to write the history of Ukraine. In their letter they wrote that even though they were perfectly aware of all possible shortcomings of national paradigm, they could not imagine a better way of structuring their series. In their own way the Blackwell editors confirmed conclusions that have been made by other methodologically sensitive historians: despite criticism, the national paradigm remains a powerful frame for the practice of history-writing.<sup>1</sup>

I am a Ukrainian historian, and Ukrainian historiography has a special record in dealing with that paradigm. For years and years, to be an Ukrainian historian meant to be a historian of Ukraine. In that sense the Ukrainian situation is different from historical writings, say, in two neighboring countries, Poland and Russia. In Polish and Russian historiographies one can rather easily find historical monographs on ancient East or international effects of the Napoleonic wars. By the sheer expanse of *Rzeczpospolita* and the Russian empire, Polish and Russian historians rather easily cross national borders, exploring Ukrainian, Belarusian,

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald G. Suny, *History and the Making of Nations*, in: Zvi Gitelman, Lubomyr Hajda, John-Paul Himka, Roman Solchanyk, eds., *Cultures and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk* (=published simultaneously as vol. 22 (1998) of *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*), pp. 569-588.

Lithuanian and other subjects. Not so in Ukraine – or, for that sake, in Belarus. Or, in most of post-Soviet countries. Here, the main point of reference still is national history. The national paradigm builds a dense and strong gravitational field that only a very few historians ever tried – not to say managed – to escape.

The lack of space does not allow me to discuss this situation in details.<sup>2</sup> At this point let me just say that I consider this unbalanced state of the art in academic production deplorable. By saying that I do not consider, however, the national paradigm to be particularly flawed when compared with other paradigms. The emphasis here is on the word “particularly” rather than on “flawed”. To be sure, the national paradigm is reductionist and exclusive to numerous historical phenomena – but then all the paradigms are, in one way or another. One example would probably do: before the collapse of communism, most of historical writings in the West did ignore the existence of a separate Ukrainian and Belarusian identity. The recent synthesis of Ukrainian history written and published by a British historian has a telling title *The Ukrainians. Unexpected Nation*.<sup>3</sup> What is then a sense, I ask myself, of more “progressive” paradigms if they failed to notice a several millions’ nation in the midst of the Eurasian continent?

One has to be reminded that the national paradigm emerged as a result of the 19<sup>th</sup> century’s transformation of history into a professional discipline, and both its persistence and criticism it evokes are – *mutatis mutandis* – sure proofs that history is a scholarly discipline rather than a simple elucidation of facts or collection of chronicles.<sup>4</sup> I need to repeat this because among its critics, we may quite often encounter a very caricatured image of that paradigm as the one that allegedly serves mainly or only political needs. Sometimes these critics make a characteristic slip of the tongue: they call it a “nationalistic” instead of “national” paradigm.<sup>5</sup> In the Ukrainian case, to equal “national” with “nationalistic” is to do a great injustice to those Ukrainian historians who stay within national paradigm but call for a critical revision of a national history.

At an earlier stage of my professional career, I was especially influenced by the writings of

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<sup>2</sup> For details see my: *Ukrainian Historiography, 1991-2001. The Decade of Transformation*, Österreichische Osthefte 44, ½ (2003), pp. 107-126.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians. Unexpected Nation*, New Haven and London, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Suny, *History and the Making of Nations*, passim, see footnote 1.

<sup>5</sup> See the discussion that was held among Ukrainian historians on national paradigm and its applicability in 1996, in: Yaroslav Hrytsak, Yaroslav Dashkevych, eds., *Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi i ukrains'ka istorychna nauka. Zbirnyk materialiv konferentsii*, L'viv, 1999, passim.

one of them – Ivan L. Rudnytsky (1919-1985), a Ukrainian émigré historian, who stood in a forefront of “rethinking Ukrainian history”<sup>6</sup>. He elaborated the most sophisticated version of national paradigm. His version denies the value of interpretations that trace the existence of an Ukrainian nation before the 19th century, accepts the idea of a “constructed” national identity, considers alternatives of identity-making, stands for comparative and multiethnic perspectives, and critically reconsiders legacy of Ukrainian-Jewish, Ukrainian-Polish, Ukrainian-Russian relations. Ukraine is *the subject*, but not *the scope* of his study: the more he focuses on the former, the more often he transcends the latter. As one of his former students put it, from his lectures on Ukrainian history they got more knowledge about Europe than from lectures of other professors on European history.

Rudnytsky was not the first who started this kind of critical revision. The first calls sounded in the aftermath of the 1914-1923 events, when Ukrainian strivings for an independent national state failed. The failure provoked heated discussions in the Ukrainian emigration: who and what was to blame? The main issue was that the leader of the failed Ukrainian state was Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi (1866-1944), the dean of Ukrainian historiography. His historical scheme was a classic statement of the Ukrainian national paradigm. It was produced in a positivist belief that an adequate understanding of the past should guarantee political success. And since it did not, the scheme came under revision. Some historians accused Hrushevs'kyi of populist overtones and exclusion of strategically important social and ethnic groups -- other than Ukrainian peasants and leftist intellectuals – whose engagement could dramatically change the final character of the Ukrainian national revolution.<sup>7</sup> They also stood against victimization of national history and the trend of putting all the blame on the “others”. In their beliefs, the defeat of national strivings were caused by their own inner weakness, including myths and misinterpretations of traditional Ukrainian historiography. Since the Hrushevs'kyi's scheme laid the foundations of the modern Ukrainian national myth,<sup>8</sup> its critics touched the most sensitive nerve of the Ukrainian patriotism. The

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<sup>6</sup> See materials of a conference that he initiated and published: Ivan L. Rudnytsky, with the assistance of John-Paul Himka, eds. *Rethinking Ukrainian History*, Edmonton, 1981. I translated, commented and published his essays in Ukraine in 1994: Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytskyi, *Istorychni esé*: 2 vols. Kyiv, 1994. Now there is a Russian translation underway that I prepared with Dmytrii Furman, a Moscow-based Russian historian.

<sup>7</sup> As a Ukrainian émigré historian put it, Hrushevs'kyi reduced a broad river of historical process to a narrow creek of the Ukrainian national revival, leaving beyond practically all the social life of modern Ukraine (Oleksander Ohloblyn, *Problema skhemy istorii Ukrainy 19-20 stolittia (do 1917 roku)*, in: *Ukrains'kyi istoryk* 1-2 (29-30) (1971), p.5.

<sup>8</sup> John A. Armstrong, *Myth and History in the Evolution of Ukrainian Consciousness*, in: Peter J. Potichnyj, Marc Raeff, Jaroslaw Pelenski, and Gleb N. Žekulin, eds., *Ukraine and Russia in Their*

results were predictable: angry reactions of Ukrainian nationalists followed.

Rudnytsky has strongly influenced younger Ukrainian historians, first in the Ukrainian diaspora, and then, after the collapse of communism, in post-Soviet Ukraine.<sup>9</sup> In 1996, I published my synthesis of modern Ukrainian history that followed his lines in its general design.<sup>10</sup> This book has made my name.<sup>11</sup> I am aware – that for better or worse – I will most probably never write anything that would be read more than my *Essays of modern Ukrainian history*. A price of the success was a wave of harsh criticism of my book that came from the Ukrainian nationalist camp.<sup>12</sup> On the positive side, there was a rather large number of sympathetic, sometimes even enthusiastic reviews published both in and outside of Ukraine.<sup>13</sup> Here I want to single out an evaluation made by Mark von Hagen, professor of the Columbia University. He quoted my book as an example of what he called “the Eurasian paradigm”.

Mark von Hagen made a bold attempt to transcend limitations of both national and empire paradigm – to the extent that he called his “Eurasian paradigm” an “anti-paradigm”, i.e. antidote to any limitations in historical analysis of the post-Soviet space. This noble and daring ambition should be applauded and admired. Still, I ask myself: why should we limit to

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Historical Encounter (Edmonton, 1992), pp. 129.

<sup>9</sup> His influence stands in a stark contrast with a volume of his academic production (he never has written a book, and his legacy consists of essays only) and marginality of his position in the North American both academic and émigré milieus. For his intellectual biography see my: *Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytskyi (Narys intelektual'noyi biohrafiyi)*, in: *Suchasnist'* 11 (1994), pp. 73-96.

<sup>10</sup> Yaroslav Hrytsak, *Narys istoriï Ukrainy. Formuvannia modernoi ukrainskoi natsii XIX-XX st.* Kyiv, 1996. It has been a result of a larger project: to write new “revisionist” histories of Belarus, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine.

<sup>11</sup> Its success can be measured, among other things, by the numbers of pirate copies, both in paper and E-Internet versions.

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g.: Volodymyr Hordiienko, *Chy dorostut' istoriïky Ukraïny do... istoriï Ukraïny?*, in: *Za Vil'nu Ukraïnu*, 61 (1378) (May 16, 1998), p.2; B. Khorvat, *My i Evropa (Kil'ka dumok na poliakh novoho chasopysu)*, in: *Shliakh Peremohy*, 16 (April 17, 1997), p. 7.

There is an apocryphal story that I heard from my colleagues: a man apparently bought my book and after reading burn it, because it hurt his patriotic feelings. Other stories are real: a man has written to the Ukrainian ministry of education demanding to extract my book from circulation in schools and universities (I keep the copy of this letter in my archive); a leader of the émigré nationalistic organization from North America demanded my resignation from all the positions I have at the L'viv National and Ukrainian Catholic University; a son of the leader of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army Roman Shukhevych called me for a duel!

<sup>13</sup> See reviews of Włodzimierz Mędrzecki in: “Dzieje najnowsze”, 30, 1 (1998), pp. 200-206; Kai Struve in: *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, 47,3, pp. 446-447; Stanisław Stępień, in: *Przegląd Wschodni*, 5, 2(18), pp 363-365; Andreas Kappeler in: *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 47, 1, pp. 127-128; Andre Kishtymau in: *Belaruski Histarychny Ahliad*, 5, 2 (9) (1998), pp. 528-533, as well as a review article: Olga Andriewsky, *Toward a “Normal” Ukrainian History*, *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 23. No 1 (Summer 1998), p. 91-97 and many others.

the Eurasian continent only? Even when we consider, as Mark von Hagen does, Northern America as a cultural and political extension of Eurasia, does it secure us from further omissions? What about possible African and Australian connections? The former should not be ignored when it comes to the Soviet imperialism in 1950-1980s, the latter is important for shaping post-Soviet post-colonial studies as an useful point of reference. When it comes to the making of modern Ukrainian identity, the whole world is not enough: considering the Ukrainian contribution to the developments of astronautics and space travels, one has "to hit the sky" from times to times!

This helps me illustrate the main point I would like to make: one can not escape the limits of the national paradigm by just extending geographical realms. Because it is not the scope, it is the focus that matters.<sup>14</sup> Whatever we do and regardless how we conceptualize the issues at stake in our field of enquiry – reframe imperial or national history into multiethnic history,<sup>15</sup> put it in the international/global context,<sup>16</sup> look for alternative scenarios of nation-building,<sup>17</sup> practice "entangled histories",<sup>18</sup> or move to cultural history<sup>19</sup> – as long as nation-building continues to be the focus of our studies, we are staying within the realm of national paradigm.

There is something ironical in the fact that this basically 19<sup>th</sup> century paradigm found a second breath by the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has been reinforced by the new wave of studies about nationalism that stress the centrality of nation and nation identity in the modern world. Ernest Gellner was probably the most influential godfather of this wave – some goes that far as to name him the greatest social thinker of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In his words, "[a]

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<sup>14</sup> Or, as Ivan L. Rudnytsky put it, "the central problem of modern Ukrainian history is that of the emergence of a nation: the transformation of an ethnic-linguistic community into a self-conscious political and cultural community". All historical phenomena should be selected from that "national" perspective, i.e. whether and to what extent they "shaped the nation-making process, either by furthering or by impeding it". Ivan L. Rudnytsky, *Essays in Modern Ukrainian History*, Edmonton, 1987, p. 14.

<sup>15</sup> Andreas Kappeler, *Russland als Vielvölkerreich. Entstehung. Geschichte. Zerfall*, München, 1993; Paul Robert Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, Toronto, Buffalo, London, 1996.

<sup>16</sup> E. Thomas Ewing, *Russian History in Global Perspective*, in: NewsNet. News of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. 42, 4 (September 2002), pp. 1-4; Roman Szporluk, *Ukraine: From an Imperial Periphery to a Sovereign State*, in: Daedalus. Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences 126, 3 (Summer 1997), pp. 85-119.

<sup>17</sup> John-Paul Himka, *The Construction of Nationality in Galician Rus': Icarian Flights in Almost All Directions*, in: Ronald G. Suny and Michael D. Kennedy, eds. *Intellectuals and Articulation of the Nation*, Ann Arbor, 1999, pp.109-154; Paul R. Magocsi, *The Ukrainian National Revival: A New Analytical Approach*, in: Canadian Review of Studies of Nationalism, 16, 1-2, 1989, pp.45-62.

<sup>18</sup> Philipp Ther, *Beyond the Nation: The Relational Basis of a Comparative History of Germany and Europe*, *Central European History* 36 (2003), pp. 45-74.

<sup>19</sup> Orlando Figes, *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*. London, New York, 2003.

man must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears; a deficiency of any of these particulars is not inconceivable and does from time to time occur, but only as a result of some disaster, and it is itself a disaster of a kind".<sup>20</sup> In terms of centrality of nation, Rudnytsky sounds very "Gellnerish" – and Gellner sounds like a more elaborated, and universal edition of Rudnytsky. In a sense, Gellner polished, refined and updated the national paradigm, making it look politically less engaged and academically less atavistic. Little wonder he found enthusiastic followers among historians of Eastern Europe<sup>21</sup> – more so that the collapse of the Soviet Union and emergence of new nation-states in the post-Soviet space seemed to corroborate his major point.

Further developments in post-Soviet Eastern Europe, however, challenged that perspective: surveys on post-Soviet Eastern Europe revealed that the issue was relevant only for the former Western borderlands of the USSR (such as Lithuania and Western Ukraine), where the national identification axis were the most salient. As far as other parts of the post-Soviet space are concerned – parts which together, as a matter of fact, make the bulk of that space – national differentiation was losing its salience. Here social identification (such as with "workers" or "business(wo)men") were becoming increasingly important for a way people perceive both themselves and ongoing changes.<sup>22</sup> It seems that historically Eastern Europe presents another type of modernity: the modern world where national identities do not necessarily matter. Or, they matter at some crucial points, and then they recede to the backstage. Under these circumstances, it is not quite clear how to apply the national paradigm, say, to the Belarusian case, where national identification through most of the time is of a little relevance.<sup>23</sup> Another challenge is to explain how nationalist doctrines and nationalist politics frequently arise in societies and regions where most of the population lacks a strong and distinct sense of national identity<sup>24</sup> – as it was the case of Ukraine in

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<sup>20</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca, New York, 1983, p.6. Gellner acknowledges that it is not always true, and "having a nation is not an inherent attribute of humanity" – but it has now come to appear as such, when the idea of nation becomes universal and normative.

<sup>21</sup> See, e.g., Roman Szporuk, *Thoughts about Change: Ernest Gellner and the history of nationalism*, in John A. Hall, ed., *The State of the Nation. Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 23-39. For an example of application of the Gellner's theory to an East European case see the book of Tomasz Kizwalter (fn 14).

<sup>22</sup> Arthur H. Miller, Thomas F. Klobucar, William M. Reisinger, and Vicki L. Hesli, *Social Identities in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania*, In: *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 14, 3 (1998), pp. 248-286.

<sup>23</sup> Characteristically, Rudnytsky's essays on Ukrainian history are abundant with German, Czech, Polish, and Lithuanian comparisons – but there is no reference to the Belarusian case. The same goes with Ernest Gellner for whom Eastern Europe remains largely a *terra incognita*.

<sup>24</sup> John Breuilly, *Approaches to Nationalism*, in: Eva Schmidt-Hartmann, ed., *Formen des nationalen Bewußtsein im Lichte zeitgenössischer Nationalismustheorien. Vorträge der Tagung des Collegium Carolinum in Bad Wiessee vom 31. Oktober bis 3. November 1991*, München, 1994, p.16.

1914-1923, or in 1989-1991.

At the beginning of 1990s, Ronald Suny suggested to look for a solution in a combination of the social and national paradigms. He used this approach for an evaluation of mobilization potential of various ethnic groups in the years 1914-1923.<sup>25</sup> This generally very promising idea omitted, however, other major groups that could not be easily be conceptualized either in national or social terms – say, refugees or peasants. Nevertheless, they played a very important role at turning points of the revolution.<sup>26</sup> Apart from that, the logic of the “mobilization paradigm” is somewhat flawed: a success or, respectively, a failure of any movement does not necessarily correlate with a scale of mobilization. They depend on the character of political regime and its procedures, that may either enable or disable mobilization, on international conjecture, military factor, flexibility of elites, and other factors.<sup>27</sup>

In any case, we have to keep open a list of actors and factors, rather than reducing them to national patriots, imperial regimes, and their mutual encounters. A sound suggestion is to place national identity – or, for that sake, any identity – in the largest possible spectrum of group identification,<sup>28</sup> and then to look for its place in a general hierarchy. In 1994, when I was finishing my book on modern Ukrainian history, I initiated a comparative project that followed these lines. It focused on identity making in L’viv and Donetsk, the two major Ukrainian cities that fall, respectively, in the two post-Soviet zones: the West and the “rest”. The cities represented the opposite extreme limits – some say, alternative options – along which nation-building in post-Soviet Ukraine has been developing: in the early 1990s, L’viv gave the largest support for the Ukrainian independence, while anti-independence sentiments were running high in Donetsk. The main aim of our project was to reveal what stood behind these differences. Many said that among the main elements of contrast the ethno-linguistic factor was to be considered dominant: L’viv was the city with the largest

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<sup>25</sup> Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Revenge of the Past. Nationalism, Revolution and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*, Stanford, 1993, pp. 20-83.

<sup>26</sup> Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking* (Refugees in Russia during World War I), Bloomington, Indiana, 1999, p.3; Andrea Graziosi, *The Soviet Peasant War. The Great Soviet Peasant War. Bolsheviks and Peasants, 1917-1933*, Cambridge, MA, 1996.

<sup>27</sup> Mark von Hagen, *The Dilemmas of Ukrainian Independence and Statehood, 1917-1921*, The Harriman Institute Forum 7, 5 (1994), pp. 7-9;

<sup>28</sup> This suggestion was made by: Shmuel N. Eisenstadt and Wolfgang Schluchter, *Introduction: Paths to Early Modernities - A Comparative View*, in: Daedalus. Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Summer 1998, „Early Modernities”. Issued as Vol. 127, no 3 of the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, MA, 1998, p.14.

Ukrainian speaking population, while in Donetsk people spoke only Russian. We put this thesis to a test. Respondents in both cities were asked to choose identities – as many as they wished – that described them best. Lviv stood the test: here the Ukrainian identity was second to none in 1994, and it proved to be unyielding in its popularity during the next two surveys in 1999 and 2004. The results of Donetsk were puzzling and surprising: even though it was a city where Russian is absolutely dominant, the Russian identity was faring very low, far worse than Ukrainian identity; significantly enough, however, in 1994, none of both identities could match the popularity of residual imperial and social identities (*Soviets, workers, retired*). During the next ten years, these identities faded away, and it was the regional identity of *Donetsk'kie (Donetskites)* that has firmly asserted itself on the top.<sup>29</sup>

In the Gellnerish-Rudnytsky's perspective, Donetsk looked like an anomaly. It was a thoroughly industrialized city inhabited by quite modern people – so one expects to find there a strongly rooted national identity. It was obviously not the case. Lviv looked like a norm – but then it was a norm for the Western strip of the post-Soviet space only. And it did not fit the Gellner's scheme either, while it is a zone with the highest percentage of agrarian population and persistence of traditional, most of all religious, values.

The new experience that I got while working on the "Lviv-Donetsk" project helped to rethink my 1996 book. The book in many ways was very revisionist toward the national paradigm – still, it was *a revision* rather than a *new vision*. One needs not just to revise, but to replace the focus of narratives. I did this in my critics of the concept of "two Ukraines", that – generally speaking – was a result of application of the Rudnytsky/Gellnerish perspective toward post-Soviet developments in Ukraine.<sup>30</sup> I found further inspiration when I started teaching at the Central European University in 1996. I profited immensely from an exchange of ideas with my new colleagues who were moving in the same direction – above all with Alexei Miller and Maciej Janowski with whom I had taught various courses. It was prof. Alfred Rieber who – I believe – made the strongest impact: he introduced us to a borderlands' paradigm, that looked very promising in discussion of societies with fragmented and shifting identities – like post-Soviet societies.<sup>31</sup> Aleksei Miller published his book on

<sup>29</sup> For an analysis of the results see my: Yaroslav Hrytsak, *National Identities in Post-Soviet Ukraine: The Case of Lviv and Donetsk*, in: Zvi Gitelman, Lubomyr Hajda, John-Paul Himka, Roman Solchanyk, eds., *Cultures and Nations of Central and Eastern Europe*. Essays in Honor of Roman Szporluk (=published simultaneously as vol. 22 (1998) of Harvard Ukrainian Studies), pp. 263-281; and *Strasty za natsionalismom: Istorychni eseyi*, Kyiv 2004, pp. 188-197.

<sup>30</sup> See my book *Strasty za natsionalismom*, passim, see fn. 29.

<sup>31</sup> See his seminal, Alfred Rieber, *Struggle Over the Borderlands* in: S. Frederick Starr, ed., *The Legacy*



Russian imperial politics on the Ukrainian question in which he suggested – in a tune with a new turn in nationalism studies – to look on shaping of national identities as a result of modern nationalizing discourses that engaged various actors and presented various, quite often contingent alternatives of nation-building.<sup>32</sup>

I integrated these ideas in my new book that was published in 2006. This was a biography of Ivan Franko (1856-1916), a leading Ukrainian intellectual who in numerous ways – through his writings, his public activity and his function as a role model – was extremely efficient in articulating modern Ukrainian identity. Both borderlands' perspective and discourse focus proved to be efficient in the conceptualization of the topic. All of his life Franko lived in Austrian Galicia, a province that was ethnically very diverse (he himself was of a mixed German-Polish-Ukrainian (some say also Jewish) origin) and where all the identities were contested and prone to changes. In that sense, his biography fitted perfectly the borderland's paradigm. Galicia was also a province that underwent a very massive and rather peculiar kind of modernization: "modernization without industrialization", where the main agents of changes were bureaucrats and intellectuals. By this token, the discourse practices were very important for transformation of cultural landscape. Franko lived in L'viv that by the time was the most modern city in Eastern Europe, and was the most prolific writer (his bibliography comprises ca. 4,500 titles), his texts are considered crucial for the emergence of modernist discourses.

Still, there was a vague feeling that something essential was missing – as I soon realized from the vast literature on both Franko and Galicia. First, those who were using borderlands' concept, quite often omitted the fact that Galicia was not only ethnic, but also a religious borderland – a meeting place between Western and Eastern Christianity and Judaism. Religious identities were sometimes supportive, but frequently rival to new emerging national identities.<sup>33</sup> Secondly, discourse analysis helped to elucidate many points, but it obscured others. My experience inclines me to agree with a characteristic of "a linguistic turn" as "a revolving door" in which "everyone went around and around and got out exactly where they got in".<sup>34</sup> An example will do: two very influential books on Ivan Franko, that embarked on

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of History in Russia and the New States of Eurasia, New York, London, 1994, pp. 61-90.

<sup>32</sup> Aleksei I. Miller, "Ukrainskii vopros" v politike vlastei i russkom obshchestvennom mnenii (vtoraiia polovina XIX v.), Sankt-Peterburg, 2000.

<sup>33</sup> In my book, I elaborated this point by stressing the extent to which Franko had to unmake the legacy of Holy Rus'- and not just rival modern Polish and Russian national projects – in his articulation of modern Ukrainian identity.

<sup>34</sup> Nancy F. Partner, *Historicity in an Age of Reality-Fictions*, Frank Ankersmith and Hans Kellner, eds.

discourse analysis, appeared in the 1990s in Ukraine.<sup>35</sup> They became exemplary for the new generation of post-Soviet scholars both in and outside of Ukraine. However, when reading them, one can not avoid a feeling that both basically missed the point. They failed to contextualize Franko's texts, to confront his texts with the historical context(s). They analyze Franko's texts on the wrong presumption that they were widely read and discussed. What is missing in this analysis is a social perception of the texts. An introduction of this aspect reveals a picture that largely contradicts general presumptions: his texts were rarely read, the public space where they – or, by that token, any other texts of any other writer – were read and discussed was rather small, and there was a large misunderstanding between him and his target public. And he was the most prolific author in the city that by the mid-1880s was the third largest cultural productive center in the Slavic lands, after St. Petersburg and Warsaw! Franko's L'viv reminded the familiar world of the post-Soviet Donetsk: a world run by clans, where personal charisma and symbolic status matter more than professional achievements, and where motivated and mobilized minorities could impose their will on indifferent and silent majority.

That leads me to the final point. The recent literature on nationalism emphasizes the role that intellectuals – together with the discourses they initiate and public space they function within – play “in articulation” of national identities.<sup>36</sup> My book on Franko pointed out serious limitations of this explanatory scheme. I came to this result unintentionally, from the advantageous point of view of micro-history that is bound to revise general theories. I do presume, however, that we may reach similar conclusions even without a microanalysis.<sup>37</sup> The main precondition is our readiness to leave the convenient world of conventional schemes. During the last decades, many interesting interpretations in social sciences and humanities came from the parts of the world that till recently have been largely marginalized by Western scholarship, say India, Australia, Near East. So far East European historians fail to capitalize the advantages coming from marginality. They are following the tactics of “catching-up”, instead of embarking on a more ambitious strategy of coming up with original interpretations that could challenge the theories and the schemes that originated beyond the

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A New Philosophy of History, London, UK, 1995, p. 22.

<sup>35</sup> O.S. Zabuzhko, *Filosofiiia ukrayins'koi idei ta ievropeys'kyi kontekst*, Kyiv, 1992; Tamara Hundorova, *Franko – ne Kameniar*, Mel'born, 1996; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2006.

<sup>36</sup> See, e.g., the book *Intellectuals and Articulation of the Nation* quoted above in the fn. 18.

<sup>37</sup> Recently David Althoen reached similar conclusions when he analyzed reading public in Wilnius (Wilna) on the eve of the Polish 1830/1 uprising – see: David Althoen, *The Noble Quest. From True Nobility to Enlightenment Society in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, 1550-1830*, Ph.D. diss, University of Michigan, 2000.

East European context.