

Great Theorists of Central European Integration in Ukraine

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ABSTRACT

'Central Europe' is a concept that varies in time and space. Ukraine is the second-largest country on the European continent, and is geographically located south-west of the Eastern European plain. The peculiarity of historical development and geographical location leads to the portrayal of Ukraine as a civilizational frontier area between the countries of the West and East. The nineteenth century was the period of birth of national histories, equally among non-historical (stateless) and historical (state) nations, while at the same time, at any historical moment, one can find the predecessor of the modern nation. The coherence of the Ukrainian narrative is ensured by proto-state and state forms: Kyivan Rus, the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Cossack era, Ukrainian statehood in 1917–1921, Soviet era, Carpatho-Ukraine's autonomous existence in 1938–1939, and independent Ukraine since 1991. The Kyivan Rus was oriented towards Byzantium, and the Principality towards Western Europe. The Hetmanate's political structure recognised as a historical Cossack statehood. In the mid-17th century, the Cossack uprising led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky brought to the fore the dilemma of pro-Moscow or pro-Polish (in fact, pro-European) orientation. Since the late 18th century, Ukrainian territories have become the periphery of the empires, and ties with Europe have weakened. Europe almost forgot about Ukraine's existence. The central powers of the First World War attempted to tear Ukraine away from Russia and push it politically and civilizationally towards the West, albeit without any international interest in the question of Ukrainian statehood aspirations. Later, the Soviet Union created Ukrainian borders, but deprived the Ukrainians of any political activity. Pro-European Union tendencies were always present in independent Ukraine, but only took definite shape following the Revolution of Dignity in 2014. In 2014 Ukraine and the European Union signed the Association Agreement, came into effect in 2017. Russia's disastrous full-scale invasion against Ukraine accelerated Ukraine-EU rapprochement, and as a result Ukraine was granted EU candidate status in 2022. Europeanisation is not only a process of identity construction, but also a value-based supranational 'ways of doing things'. In this context, Ukraine's place in the buffer zone between Eastern and Western Europe has changed over the centuries. The study analyses the development of opinions on this topic, based on the works of some selected Ukrainian and Ukrainian-descent thinkers from the 19th century to the present day.

KEYWORDS

Ukraine, Central Europe, East and West dichotomy, nation, nationalism, historical development

Introduction

The concept of Central Europe has a long history and a extensive literature. Therefore, without going into detail, we will briefly review the historical period that has been the focus of the work of the theorists highlighted in this study, i.e. the period from the 19th century to the present, providing a framework for the work of these theorists.

Where 'Central Europe' is situated has always been a function of current political power relations. As Ferenc Mező put it

The location of Northern, Western and Southern Europe is not a problem [...] but the concept of Central Europe and the boundaries of its extent are. [...] No other concept of the division of Europe has provoked so many objections or been so intertwined with the political world, with the powers that be. [...] Central Europe as a term exists in the realm of feelings and identity, not in the realm of reason, and the concept is accordingly full of multiple levels of duality, of multilayering.¹

The American Slavic scholar Larry Wolff notes, in his inventive book (*Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, 1994), that in the 18th century, there were different points of view on the location of the border between Europe and Asia: sometimes it was drawn along the Don, sometimes along the Volga, and sometimes along the Ural Mountains. Before the Age of Reason, Europeans divided the Old World into the Baltic North and Mediterranean South; only with the emergence and evolution of the concept of Eastern Europe, created by Western European travellers (Danish Isaac Massa, Cornelis de Bruijn, Venetians Francesco Algarotti, Giacomo Casanova, etc.) and enlightened thinkers (for example Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Russo), began division into Eastern and Western Europe.

Central Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, was aligned with the German-Roman imperial territory, and until the emergence of German unity, the approach to it varied, although its German-centricity remained unchanged. With the creation of Austria-Hungary in 1867, this virtual Central European space now extended to the Kingdom of Hungary and north-western Balkans. Eastern Europe was mostly identified with Russia – with underdevelopment. The German Empire perceived Russia as a rival to the spread of German influence to the East, while in Austria-Hungary, interest in Eastern European history intensified following the liberation of the Southern Slavs from the Ottoman Empire, as well as the attempts to preserve the integrity of the empire through loyal national policy.²

During the First World War, the emphasis shifted from economic and cultural interests to cultural arguments, and 'Central Europe' was considered covered the

1 Mező, 2001, p. 81.

2 Барвінська [Barvinska], 2014, p. 253.

area from the North and Baltic Seas to the Adriatic Sea, and the southern edge of the Danube plain, which allowed the core area to be joined by the countries on the periphery to the 'East', up to the border of the Russian-speaking area, i.e. including a large part of the Ukrainian plain. The eastward shift of political central Europe was, of course, largely due to the Great War. The term 'Central Europe' was introduced into the discourse about 'Intermediate Europe' as a regional offshoot of the Versailles system, which ended the war, and was used to denote the buffer zone between Soviet Union and Germany, where the Soviets expanded westwards and the Germans eastwards.

After the Second World War, the concept of 'Central Europe' lost its meaning, for a long time, within the context of 'Eastern Europe'. To the east of the Iron Curtain was 'Eastern Europe' and to the west 'Western Europe.' Since the 1970s, 'Central Europe' has re-emerged as a historical, cultural-geographical and socio-geographical entity – a 'symbolic reality' that does not wish to be identified with 'Eastern Europe'.³ The Czech novelist Milan Kundera, in his provocative essay 'The Tragedy of Central Europe' (first published in 1983), explained, *inter alia*

After 1945, the border between the two Europe's shifted several hundred kilometres to the west, and several nations that had always considered themselves to be Western woke up to discover that they now belonged to the East. [...] Indeed, nothing could be more foreign to Central Europe and its passion for variety than Russia: uniform, standardizing, centralizing, determined to transform every nation of its empire (the Ukrainians, the Belarusians, the Armenians, the Latvians, the Lithuanians and others) into a single Russian people (or, as is more commonly expressed in this age of generalized verbal mystification, into a 'single Soviet people'). [...] One of the great European nations (there are nearly forty million Ukrainians) is slowly disappearing. And this enormous, almost unbelievable event is occurring without the world realizing it.⁴

The 1989–1990 revolutions and regime changes, German reunification, break-up of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War have once again rearranged the mental map of Europe. Samuel P. Huntington asked the delicate question: '*Were the revolutions of 1989–1990 in eastern Europe primarily anticommunist democratic movements or anti-Soviet nationalist movements? If the latter, authoritarian nationalist regimes might return to some eastern European countries*'.⁵

To this day, nobody knows for sure, and there is only speculation, about the fact that during negotiations on German reunification in 1990, the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev allegedly received assurances from his Western partners that NATO would not expand eastwards if East Germany was permitted to become a

3 Mező, 2001, pp. 81–103.

4 Kundera, 1984, p. 33.

5 Huntington, 1991, pp. 293–294.

NATO member.⁶ On 9 February 1990, James Baker told Mikhail Gorbachev, according to the surviving stenographic record, that if the United States maintained its presence in Germany within the NATO framework, not an inch of NATO's present military jurisdiction would spread in an eastern direction.⁷ However, this 'promise' was that the territory of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) would not be covered by NATO's infrastructure, the Warsaw Pact was still in existence at the time. The Warsaw Pact, one of the two military blocs of the Cold War, has been dissolved, and NATO, which at its height had 16 members, will be enlarged to 31 by 2023. The post-Cold War NATO aspirants saw joining the alliance as crucial to achieving their goals of integration with the West, and ensuring protection from Russia, with which many had a troubled history. Those who called for NATO enlargement also believed it was essential to promote and consolidate democracy in post-Cold War Europe. The opponents of its, however, warned that the same would restore a Cold War atmosphere to East-West relations.⁸ On 27 May 1997, during the NATO summit in Paris, the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security was signed between NATO and the Russian Federation. At the time, both sides attempted to not view each other as opponents but as partners. In this cooperation a key role was accorded to the NATO-Russia Council. The first turning point was 2008 Russo-Georgian War, then the another breakdown represented the 2014 Ukraine crisis. It became clear that *'when NATO-Russia relations are in crisis, the work of the Council also becomes dysfunctional or is completely disrupted'*.⁹

With the enlargement of the European Union, part of 'Eastern Europe' was reunited with 'the West'. From the countries of the 'post-Soviet space', which emerged after the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Baltic states 'returned' to Europe in 2004, while the new 'Eastern Europe' was divided between the Eastern Partnership countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and Russia.

Despite the absence of statehood, Ukrainian history has some periods during which the history of the population and the region they occupy can be distinguished from that of the state exercising sovereignty, and others when these merge with the history of the state. The presence of the state mentality and the question of political and cultural orientation can also be observed in the alternation between the move away from relative autonomy and the pre-total incorporation. Until the beginning of the 20th century, the eastern half Ukrainian regions had always been closer to the 'East', whereas the western half was closer to 'Central Europe' or the 'West' in general. However, as will be discussed later, some arguments favour the North-South division. In the next period the Soviet Union pulled its growing European territories towards the 'East'. This ideology has been adopted to a large extent by modern Russia, spreading the idea of a 'Russian world'.

6 Ghodsee, 2017, p. 53.

7 Savranskaya and Blanton, 2017.

8 Menon and Ruger, 2020, p. 371.

9 Douglas, 2017.

After its 1991 independence, Ukraine found that it was impossible to be a neutral state in the geopolitical space it occupied. First, During the 2004 Orange Revolution, the choice was between a more Europe-oriented and more Russia-integrated future. The possibility of a second choice was at the turn of 2013–2014, when a new revolution broke out in protest against the then-Ukrainian power’s disengagement to sign the Association Agreement with the European Union. The question of eastern or western orientation could no longer be decided at the negotiating table. According to Tatiana Zhurzhenko, with the annexation of Crimea and induced by Moscow, and the ‘Russian spring’ in two eastern regions, known collectively as the Donbas, the majority population opted for the Ukrainian state. However, there were also those who sympathize with the separatists and with Russia. *‘One of the difficult questions we will be confronted with after the war is how to live together again in one state.’*¹⁰ At the same time,

[...] the Russian aggression has done what previous Ukrainian presidents from Kravchuk to Yanukovych had failed to achieve – catalyse the creation of a political nation. Ukrainian identity, which for so long had been associated with ethnicity, language and historical memory, suddenly has become territorial and political [...].¹¹

The Russian–Ukrainian war a challenge not only for Ukraine, but also for the world order. The annexation of Ukrainian territories and covert hybrid warfare in the eastern regions of Ukraine in 2014 did not lead to immediate and unanimous condemnation of Russia, but rather, to analysis and discourse around the reasons for this situation. *‘Many Europeans and Americans found it easier to follow Russia’s propaganda phantoms than to defend a legal order.’*¹² However, this hesitation was promptly abandoned on 24 February 2022, when Russia launched a full-scale invasion against Ukraine. This time, the ‘collective West’ banded together.

The idea of relevance to the present ‘Jagiellonian heritage’ – a Polish historiographical construction of a Polish-Lithuanian-Ukrainian federation, an equal union of the three nations, idealisation of the monarchy of Jagiellon’s descendants –and the concept of the ‘civilisation mission of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the East’, created in the 19th century, among Ukrainian political analyst Yevhen Magda received a ‘second wind’ in the 21st century. Poland advocated for the former peoples of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, especially Ukraine, to integrate them into the European community.¹³ It is evident that Central and Eastern Europe appears to be a region serving as an internal frontier, where rules can be broken; and Russia is willing to do so.¹⁴ One of the most acclaimed contemporary Polish

10 Zhurzhenko, 2014.

11 Ibid.

12 Snyder, 2018, p. 9.

13 Marđa [Magda], 2015, pp. 109–110.

14 Ibid. p. 112.

writers, Andrzej Stasiuk, formulated what it means to be a Central European: it means to live between the East and the West, *'to live 'in the middle,' if this middle is, in truth, the only real solid ground. Except that this solid is not stable. It resembles an island, maybe even a floating one.'*¹⁵ This idea of East-West 'transitivity' has deep roots in Polish geopolitical thinking.¹⁶

*'For Ukraine, it is better to be the borderland of democracy rather than of an authoritarian bloc. But a border is a border – an honourable but difficult fate.'*¹⁷ This is how the Ukrainian editor and journalist, Vitaly Portnikov, summed up the essence of Ukraine's current, but in fact complete, history in the summer of 2022, going on to say that before the Russian-Ukrainian war, whether Ukraine (and Moldova) would be granted EU candidature was a question for the distant future (and appeared to be neither easy nor quick). Although we do not know how far away actual membership is for Ukraine now, such an achievement will in any case be a civilizational success. Before the war, Ukraine was considered a bridge between Russia and the EU; now, it could serve as a bridge between Poland and Romania. Ukraine will then no longer be an 'Eastern-European country', thereby leaving only Russia in the 'East'. One can conclude that *'Ukraine Is Coming Back to the Centre of Europe.'*¹⁸

1. Ukrainian autonomism – Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841–1895)¹⁹



Mykhailo Drahomanov (6 September 1841, Hadiach /Poltava province/, Russian Empire /now Ukraine/ – 20 July 1895, Sofia, Bulgaria) was an ethnographer, historian, and political theorist, and one of the most notable modern Ukrainian political thinkers. He was the uncle of the famous poet and playwright Lesya Ukrainka. His parents were petty nobles, descendants of Cossack officers. He studied at the Poltava Gymnasium and the Faculty of History and Philology at Kyiv University. Between 1864 and 1876 he taught at the Kyiv University, and then became a central figure of Ukrainian political emigrants

15 Стасюк and Андрухович [Stasjuk and Andruhovych], 2005, p. 63.

16 Mitrovits, 2023.

17 Portnikov, 2022.

18 Ibid.

19 Mykhailo Petrovych Drahomanov, Ukrainian intellectual and public figure, unknown author, public domain, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:00%94%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2_%D0%9C%D0%B8%D1%85%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BB%D0%BE.2.gif?uselang=uk#filelinks.

in Geneva. In 1889, Drahomanov was invited to teach at the Department of General History at the Faculty of History and Philology of Sofia University, where he worked until his death. In 1991, the former Kyiv Pedagogical Instituted was renamed as the Kyiv Pedagogical Drahomanov Institute, and in 1997, the National Pedagogical Drahomanov University.

In 1863 Drahomanov became a member of the Hromada (meaning of the word: community) society, which was one of the Ukrainian intelligentsia secret society networks that worked to awaken the consciousness of the national intelligentsia to the knowledge of Ukrainian history and culture. His socio-political concept combined the ideas of social equality and justice with the ideas of constitutional law and the need for political struggle. His thinking had a great impact on the socialist movement in Galicia, and was also reflected in the Hromada programme, signed by Serhiy Podolynsky, Mykhailo Pavlyk and Drahomanov. All of them defended the autonomous-federalist position. As an advocate of European positivism and rationalism, Drahomanov developed the principle of federalism of state and non-state Slavic peoples as a means of transition from the imperial repressive-dictatorial, unitary-centric mode of government to democratic, European forms of statehood. According him Ukrainians had suffered a huge loss when most of the peoples of Europe were creating their own states, while Ukrainians had failed to do so.

On the basis of the Edict of Ems of 1876, which was a decree of the Russian Emperor Alexander II, directed against the Ukrainian language and Ukrainophiles, the Hromada were liquidated, and the need to expel Drahomanov and Pavlo Chubynsky (author of the Ukrainian anthem) as dangerous agitators was pointed out. Drahomanov was dismissed from the university for being politically unreliable. The onset of the reaction and introduction of harassment against the reviving manifestations of Ukrainian culture forced Drahomanov to go abroad and become a political emigrant. The emergence of the Edict of Ems was due to the revival of the Ukrainian movement in the early 70s of the 19th century, and it remained in force until 1905.

The 19th century was a one of gradual political maturation, and awakening to the conscious national existence of the Ukrainian nation. The Ukrainians in Galicia lived under the political rule of Austria-Hungary, but under cultural influence of the Poles. Since the Battle of Poltava (1709), which ended Sweden's status as a major power and marked the beginning of Russian supremacy in Eastern Europe, the Russian Empire has made enormous efforts to reduce Ukrainians to Little Russia, a perception of unity between Ukraine and Russia. The Ukrainian language was interpreted as a dialect, occupying the middle ground between Russian and Polish, or it was seen as actually Russian. Ukrainophilism entered the arena of cultural and political life in the Russian Empire at the turn of the 50s and 60s of the nineteenth century. The dominant view of Ukrainophilism was that of a national and cultural phenomenon. Drahomanov also argued that Ukrainophilism could not be perceived as a non-political movement, and

associated its emergence with the political interests of the Ukrainian nation.²⁰ Among the political ideas were that of uniting the nation, removing Ukrainians from the humiliating condition of living on the Russian outskirts and Polish Kresy, and creating their own statehood instead. The possibility of this statehood was imagined in two forms: autonomy and an independent state. Drahomanov were among those also worked on the development of a draft state system based on federalist principles, he was a prominent ideologist of the Ukrainian autonomists.²¹

The peculiarity of Drahomanov's vision of history was to look at everything with a 'cold scientific eye.' As a consequence of such aspirations, he was perhaps the least prone to mythologising history, seeking instead to explain the processes of political life through rational arguments. He also viewed Ukrainians and Russians in a European context.²² Drahomanov substantiated the separateness of Ukrainians and sought to refute the view of Ukraine as one of Russia's minor provinces.

For Drahomanov, the problem of relations between the Ukrainian and Russian nations as a problem of the need for linguistic, cultural, and state equality was a leading idea. In 'What is Ukrainophilism?' he criticised attempts to introduce Russian among Ukrainians as the language of the dominant nation. This would not lead to the formation of 'pure nationality,' but give rise to new 'national bastards.' Therefore, the homeland was not principally mountains, rivers, lakes, marshes, etc., but also as the nation that lives in it.²³

The erasure of national languages in favour of not world language, but state and estate languages would not only be contrary to the obviously democratic course of development of civilization in recent centuries, but would only produce new divisions between people, not justified even by the natural conditions that gave rise to existing nations. Taking the Ukraine as an example, we now see that in the territory from the upper Tisza in Hungary to the Kuban region in Russia there is language along with others, also similar national features, thanks to which 30 million individuals can very easily solidarize with each other.²⁴

According the 1897 all-Russian imperial census with a population of 125.6 million, only 44.3% (55.7 million people), excluding the Grand Duchy of Finland, declared themselves to be native Russian speakers; this proportion was less than 50%. Ukrainians were the second largest nationality: 17.8% (22.3 million people), although this figure was estimated to be even higher. However, the Russian

20 Кармазіна [Karmazina], 2015, pp. 9–12.

21 Ibid. pp. 13–14.

22 Ibid. pp. 18–19.

23 Драгоманов [Drahomanov], 1991, p. 448.

24 Ibid. pp. 442–443.

authorities labelled them as ‘Little Russian’ language speakers, and not as a separate nationality.²⁵

Drahomanov felt that the Ukrainian thinking had developed from European liberalism. Mentions that in the 1830’s and 1840’s there was still a certain tradition of statehood among the nobility of the Left Bank Ukraine descended from the Cossack elders, i.e. among the members of the class to which himself belonged.²⁶ However, memory of an independent Ukrainian State had died out. According to Drahomanov, only one solution remained for the Ukrainians: Ukrainian autonomy within an all-Russian federation.²⁷ While Drahomanov was content with the autonomy of regions, the Radicals demanded the unification of all the ethnically Ukrainian territory in the Russian Empire into one autonomous unit.²⁸ Drahomanov’s ideas worked in the legislation and policies of the independent Ukrainian People’s Republic. The 22 January 1918, which was adopted at the same time as the declaration of independence, introduced the principle of ‘national-personal autonomy.’ This meant that the Russians, Poles, Jews, and any other nationalities were permitted to form national autonomous bodies in public law, and have legislative powers in the cultural affairs; however, the Bolshevik invasion prevented its implementation.²⁹

For Drahomanov, federalism was a universal principle. According Ivan L. Rudnyczky, for a political thinker who takes the autonomy of the individual as his starting point, and rejects every form of authoritarianism, ‘*federation – the adherence of persons with equal rights to groups and communities, and the cooperation of these in greater unions—is the only way to overcome the atomization of society.*’³⁰

The idea of Ukrainian unity was based on prominent figures such as Drahomanov. He left ambiguous memories of his relations with ‘Galicians and other Austrian Rusyns’ in ‘Austro-Ruthenian Memoirs (1867–1877)’. His memoirs in fifteen books was published in Lviv in 1889–1899, after his death, thanks to the efforts of famous Ukrainian poet and thinker Ivan Franko. The researcher raises the specific topic of relations the territories of eastern Ukraine, then part of Russia with Austrian Rusyns who lived in Galicia, Bukovina, and Hungary. (Slavic word Rusyns or latin Ruthenians oldest names used for several East Slavic peoples, modern-day Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Carpatho-Rusyns.)

In his ‘Letters to the Dnieper Ukraine,’ he praised the work of those who, although writing in Russian, explained Ukrainian language and Ukrainian history. Russian, or any other language, should serve as a meta-language in the development and education of the nation, because national independence without education would not produce democracy. The merit of Russia and the Russians to

25 Bauer, Kappeler and Roth, 1991.

26 Doroshenko, 1952, p. 26.

27 Ibid. p. 27.

28 Stakhiv, 1952, p. 60.

29 Ibid. p. 61.

30 L. Rudnitsky, 1952, p. 74.

Ukrainians is their liberation from Mongol-Tatar rule and Polish authority.³¹ The Cossack conception of the State was the monarchy, although way of their life led them to a republican political order. However, before and after the union with Moscow by Pereyaslav Agreement (1654), *'democracy was only to be found on the local level; above there was only monarchy.'*³² Drahomanov draws attention to the problem of different regions: the Left Bank Ukraine, Right Bank Ukraine, Galicia and Transcarpathia had very little contact, and were not completely informed about each other. He also stressed ethnic and linguistic homogeneity of the Ukrainian people from Transcarpathia to Kuban region. In his opinion *'Russian Ukrainians and Austrian Rusyns can only come together on the basis of interests demos and pan-European progressive ideas.'*³³

Drahomanov visited Transcarpathia twice – in 1875 and 1876, although he never lost sight this land even during his later years. He visited Mukachevo and Uzhhorod, met with representatives of the Transcarpathian intelligentsia, and was struck by the cultural backwardness. He drafted a special proclamation in which he requested that folklore materials be collected and sent to him. Soon, a number of his articles were published in Lviv, describing the situation in 'Hungarian Rus' and calling on the Galician intelligentsia to lend a helping hand to their brothers on the other side of the border.³⁴ Drahomanov had great hopes for Galicia, viewing it as a bridge for the spread of Western European values to Greater Ukraine.³⁵ In the work 'Drahomanov's Answer [to Greetings from Galicia]', not long before his death, he took the Hannibal oath to help the 'wounded brother' (Hungarian Rus), which was geographically closest to the Galicians:

I was the first Ukrainian to visit Hungarian Rus. I saw that spiritually it is farther separated even from Galicia than Australia is from Europe. I swore to myself an 'oath of Hannibal' to work for the integration of Hungarian Rus into our national democratic and progressive movement, for only thus can it find salvation [...] I have not been able to fulfill my oath, but today I lay it upon the heads of the whole Ukrainian people.³⁶

Drahomanov in 'A Preface [to the 'Hromada' in 1878]' argues that Transcarpathia is *'Ukrainian land [...] where the same men live as in former Cossack Ukraine along the Dnipro River.'*³⁷ Ukrainian lands were divided between separate states, but despite the long separation from each other,

31 Кармазіна [Karmazina], 2015, pp. 19–20.

32 Cf. Doroshenko, 1952, p. 32.

33 Драгоманов [Drahomanov], 1897, p. 177.

34 Мушинка [Mushynka], 1987, p. 29.

35 Гачковський [Gachkowskyi], 2018, p. 35.

36 Cf. L. Rudnitsky, 1952, p. 116.

37 Драгоманов [Drahomanov], 1991, p. 276.

[...] Our Ukrainians are almost exclusively peasants and urban labourers, and a few small merchants and priests, and there are also Moscow (mostly on the left side of the Dnipro and in the steppes), Polish (mostly from the Dnipro to the Beskydy), Hungarian (beyond the Beskydy), and Moldovan (in Bessarabia and Bukovina) priests, lords, bosses, and merchants in our Ukraine. All these people, strangers to our men's communities, are more united with each other than anywhere else, because in addition to doing the same thing, they are also of the same language, faith, and breed [...] ³⁸

Philip E. Mosely referred to Drahomanov a '*a prophet of the Ukrainian and the European conscience.*' According to him:

Seeing the people of the Ukraine divided, Drahomanov sought to disclose and revivify the deepest source of its national unity. And, since true unity must develop from within, he devoted special efforts to recording, cultivating, and popularizing the treasures of Ukrainian folklore and folk-literature. [...] Turning to the history of the Ukraine, he rejected all attempts to 'monopolize' the national history for the benefit of any one tradition, region, or class. [...] His profound conviction that national unity cannot be imposed from without but must grow within the thought and feeling of living people is as true today as it was then. [...]. Drahomanov devoted the best of his life's effort to defining and clarifying the vital interaction between Ukrainian and European development, to making clear to informed European opinion the undeniable place of the Ukraine in Europe, and to assisting his own people to identify and grapple with those inner tasks of self-development which would enable it to occupy the place of its aspiration in the community of the European conscience. ³⁹

An interesting aspect is that in 1941, Mykhailo Drahomanov's granddaughter and Lesya Ukrainka's great-niece, Natalia, met the Hungarian soldier Árpád Bartai in Kyiv, and married him following two years of correspondence. Overcoming considerable obstacles, the young Natalia Drahomanova arrived in Budapest in 1943, where she married her Hungarian fiancé. She was one of the founders and a permanent member of the Ukrainian Cultural Association in Hungary (UCAH) since 1991, co-founder of the UCAH's magazine 'Hromada' in 1996, and an active member of the editorial board until 2016. Natalia Drahomanova-Bartai died in 2018 in Budapest. ⁴⁰

38 Ibid. p. 278.

39 Mosely, 1952, pp. 2-3, 5.

40 Плоскіна [Ploskina], 2018.

2. Cossack statehood on Balkan-Eastern European area – Ivan Krypyakevych (1886–1967)⁴¹

Ivan Krypyakevych (25 June 1886, Lviv, Austro-Hungarian Empire – 21 April 1967 Lviv, Soviet Union /now Ukraine/) was one of the most prominent and well-known Ukrainian historians of the twentieth century, as well as an academician, history textbook author, journalist and editor.

Krypyakevych was born in a family of the Greek Catholic priest and emigrant from the Polish Chełm Land, Father, Petro Franz Krypyakevych who was a doctor of theology and a professor at a gymnasium in Lviv. At home they spoke Polish, and he studied at a gymnasium with Polish as the language of instruction.

The only subject in Ukrainian, which were lessons of the Greek Catholic religion, was taught by his father. He also hired a Ukrainian language teacher for his son. At the Lviv University, Krypyakevych studied history under Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who was also heading the Shevchenko Scientific Society (a kind of academy of sciences founded in 1873). In 1911, Krypyakevych defended his doctoral dissertation on the topic ‘The Cossacks and Bathory’s Privileges,’ written under the supervision of Hrushevsky. At this time, he was also elected a full member of the Shevchenko Scientific Society.

In the 1910s Krypyakevych taught in high schools. Following this, in the 1920s and 1930s, he was a professor at the Ukrainian Secret University (USU) in Lviv, the Theological Academy in Lviv, and from 1941, at Lviv University. During the German occupation, he remained in Lviv and worked as an editor of scientific publications at the Ukrainian Publishing House. In 1953–1962, he was director of the Institute of Social Sciences at the Lviv branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1993, the Institute in Lviv was renamed the I. Krypyakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. This is the only academic interdisciplinary research institution in Ukraine with departments of history, socio-cultural, linguistics and literature.

With the transfer of Galicia to Polish rule, Krypyakevych stopped engaging in politics and confined himself to scientific and educational work.⁴² During this



⁴¹ Ivan Krypyakevych, Ukrainian historian, unknown author, public domain, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ivan_Krypiakevych.jpg.

⁴² Клименко [Klymenko], 2012, p. 109.

period, his books were repeatedly confiscated and banned. Later, under the new Soviet power during World War II, he was first embraced, and later accused of standing not on Marxist, but on ‘nationalist positions;’ he viewed all these events from the perspective of the Ukrainian nation, and the Ukrainian national state.⁴³ The director was a ‘non-party specialist’ with an ‘unclear past’ and this made his position very difficult.⁴⁴ In 1939, when a historian from Lviv, Oleksandr Dombrowski (1914–2014) asked Krypyakevych why he was staying in Lviv, he replied that it was necessary to preserve the Ukrainian state of the settlement in the Galician capital.⁴⁵ Krypyakevych’s rehabilitation began in 1951, apparently in the system of preparations for the three-hundredth anniversary of the Pereyaslav Agreement—in view of he was a specialist on Ukrainian history of the Ukrainian Cossacks era, especially during the time of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky.⁴⁶ In his early memoirs, Krypyakevych summarised the essence of his work, in the following statement: *‘I always considered science to be the main area of work. The main issue of my research was Bohdan Khmelnytsky’s state—the liberation struggle and the creation of a new state.’*⁴⁷

In Ukraine, the profession of a historian has always been regarded as risky, and this was especially true under communism. But even during the most cruel of times, historians’ choicer were generally quite limited. In this context, Lviv played a special role. Under the repression of the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union, the historical school of Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who is the father of modern Ukrainian history, was being brutally attacked. At the same time his students and followers were working calmly under Polish rule in the interwar Lviv.⁴⁸ Among them was Ivan Krypyakevych, who after World War II was in the Soviet Union, headed the academic Institute and taught at the University in Lviv. Krypyakevych applied the ‘50–50 principle’ at his institution: 50% of solid scientific work, and 50% of opportunistic articles at the request of the party leadership. At the Institute in the 1950s and 1960s, a new generation of the Ukrainian scientific-humanitarian elite emerged, led by Krypyakevych. Under conditions of political repressions and total censorship, this generation of scholars had to further the cause championed by the distinguished Ukrainian historiographers Volodymyr Antonovych and Mykhailo Hrushevsky in the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century.⁴⁹ The fundamental difference in their historical views was that Hrushevsky built the history of Ukraine around the idea of the Ukrainian people, while Krypyakevych followed the idea of Ukrainian statehood. According to Krypyakevych:

43 Заболотна [Zabolotna], 2007, p. 15.

44 Дашкевич [Dashkevych], 2007, p. 480.

45 Ibid. p. 11.

46 Прицак [Pritsak], 1968, p. 83.

47 Крип’якевич [Krypyakevych], 2001, p. 117.

48 Portnov, 2011, p. 147.

49 Kuhutiak, 2017, p. 42.

We can only achieve a full and proper understanding of the past if we set ourselves the goal of learning about the state. No matter how we approach any issue, no matter how we approach it, the ultimate measure should be statehood. Then we will be able to move the harmonious structure of Ukrainian history, in which the highest manifestation of human organisation – the state – will form the basis and centre.⁵⁰

Krypyakevych admired the research methodology of the French positivist historian Gabriel Monod (1844–1912), who pioneered the training of highly qualified source specialists and archivists in France, while simultaneously advocating for the neutrality of historical science in relation to politics.⁵¹ Krypyakevych tried to theoretically connect positivism – with its increased attention to sources – to the historiographical trend known as ‘cultural history’.⁵²

He believed that one of the most important issues of national revival was the issue of the Ukrainian history book. Knowledge of history makes it possible to discover who we are.⁵³ Among his disciples, he referred to himself a ‘Johannes de fabulis’.⁵⁴ In 1923 he wrote:

History is not only of theoretical importance as a science for science, but also of very great practical value when it is set the task of explaining the present. In Western Europe, this task of history has long been understood and textbooks are written accordingly.⁵⁵

In the 1930s, among his other pursuits, Krypyakevych was absorbed in the preparation of four fundamental books of the Historical Library series (‘Great History of Ukraine,’ ‘History of the Ukrainian Host,’ ‘History of Ukrainian Culture,’ ‘World History’). The first issue of volume of the ‘Great History of Ukraine’ was published in January 1934 with certain white spots. The Polish censors removed following content:

If all those parts of Ukraine could be politically united in this way, the Ukrainian tribe would stand up to the Moscow tribe, if not as equals, then as a politically strong tribe. The stones for that building are still lying ready. Maybe in time there will be a builder, a hero, who will put it together. Over the thousand years of the Ukrainian people’s life, many, many of these ‘stones’ have accumulated. Different sizes and shapes, different durability and quality. The future builder will have a lot to choose from when

50 Cf. Дашкевич [Dashkevych], 2007, p. 491.

51 Клименко [Klymenko], 2012, p. 105.

52 Дашкевич [Dashkevych], 2007, p. 489.

53 Ibid. p. 490.

54 Прицак [Prytsak], 1968, p. 86.

55 Cf. Клименко [Klymenko], 2011, p. 193.

tapping into the treasure trove of building materials that is the history of Ukraine.⁵⁶

The Ukrainian Cossacks were a unique military and political entity. In the revival of the Ukrainian state, Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky relied on the historical experience of the previous founders of Ukrainian statehood – Kyivan Rus, the Galicia-Volhynia Principality, and the Zaporozhzhian Sich. Krypyakevych was a supporter of the Norman theory. In his opinion, the Varangians of the Rus tribe liberated Kyiv from the Khazars, and formed the state of Kyivan Rus in the 9th century. Initially, Rus was called the Kyiv region, but later this name was transferred to the Muscovy conquered by Varangians princes. Krypyakevych's fundamental monograph 'Galicia-Volhynia Principality' was published only after his death in 1984. According to Krypyakevych, the Principality was the direct successor of Kyivan Rus, the continuer of its traditions, and considered an important state in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Khmelnytsky's uprising or war of independence in 1648–1654 was primarily aimed at liberation from the rule of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In January 1654, Khmelnytsky convened a council of Cossack hosts in Pereyaslav, where he recalled the possible prospects for Ukraine's political development under the patronage of the Turkish sultan, Crimean khan, Polish king, or Muscovite tsar. As a result, he proclaimed the military and political alliance between the Cossack Hetmanate and the Muscovy. By the agreement of 1654, the Ukrainian territories on East of the Dnieper River came under the rule of the Muscovy. Note here that the Soviet and Russian history viewed this event as an expression of unity between the two peoples. However, for Ukraine, which aspired for an identity distinct from the Russians and was looking for a Central European identity, the Pereyaslav memory was considered disastrous for Ukraine's independent existence. In 2024 in Kyiv the sculptural composition in honor of the Pereiaslav Agreement was removed.⁵⁷

Krypyakevych's works occupy a special place among historical studies of Ukrainian statehood during his time. In his 'Studies on the State of Bohdan Khmelnytsky,' he noted that while old historians paid attention to the destructive side of the popular revolution, a new generation of researchers did not limit themselves to describing the breakdown of the old system, but complemented the picture of Khmelnytsky with the experience of this new state structure. Krypyakevych considered the era of the hetman as the initial period of the organisation of the Cossack state, namely, the military division of the territory. According to him, this was the main reason for both its strength and weakness.

The military organisation was the greatest success of the Cossack state and gained respect for Ukraine throughout Europe – for the Ukrainian state

⁵⁶ Ibid. pp. 205–206.

⁵⁷ Odey and Bassey, 2022, pp. 347–348.

itself, the army was the main force that allowed it to survive politically, despite all external difficulties and internal flaws.⁵⁸

From the very first steps of its independent existence, the Ukrainian state became a political factor in Eastern Europe.

Until now – under Polish rule, Ukraine had been drawn to the Baltic Sea and politically linked to Warsaw; the new Cossack state, severed from these ties, is looking for a new path and is nailing down the great Balkan-Eastern European artery.⁵⁹

Among other negative factors that comprised the young state's weakness were its limited territory, primitive state of the economy, lack of a strong state elite, growth of social conflicts, etc.

In peaceful world times, with a happy relationship with its neighbours, this country could have found a transitional zone, a link between the Balkans and northern Europe; but the Cossack state was created in a time of incessant wars, which exhausted its economic resources and did not and did not allow it to develop fully its productive forces—it was forced to seek support from one of its strong neighbours in order not to become a victim of others.⁶⁰

While all the states of the world were actually built on monarchical and feudal principles, the Cossack state was essentially a republic, as the entire host hierarchy had been elected, economy was based on farming with hired labour, and state formation existed in conditions of constant hostilities. The Cossacks established their 'republic of freedom' because the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a militarily and politically decentralised state. This Cossack 'state' existed within the Polish-Lithuanian Rzeczpospolita. Khmelnytsky recognised the King of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as his ruler, and after 1654, the Russian Tsar. The Polish-Lithuanian state offered the Cossacks the possibility of trialism, i.e. a Polish-Lithuanian-Ruthenian Commonwealth (Hadiach Union, 1658) much too late.⁶¹ Krypyakevych portrays Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky as a strong-willed politician who, for the sake of the cause, could go against the tradition and established order. The rarely convened general Cossack council, remained only a traditional ceremonial act. In the end, Cossack democracy was reduced to autocracy, and by the end of Khmelnytsky's life had become the autocratic lead. However,

58 Крип'якевич [Крып'якевич], 1931, p. 148.

59 Ibid. p. 141.

60 Ibid. pp. 148–149.

61 Snyder, 2003, p. 116.

Krypyakevych still representing the ideal of a united Ukraine, pursued the interests of the state rather than Cossack host elites. Cossack Ukraine, confined within a narrow framework, had to strive for territorial expansion, gathered of all Ukrainian lands of medieval Rus, up to the Vistula.

Interestingly, in all polls in independent Ukraine on ‘the most outstanding Ukrainians of all times,’ despite the variable perception of his persona, Khmelnytsky has always been among the top three. Only after the Russia’s full-scale invasion against Ukraine did he slip to fourth place, behind President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and two 19th century poets, Taras Shevchenko (Kobzar /Ukrainian bard/, founder of modern Ukrainian literature and modern Ukrainian language) and Lesya Ukrainka (one of the most famous Ukrainian women public figures of all time).⁶²

3. Craving for a synthesis of East and West – Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky (1919–1984)

Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky (27 October 1919, Vienna, Austria – 25 April 1984, Edmonton, Canada) was a Ukrainian social and political thought historian, political scientist and publicist. He hailed from a mixed Ukrainian-Jewish family. His parents were political refugees from Galicia. In 1919, Vienna was one of Europe’s most cosmopolitan intellectual centres, and the leaders of the political emigration of the time would meet in his parents’ house.⁶³ Lysiak-Rudnytsky’s father, Pavlo Lysiak, was a Ukrainian lawyer, politician, editor and journalist. His mother, Milena Rudnytska, was also a politician, journalist and civic activist. She was born to Ivan Rudnytsky who was a Ukrainian and Ida Spiegel who was Jewish. Mixed marriages were not uncommon in interwar Galicia, but the Rudnytsky family’s case was exceptional because Ukrainian-Jewish marriages were very rare compared to Polish-Ukrainian or Polish-Jewish ones.⁶⁴ As can be seen from his surname, the fact that he belonged to this family was important to Ivan. His father insisted that he stop using the Rudnytsky surname and use only his father’s surname, but Ivan insisted on using Lysiak-Rudnytsky.⁶⁵

Although Lysiak-Rudnytsky was born in Vienna, he spent only the first two years of his life there. His parents divorced soon after. He lived with his mother and grew up in the house of Ida Spiegel in Lviv. In 1939, on the night of Catholic Christmas, along with his mother Milena, he secretly crossed the German-Soviet border across the San River and ended up in Krakow.⁶⁶ He graduated from the Law

62 People’s top, 2022.

63 Pritsak, 1987, pp. XV–XVI.

64 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2019, p. 89.

65 Ibid. p. 93.

66 Ibid. p. 88.

Faculty of the Lviv University and the Faculty of Foreign Relations of the University of Berlin. In 1945, he defended his doctoral thesis at the Charles University in Prague. In the early 1950s, he moved to the United States. After receiving his degree from Columbia University, he worked at the University of St. La Salle, then the American University of Washington, and since 1971, he has been a professor at the University of Alberta in Canada, where he co-founded the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.

Most of the documents related to the life of Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky were transferred to the archives of the University of Alberta in Edmonton after his death. He kept a diary almost all his life. The diaries of his youth, between the twelfth and nineteenth years of his life (1931–1939), were kept by his widow, Oleksandra Chernenko. After her death in 2014, they became the property of Lysiak-Rudnytsky's son Petro. He handed over scanned copies of these diaries to the Institute of Historical Research at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. The publication of the diaries covers a wide range of events in his biography: life in Lviv in the 1930s, the Ukrainian community in Krakow in 1939–1940, life in Nazi Berlin and occupied Prague in 1940–1945, life in exile in Western Europe and the United States in 1945–1954, and life in Soviet Moscow and Soviet Kyiv in the 1970s.⁶⁷

The youth's diaries reflect details and episodes from his personal life, the life of his family, and the general situation in interwar Galicia.⁶⁸ The diary contains openly anti-Semitic entries, as well as critical characterisations of Ukrainians. The young Lysiak-Rudnytsky's goal was a free Ukraine, stating that *'we will take a place in world culture worthy of a 40-million people,'* i.e., to make Ukraine a full-fledged member of the European community. According to Yaroslav Hrytsak's assessment at the time, his Europe was not a political concept, but rather a *res publica artes liberales*.⁶⁹

According to a 1947 diary entry, in the Eastern European regions—regions occupied by the Bolsheviks.⁷⁰ In one 1948 entry, he placed European solidarity above neutrality: *'I understand the Swiss well – but it is an evil sign for European solidarity if each nation – like Switzerland – puts its own particular interest above the collective interest of the European community.'*⁷¹

In Lysiak-Rudnytsky's deep conviction, Hrushevsky was the first prominent eastern Ukrainian to settle in Galicia, appointed in 1894 to the newly created Ukrainian Chair of East European History at Lviv University. In 1913, his classic *'History of Ukraine-Rus'* comprised eight volumes. Elected as chairman of the reorganised Shevchenko Scientific Society, he elevated the Society to the level of an unofficial Ukrainian academy of sciences. Assessing Ukrainian historiography, Lysiak-Rudnytsky noted the achievement of Mykhailo Hrushevsky and his school in proving the continuity of the Ukrainian historical process from Kyivan Rus to the present,

67 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 2019, p. III.

68 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2019, p. 87.

69 Ibid. pp. 91–92.

70 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 2019, p. 357.

71 Ibid. p. 390.

which elevated the national feeling, since ancient Rus was a period of Kyiv's great power and its hegemony in all of Eastern Europe.⁷² *'Thanks to Hrushevsky's work, we have learnt to see Kyivan Rus as the initial period of our national history.'*⁷³

Lysiak-Rudnytsky clearly traced the evolution of Ukrainian political thought in general, and that of Hrushevsky in particular. He noted:

From the point of view of the historical evolution of Ukrainian political thought, the importance of the events in the fall and winter of 1917 lay in the tremendous shift from federalism to a program of state independence. The federalist concept had already been undermined by the insincere and ambiguous policy of the Provisional Government toward Ukraine. Now Bolshevik aggression delivered the death blow to this traditional Ukrainian ideology.⁷⁴

Hrushevsky termed this great revolution in Ukrainian political thought, that is, the rejection of the orientation towards Moscow and Russia, a 'purification by fire.' *'Hrushevsky's impassioned words illustrate the great change that had occurred in Ukrainian political thinking in the wake of the experiences of 1917.'*⁷⁵

However, Lysiak-Rudnytsky did not ignore the history of Transcarpathia. In particular, his first works on Carpatho-Ukraine appeared in 1939. The journal *Natsija v Pohodi* – Ukrainian language organ of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, printed in Berlin (1939–1941), later moved to Prague – published his article 'Carpatho-Ukraine', 'Legitimacy and Ukrainian Youth', and 'The State Leadership of Ukraine'.⁷⁶ The essay 'Carpatho-Ukraine: a people in search of their identity' provides a brief overview of three national orientations in Transcarpathia (Rusynophile, Russo-ophile, Ukrainophile), focusing on their ideological background. The author noted:

The period of Carpatho-Ukrainian autonomy was to last but a few months, and it ended in mid-March 1939 with the final disintegration of Czechoslovakia and the re-annexation of Carpatho-Ukraine by Hungary. The brief period of autonomy, however, had one lasting and irreversible effect: the mass of Subcarpathia's population became permeated with a Ukrainian national consciousness. [...] It is no exaggeration to say that this 'baptism of fire' put the final seal on the Ukrainian national identity of the land.⁷⁷

In the early 1950s, he even considered writing a dissertation on the history of Transcarpathia, particularly *'the transition of Transcarpathia from Hungary to*

72 Вереш [Vehesh], 2005, p. 178.

73 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 1994, p. 14.

74 L. Rudnytsky, 1987g, pp. 407–408.

75 Ibid.

76 Вереш, 2005, p. 178.

77 L. Rudnytsky, 1987f, p. 371.

*Czechoslovakia [...] on the basis of autonomous diplomatic and legislative acts.*⁷⁸ However, this endeavour did not come to fruition.⁷⁹

An important component of the historiography of the Ukrainian diaspora in the 1950s and 1980s was the attempt to find the future place for the Ukrainian national state within the geopolitical structure of the bipolar Cold War world order. The desire for a synthesis of West and East is best expressed in his famous essay 'Ukraine between East and West'.

Lysiak-Rudnytsky sets himself the task of defining Ukraine 'as a historical entity'. The concept of 'people' is defined through the categories of origin, language, way of life and social system, which gives the people a special 'national character'.⁸⁰ Similarly, nation is 'a phenomenon of the political sphere [...] a collective of people who want to be a state.'⁸¹ The national character formed in the process of historical formation of a nation crystallises at the stage of its political maturity and subsequently shows resistance to disruptive influences, the ability to reject or assimilate them.⁸² Belonging to Europe is not always geographically determined: the Muslim states of medieval Spain, the Ottoman Empire that for centuries occupied most of the European continent, and 'Muscovite Russia' in the 14th and 17th centuries were 'essentially non-European.' 'However, Ukraine's European outlook was strengthened through contacts with, and influences from, other European countries.'⁸³ In this context, Lysiak-Rudnytsky questioned: 'With what part of the European community did Ukraine entertain close relations?'⁸⁴ He went on to answer, stating:

Not with the Atlantic or West European zone. Relations with France and England existed since the times of the Kyivan realm, and can be traced in all other epochs of Ukrainian history, but they always remained rather sporadic. When modern Ukrainians speak of 'Western Europe', they usually refer to the area commonly known as Central Europe, i.e., to the German-speaking lands from the North and Baltic Seas to the Danubian valley. [...] Even closer were the ties with the countries to the east of the German ethnic territory, for which the term 'East-Central Europe' (Ostmitteleuropa) has been coined in scholarly literature: Bohemia, Hungary and especially Poland. Besides them, we must also mention Baltic and Scandinavian areas – Lithuania, with which a direct political tie existed for over two centuries (from the middle of the fourteenth to the middle of the sixteenth centuries), and Sweden, whence came the stimulus for the formation of the Kyivan State.⁸⁵

78 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 2019, p. 589.

79 Ibid.

80 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 1994, p. 11.

81 Ibid. p. 13.

82 L. Rudnytsky, 1987a, p. 1.

83 Ibid. p. 2.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid. pp. 2–3.

The term 'the East' is commonly interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, it refers to the world of Eastern Christianity and the Byzantine cultural tradition, and on the other hand, it describes the world of the nomads of the Eurasian steppes. For Lysiak-Rudnytsky, these are different staircases. Each played a separate role in Ukraine's development. The nomadic peoples of the Great Steppe played the role of a braking factor, causing the decline of the culture of medieval Rus. The centuries-long struggle ended only in the second half of the 18th century, when, after the decline of the Crimean Khanate, the Ukrainian peasantry settled the Black Sea steppes.⁸⁶ Another source of influence from the East is the Byzantine religious and cultural tradition. Being situated between the worlds of Greek-Byzantine and Western cultures and feeling part of both, Ukrainians have sought a synthesis between East and West. It almost achieved this synthesis in the great epochs of its history – during the times of Kyivan Rus and the Cossack period of the 17th century. The conclusion is that

Ukraine, located between the worlds of Greek Byzantine and Western cultures, and a legitimate member of both, attempted, in the course of its history, to unite the two traditions in a living synthesis. This was a great work, although it must be admitted that Ukraine has not fully succeeded in it. The synthesis has been approached in the great epochs of Ukrainian history, in the age of Kyivan Rus' and in seventeenth-century Cossack Ukraine. In both cases, although these epochs were rich in promise and partial achievement, the final synthesis miscarried, and Ukraine succumbed to excessive pressure from the outside, as well as to internal disruptive tendencies. In this sense, it may be said that the great task, which appears to be the historical vocation of the Ukrainian people, remains unfulfilled, and still lies in the future.⁸⁷

In philosophy, Lysiak-Rudnytsky refers, among others, to the works of: German philosopher Georg Hegel, who originated the concept of 'historical' and 'non-historical' nations; Austrian-American historian Robert A. Kann, outstanding authority on nationality problems in the Habsburg Empire, who classifies the peoples of Austria-Hungary into '*the national groups with independent national history*' and '*the national groups without independent national history*';⁸⁸ British historian and political scientist Hugh Seton-Watson, who distinguished between 'the old continuous nations' of Europe and the 'new nations'; and Mykhailo Drahomanov, whose fundamental political thought is conflict between the 'aristocratic' and 'plebeian' nations of Eastern Europe.⁸⁹

86 Ibid. p. 3.

87 Ibid. p. 9.

88 L. Rudnytsky, 1987c, pp. 40–41.

89 Ibid.

The cornerstone of Lysiak-Rudnytsky's historiosophical concept is the interpretation of the Ukrainian nation as non-historical. The notion of a 'non-historical nation,' he notes in his essay 'Observations on the problem of "historical" and "non-historical" nations,' means only that such a nation has experienced deep and long interruptions in its historical development. Statehood is an important criterion, but not the decisive one for the division of historical and non-historical nations,

[...] the decisive factor in the existence of the so-called historical nations was the preservation, despite the loss of independence, of a representative upper class as the carrier of political consciousness and 'high' culture. [...] Conversely, the so-called non-historical nations had lost (or had never possessed) a representative class, and were reduced to an inarticulate popular mass, with little if any national consciousness and with a culture of predominantly folk character. This differentiation is not an arbitrary theoretical construct, for it is grounded in empirical historical reality.⁹⁰

The peculiarity of the Ukrainian situation is that its national existence was interrupted twice: after the Union of Lublin (in 1569 create single state of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, to which a large part territories of modern-day Ukraine belonged) and as a result of the liquidation of Cossack Ukraine. According to Lysiak-Rudnytsky, the Ukrainian nation has already died twice and been reborn twice.⁹¹ Each time, state projects had to be started from scratch.⁹² The essay 'The role of Ukraine in modern history' emphasises that: *'The character of modern Ukrainian history changes definitely after 1917. The making of the nation was basically completed during the revolutionary years 1917–1920.'*⁹³

The essay 'The Intellectual Origins of Modern Ukraine' describes the process of Ukrainian national revival as follows:

Though the destruction of the Cossack state and the Russification of the Cossack aristocracy had reduced Ukraine to the level of a politically amorphous ethnic mass, now, from this mass, the Ukrainian nation was beginning to re-emerge. [...] When the First World War started, the Ukrainian movement in Russia already presented a factor of real power, but it was still only a 'movement'. It was not as yet a crystallized nation, as were the Poles, Czechs, or Finns. It was during the Revolution that the modern Ukrainian nation was created.⁹⁴

90 Ibid. pp. 41–42.

91 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 1994, p. 18.

92 Ibid. p. 21.

93 L. Rudnytsky, 1987b, p. 14.

94 L. Rudnytsky, 1987e, pp. 139–140.

Here it is worth making a small digression, so as not to be misunderstood, because today's Russian official policy, which launched a full-scale invasion against Ukraine in early 2022, is based, among other things, on the fact that the modern Ukrainian state was created thanks to the Bolsheviks. Rather, it was against the will of the Bolsheviks, as a direct reaction to the Bolshevik coup in Petrograd in October 1917 (November according to the Gregorian calendar), who tried to take control of Kiev but were defeated, thus starting the process of modern Ukrainian state-building. Our author also refers to this interpretation.

Lysiak-Rudnytsky concludes that it would be a mistake to think that there was no genetic connection between the three phases of the Ukrainian nation's existence. On the contrary, when we speak of breaks and revivals, we accept that these were the processes of one subject: the Ukrainian nation in its formation.⁹⁵

The concept of nationalism is also a mainstay in Lysiak-Rudnytsky's political studies. In the Ukrainian political terminology of the late 19th century, it was understood as active national consciousness and patriotism, and during the liberation struggle – independence. When an ideological current and a corresponding political movement emerged in the 1920s, the concept of nationalism acquired a party colouring. Therefore, Lysiak-Rudnytsky differentiates nationalism: in a broad interpretation (patriotism, independence); in a narrow interpretation (political movement – integral nationalism).⁹⁶ Nationalists often cherished myths and drew attention to the cult of struggle. Lysiak-Rudnytsky promoted a new type of Ukrainian: a strong man with an unbending character, fanatically devoted to the ideals of the movement, and ready to sacrifice himself and others for them, possessing nationalism subordinated traditional moral virtues to the requirements of political expediency ('the end sanctifies the means'), and rejecting political values beyond the national interest.⁹⁷ World War II was the period of the nationalist movement's greatest rise and, at the same time, its organisational and ideological crisis. According to Lysiak-Rudnytsky, the ideological evolution of any political camp requires an honest reckoning with its own past, which did not occur. Instead, a series of tragedies in the history of Ukrainians in 1941–1944 occurred. He blames the leaders of nationalist organisations for not condemning the genocide of Jews and warning Ukrainians against complicity in Nazi atrocities.⁹⁸

The end of World War II brought '*the consolidation of all lands of Ukrainian speech into one Ukrainian body politic*'.⁹⁹ In his vision of future trends in the development of Ukrainian society, Lysiak-Rudnytsky attributes a primary role to overcoming the dichotomy of Eastern and Western Ukraine, and consolidating Ukrainian lands into a single state body. He considers the Left-bank Ukraine [the left (east) bank of the Dnieper River], Sloboda Ukraine [region in the eastern part of Ukraine and

95 Лисяк-Рудницький [Lysiak-Rudnytsky], 1994, p. 21.

96 Діптан [Dyptan], 2020, p. 69.

97 Ibid. p. 70.

98 Ibid. pp. 71–72.

99 L. Rudnytsky, 1987b, p. 33.

the border regions of the Russian Federation], Southern Ukraine, the Right-bank Ukraine [the right (west) bank of the Dnieper River], Galicia and Bukovina to be the core of the Ukrainian world, and the Kuban, Chełm and Transcarpathia to comprise the peripheral lands. In his essay ‘Trends in Ukrainian political thought’ he emphasised:

In view of the country’s precarious geographical location, its political survival will depend on Ukrainians’ ability to resolve their internal differences amicably and to maintain a reasonable degree of solidarity against foreign threats and pressures. Civil wars are a luxury that Ukraine can ill afford.¹⁰⁰

Therefore Lysiak-Rudnytsky, in his historical analyses, essentially pointed at particular features of the historic development of Ukraine and the Ukrainians inhabiting the territories between the civilization influences of the East and the West. He concluded that the Ukrainians had always craved a synthesis of the East and West, and Ukraine had always been ‘a classical land of union freedom’.¹⁰¹

4. Ukraine than the (eternal) Gate of Europe – Serhii Plokyh (1957–)¹⁰²

Serhii Plokyh /Plokhii/ (23 May 1957, Nizhnii Novgorod, Soviet Union /now Russia/) is a Ukrainian and American Historian. He lives and works in the USA, and is considered one of the leading specialists in the early modern and modern history of Ukraine and Eastern Europe. According David Cutler, Plokyh ‘*represents the frontier of contemporary studies in the history of Ukraine and its environs.*’¹⁰³ He has authored many historical and journalistic works that have been translated into numerous languages.

Plokyh spent his childhood in Ukraine, attended school in Zaporizhzhya, and graduated from Dnipropetrovsk University (now



¹⁰⁰ L. Rudnytsky, 1987d, p. 88.

¹⁰¹ Zashkilnyak, 2015, pp. 48–49.

¹⁰² Historian Serhii Plokyh during the presentation of his award-winning book “The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union” on the Shevchenko Scientific Society (Toronto) in the KUMF Gallery on April 20, 2015. Author: Mykola Swarnyk, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plokyh_NTSh_Toronto.JPG.

¹⁰³ Cf. Woloschuk, 2007, p. 10.

city named Dnipro). He defended his candidate degree at the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia in Moscow, and doctorate in history at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. In 1983–1992 he taught at Dnipropetrovsk University, and in 1991 he came to Canada to work at the University of Alberta. Since 1996, he has been at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. In 2007, he was appointed of Ukrainian history at Department of History of the Harvard University, since 2013 director of the Ukrainian Research Institute of the Harvard University. The historian has also become a major media personality thanks to social networking, YouTube and other media platforms.

To develop a new perspective of Ukrainian history, Plokhy used a transnational approach based on its consideration as a civilizational and cultural frontier, a kind of contact zone between Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁰⁴ He believes that it is necessary to rethink Ukraine's history in order to overcome the limitations imposed on it by the imperial and then national paradigms. This will help integrate the Ukrainian past into the history of Eastern Europe and the entire continent. He notes that national minorities should be included in this new narrative of Ukrainian history as part of the collective 'we', an important element of Ukrainian history that distinguished it from the history of other lands. Writing a multi-ethnic history of Ukraine is one way to overcome the ganja of the national narrative.

After all, writing national history in today's context means reinforcing the isolationism and provincialism that Eastern European historiography has been subjected to during the decades of the Iron Curtain. The new nations of Eastern Europe want to be part of a united Europe, and their young historians are eager to find their place in the European and global historical community.¹⁰⁵

Plokhy also pointed out that today's world has brought new challenges. In particular, it is difficult to be heard amidst the barrage of information spam that prevails today. Plokhy noted the important role of social media and recommended that historians consider this aspect. He called on history experts to become a moral authority with tens of thousands of followers who will read them and listen to their opinions.¹⁰⁶

In his monograph 'The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union'¹⁰⁷ Plokhy referred to declassified documents and original interviews with key participants. In his opinion, the collapse was part of the process of disintegration of multinational states or empires that began after the First World War.

104 Верменич [Vermenych], 2013, p. 5.

105 Плохий [Plokhy], 2013, p. 5.

106 Cf. Місія історика в сучасних умовах [Misija istoryka v suchasnyh umovah], 2019.

107 Plokhy, 2015a.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, German reunification under way, and Mikhail Gorbachev adopting the [jokingly named after Frank Sinatra popular song ‘May way’] ‘Sinatra doctrine,’ which allowed Moscow’s East European clients to ‘do it their way’ and eventually leave the Kremlin’s embrace, the conflict at the core of the Cold War was resolved.¹⁰⁸

The United States had a completely negative attitude to the idea of the Soviet Union’s collapse, mainly because of fears of ethnic conflicts, wars between republics with nuclear weapons, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Simultaneously, the Baltic and Ukrainian communities in the United States were mobilising, and pressuring the White House through the House of Representatives and the Senate. Finally, the US administration compromised: the Baltic republics could secede, but the Soviet Union must remain intact; the United States would not support – on the words of US President George Bush in Kyiv (known as ‘Chicken Kiev’ speech) – ‘suicidal nationalism based upon ethnic hatred.’¹⁰⁹

The changes came in the days of the Ukrainian independence referendum on 1 December 1991, ‘*the Ukrainian factor would dramatically change the balance of forces between the republics, their relations with Gorbachev, and Bush’s relations with the Soviet leader.*’¹¹⁰ From this point for the West, the question was ‘*not whether to recognize Ukraine, but how and when,*’¹¹¹ while Gorbachev still thought, that Ukraine and Russia ‘*[t]hese two nations are branches of the same tree. No one will be able to tear them apart.*’¹¹²

For the first ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world was effectively unipolar. The question for Ukraine was whether it could be a federal state. Plokhy believes that the Crimea gained autonomy in early 1991, which ‘*envied by local elites in the Transcarpathian oblast [...] They, too, wanted autonomy. Odesa in the south and the Donbas coal region in the east were prime candidates for similar status.*’¹¹³ Plokhy notes that neighbouring countries reacted differently. In his view Hungary’s elites ‘*were not making any claims on current Ukrainian territories.*’¹¹⁴ Federalism becoming a ‘dirty word’¹¹⁵ in the Ukraine.

Plokhy’s book *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*¹¹⁶ begins with the establishment of terms denoting the nationality of the inhabitants of Eastern Europe. The term ‘Rus’ was introduced to Eastern Europe by the Vikings, and was adopted by Slavic inhabitants along with newcomer princes and warriors, who were quickly

108 Ibid. pp. 4–5.

109 Ibid. p. 64.

110 Ibid. p. 255.

111 Ibid. p. 264.

112 Ibid. p. 260.

113 Ibid. p. 282.

114 Ibid. p. 283.

115 Ibid. p. 282.

116 Plokhy, 2015b.

Slavicized. After the collapse of Kyivan Rus and the absorption of its lands by neighbouring states, the local population was referred to as ‘Rusyns’ in the Kingdom of Poland, ‘Ruthenians’ in the Austrian Empire, and ‘Little Russians’ in the Russian Empire. In the nineteenth century, the leaders of the Ukrainian national movement did not recognise their Little Russian identity and turned the medieval place name ‘Ukraine’ into an ethnotoponym.¹¹⁷ In the book, Plokhy uses the term ‘Rus’ mainly in relation to the medieval period, ‘Rusyns’ to Ukrainians of the early modern period, and ‘Ukrainians’ when writing about the modern period. Since the proclamation of the independent Ukrainian state in 1991, all citizens are considered Ukrainian, regardless of ethnicity, as this has been the norm in Western academic historiography.¹¹⁸ *‘Nation is an important – although not dominant – category of analysis and element of the story that, along with ever changing idea of Europe, defines the nature of this narrative,’* Plokhy concludes.¹¹⁹

The book title, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine*, is explained as follows:

The title [...] is of course a metaphor, but not one to be taken lightly or dismissed as a marketing gimmick. Europe is an important part of the Ukrainian story, as Ukraine is part of the European one. Located at the western edge of the Eurasian steppe, Ukraine has been a gateway to Europe for many centuries. Sometimes, when the ‘gates’ were closed as a result of wars and conflicts, Ukraine helped stop foreign invasions east and west; when they were open, as was the case for most of Ukraine’s history, it served as a bridge between Europe and Eurasia, facilitating the interchange of people, goods, and ideas. Through the centuries, Ukraine has also been a meeting place (and a battleground) of various empires, Roman to Ottoman, Habsburg to Romanov. In the eighteenth century, Ukraine was ruled from St. Petersburg and Vienna, Warsaw and Istanbul. In the nineteenth century, only the first two capitals remained. In the second half of the twentieth, only Moscow ruled supreme over most of the Ukrainian lands. Each of the empires claimed land and booty, leaving its imprint on the landscape and the character of the population and helping to form its unique frontier identity and ethos.¹²⁰

The pre-revolutionary Russian Empire questioned not only the existence of Ukrainians, but also their national statehood. However, in the Soviet empire, the Bolsheviks recognised the existence of peoples separate from the Russians – the Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples. Each of them gained national statehood, and with it the right to their own history. This was significant progress compared to the pre-revolutionary situation. However, in order to prevent possible manifestations

117 Plokhy, 2015b, p. xxiii.

118 Ibid. pp. xxiii-xxiv.

119 Ibid. p. xxi.

120 Ibid. p. xxi.

of separatism, the Kremlin repeatedly resorted to repression. Plokyh's popular book was written in 2014–2015, during the first stage of Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict in the east of the country, when the President of the Russian Federation reiterated that Ukrainians and Russians are 'one people'.¹²¹ The forced partitioning of the Cossack state between Muscovy and Poland (1667), and Russia's victory over Sweden at Poltava (1709), as well as the further incorporation of Ukraine's eastern half as 'Little Russia' forged an enduring narrative about the Kyivan origins of Russian nation. Plokyh's merit, states Elizabeth Jones, is that standard accounts of European nationalism rarely touch on Eastern Europe, but this book outlines that history in detail precisely in this context.¹²²

In the context of the Russian–Ukrainian war, which began in 2014, Plokyh notes that the perception of Ukrainians constituents of the Russian nations originates in the perpetuating myth of modern Russia about Kyiv as the 'mother of Russian cities'.¹²³ Ukrainian territories have always been located between Russia and the West, and when the moment of choice came, Ukrainians chose the West in protest against Ukraine's constant identification with Russia: in 1991, masse to vote for independence, in 2004 the Orange Revolution (1st Maidan Revolution) '*gave a common name to a number of 'colour revolutions' that shook authoritarian regimes*', which '*did not change the post-Soviet world, but they left [...] the hope that it would change one day*', and at the turn of 2013–2014 the Euromaidan or Revolution of Dignity (2nd Maidan Revolution) they took to the cold streets for Europe at a time '*when enthusiasm for the European Union was at a low ebb among its member countries*'. Then in spring 2014 the annexation of Ukrainian Crimea and starting Russia's hybrid military campaign in the Donbas region of Ukraine '*causing politicians to speak of a 'battle for the future of Europe' and a return of the Cold War in the very part of the world where it had allegedly ended in 1991*'.¹²⁴

In 1989, Mikhail Gorbachev created a concept 'Common European Home', which '*rules out the probability of an armed clash and the very possibility of the use of force or threat of force – alliance against alliance, inside the alliances, wherever*'.¹²⁵ The watershed outlined by Plokyh between Europe and non-Europe ('Russian world') has every chance of taking root for a long time in the Ukrainian and Western mentality, burying the dream of Greater Europe. On 22 March 2022, the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy used Plokyh's metaphor of the 'gateway to Europe' in his address to Italian parliamentarians, stating: '*Ukraine is the gateway to Europe for Russian troops*'.¹²⁶

In response to a question by journalists in January 2023 on whether Ukraine will remain a frontier area between two civilizations, Plokyh noted that since the

121 Кульчицький [Kulchytsky], 2016, pp. 202–203.

122 Jones, 2022.

123 Plokyh, 2015b, p. 350.

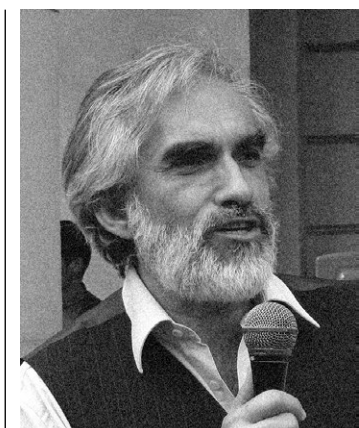
124 Ibid. p. xx.

125 Gorbachev's address to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, 1989.

126 Address by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, 2022.

Second World War, the Russian-Ukrainian War is the largest military and political conflict in Europe, the first example in Europe since 1945 of the annexation of the territory of one state by another. It marked the end of the period of ‘long peace’ after the Cold War, a restructuring of relations in Europe and the world in terms of relations between Europe and Russia, and a major change for Ukraine. In his opinion, Ukraine has become a Central European state in many ways by that became an EU candidate, to being the most NATO-integrated country in the world, even compared to NATO countries, *‘because they all fight to their national standard, and we have mastered the standards of many NATO countries.’*¹²⁷

5. Ukraine, which could be a new Central European tiger – Yaroslav Hrytsak (1960–)¹²⁸



Yaroslav Hrytsak (1 January 1960, Dovhe, Soviet Union /now Ukraine/) is one of the most prominent Ukrainian historians, publicists, editors, and bloggers. He believes it is important not only to cultivation science in the strictest sense, but also to science popularization as widely as possible, as he calls himself – ‘public historian’. He graduated in history from Ivan Franko State University of Lviv. Hrytsak’s career as a historian was launched by a project led by Professor Jerzy Kłoczowski at the Catholic University of Lublin. In the early 1990s, Kłoczowski commissioned young Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Belarusian historians to rewrite the history of their nations.

It was here that he first encountered the Western historiography methodology. His obtained scientific degrees obtained from here, as well as the Institute of Ukrainian Archeography of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. In Lviv, Hrytsak is a professor of the Ukrainian Catholic University and director of the Institute for Historical Studies of Ivan Franko National University. He has taught at several universities abroad, including the Central European University in Budapest.

The origin of the name ‘Ukraine’ has been of interest to many generations of historians. The name originates from the general Slavic word for ‘borderland, outskirts’. Hrytsak notes, that ‘Ukraine’ could refer to both the country and this outskirts.

127 Портников [Portnykov], 2023.

128 Yaroslav Hrytsak, Ukrainian historian, publicist, editor, blogger. Yaroslav Hrytsak gives a lecture “How to overcome history?” at the first class of the street university in Lviv on 22.04.2012. Author: Volodymyr_F. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%D0%AF%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2_%D0%93%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B0%D0%BA.JPG.

To say that Ukraine is an ‘outskirt’ of Russia is a fundamental misconception. It is based on the wrong assumption that all words have one and only one meaning. We know that this is not the case. The word ‘Ukraine’ has two meanings. Literally speaking, it is a cut-off territory [...]. The meaning of this word depends on the perspective – from where do you look at this land? If you look at these territories from the outside, relatively speaking, from the perspective of Warsaw or Moscow, this is the ‘outskirts’. If you look from the inside, it is your country.¹²⁹

He adds that this is not an exceptional case, citing the origin of Germany’s name as an example. *‘The word ‘Deutschland’ comes from the self-name of the local tribes, the Old Germanic word ‘diutisc’, and this word means ‘local [people]’. That is, Deutschland is a country of local people.’*¹³⁰

Hrytsak also addresses the issue of borders. He notes that *‘the main principle of modern Europe is that borders are inviolable.’* Adding that these borders *‘are imperfect, we don’t like them, but they are inviolable.’*¹³¹ While the Russia of today is looking everywhere for ‘Russian perpetual territories,’ the other former empires are not living in the past. The wisest of all was the Polish politician and public figure Jerzy Giedroyc, an opponent of mutual territorial and other claims, and publicist, political commentator Juliusz Mieroszewski. *‘In the 1950s, there was an elite that said that for the good of the Polish cause, it was necessary to recognise that Vilnius is a Lithuanian city and Lviv is a Ukrainian city,’*¹³² states Hrytsak. In 1977, Giedroyc initiated the ‘Declaration on the Ukrainian Cause,’ which was signed by Russian, Polish, Hungarian, and Czech dissidents and activists. They demanded self-determination for Ukraine and solidarity with the struggle for Ukraine’s state independence.¹³³ Jerzy Giedroyc and Juliusz Mieroszewski (leading figures of the Polish emigration in Paris) argued that the Central and Eastern European states should abandon the ‘historical–legal’ argument, and territorial claims, as these only weaken common security. They believed in a future historic moment when the societies of the ULB countries (Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus) could demand either autonomy or independence.¹³⁴

The concept of ‘two Ukraines’ created by the Ukrainian public intellectual Mykola Ryabchuk in 1992, provoked a really wide reaction. One answer was given by Hrytsak, response to Ryabchuk’s metaphor the concept of ‘twenty-two Ukraines’.¹³⁵ Ryabchuk claiming that the border of the former Russian Empire has left an eternal mark on the mentality of different parts of the country, making regional identities

129 Єрмоленко [Jermolenko], 2019, p. 76.

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid. p. 86.

132 Ibid. p. 87.

133 Шаповал [Shapoval], 2017.

134 Turkowski, 2019.

135 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2002.

a threat to statehood. In contrast, in Hrytsak's essay Ukraine's regional diversity presented as a resource that contributes to the country's sustainability.

Hrytsak authored the first popular history of Ukraine, 'An outline of the history of Ukraine. Formation of a Modern Nation in the XIX–XX Centuries,' whose first edition was published in 1996.¹³⁶ He reduces the entire modern history of Ukraine to the formation of the Ukrainian nation, whose geographical and political location, as well as borderline between the Catholic and Orthodox worlds, has determined its peculiarity. As he later stated in a 2019 interview: 'Ukraine was a Big Frontier, Big Borderland.'¹³⁷ Published a quarter of a century later, in 2022, also its other popular book 'Overcoming the past: the global history of Ukraine'¹³⁸ questioned whether it is possible to 'overcome' the past – to go beyond national history and 'reboot' the country. According to Hrytsak, Ukraine's goal should be to join countries with open access and sustainable development, i.e. the idea of Europe must be deeply embedded.

In his essay 'Eastern Europe as an Intellectual Construction' back in 2011, Hrytsak wryly observed '*[a] spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of Orientalism.*' This is the spectre whose '*intellectual shadow makes all the happy inhabitants west of the Elbe laugh or (depending on their professed moral principles and upbringing) to unravel at the savagery and poverty of their eastern neighbours.*' Meanwhile

[e]ach of the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe has a tradition in its intellectual history of presenting itself and its culture as the last bastion of Europe, beyond whose extreme borders – the San River [Ukrainian-Polish border river], Mukachevo [more precisely: Veretsky] Pass, or *Khutor* Mikhailovsky [railway junction on the Ukrainian-Russian border] – stretches the vast Asian spaces.¹³⁹

For a long time, 'Eastern Europe' has been used to express the 'otherness' of the territory between Europe and the East. In the autumn of 2014 in Lviv, prominent experts on the region – American historians Mark von Hagen and Frank Sysyn, Swiss historian Andreas Kappeler and Yaroslav Hrytsak – debated whether the concept of 'Eastern Europe' still has a *raison d'être* in the light of the war in Donbass, and if so, what the same should include.¹⁴⁰

All of them stressed that Eastern Europe is a concept that changes in time and space. Kappeler pointed out that until the beginning of the 19th century, the East–West division made no sense, and the North–South division prevailed, with the South representing the civilized world. Simultaneously, 'Eastern Europe' began to be subdivided into smaller regions. Sysyn pointed out that the concept of 'Central Europe' as such had been domesticated by Oskar Halecki's 'Borderlands of Western

136 Грицак [Hrytsak], 1996.

137 Yermolenko, 2019.

138 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2022.

139 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2001, pp. 17–21.

140 Reichardt, 2014.

Civilization: A History of East Central Europe' (1950), who based his theory on the fact that the Ukrainian and Belarusian territories of today's Rzeczpospolita were not part of the Russian civilizational space. 'West Central Europe' never gained a right to exist, but 'East Central Europe' did. The war will change that, and answer the question of whether the eastern edge of Ukraine is really part of the whole Ukrainian cultural sphere. 'East-Central Europe' is now a 'privileged club,' with a ticket to the European Community. Hagen drew attention to the concept of a 'New Eastern Europe,' by Robert Seton-Watson, who was a supporter of Czechoslovak and Polish independence and was able to influence US President Woodrow Wilson, and who was responsible for the peace plan that ended the First World War. This 'New Eastern Europe,' however, ended in the Second World War and was consigned to the dustbin. In wartime Ukraine, two competing ideals clashed: a cosmopolitan, inclusive and democratic Europe, with open borders; and a Europe based on conservative values and the preservation of order and discipline. Hrytsak's distinctive view is that both the North-South and East-West divisions are ancient to humanity, constantly changing but with a current content:

Ask any driver crossing the Polish-Ukrainian border if Eastern Europe exists. [...] the most visible criteria that could be used nowadays to determine where Eastern Europe starts would be GDP per capita or other related indices that reflect standards of living. [...] In many ways, the reason why 'Eastern Europe' is seen as a pejorative term [...] This negative association with the term is thus now a challenge for countries such as Ukraine.¹⁴¹

Hrytsak concludes that the Ukrainian revolutions, especially Euromaidan (2nd Maidan Revolution), played a significant role in the change, which differs from other protests in Eastern Europe in that it was successful, thanks to the nationalism factor. *'We cannot discount the role of the nationalist groups in the Euromaidan Revolution,'*¹⁴² he notes. *'Here is the irony of the situation that has been noted by a Russian observer: nationalists can make a revolution succeed – but they cannot win over a revolution.'*¹⁴³

Hrytsak's view of the Habsburg heritage is also interesting. Galicia serves as a common point in the history of Austria and Ukraine. According American historian Larry Wolff, the 'revindicated, invented, and recast'¹⁴⁴ Galicia was born out of the first partition of Poland in 1772. The name comes from the approximation of the names of two historical areas – the Habsburg possession of Galicia in northern Spain and Halych Principality of the medieval Kyivan Rus. For over 146 years, this Austrian Galicia was a single province, and was then dissolved as a result of Poland regaining independence in 1918. In 1945, Eastern Galicia became part of

141 Ibid. p. 56.

142 Ibid. p. 58.

143 Ibid. p. 59.

144 Wolff, 2010, p. 32.

Soviet-Ukraine, and now independent Ukraine. This, Galicia existed twice as long as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia or Soviet Union. Based on Wolff's opinion, Hrytsak idealises the 'happy granny Austria.' His view is that although Austria was not as good, successful and tolerant as it is even portrayed in the literature, at the same time, it also was. He stated:

However, Austria was definitely better for Ukrainians than anything that came after it. [...] In addition, belonging to the Habsburg space was an entry ticket to European integration. This is a reason to say that we have already belonged, and therefore have a full right to belong to Europe now. The best prototype of the European Union, even before the European Union itself, was Austria-Hungary, where you could travel from Lviv to Trieste without a foreign passport. [...] Austrian Galicia was a real laboratory for national movements at that time. It is for all of these reasons that such a strong mark emerges. To this day, in both Lviv and Krakow, everything beautiful and of high quality is deliberately called 'Galician.' This is a mark of the Austrian era.¹⁴⁵

The label of Austrian Galicia is one of modernisation, with a West-East dimension: The West, where all this has long existed, and the East, where it has not yet. *'For us, this Austrian label is a symbol of the fact that we have already been there in the West, and therefore have the right to return there.'*¹⁴⁶

In 2014, in the aftermath of Euromaidan – that he thinks it should be called 'the revolution of values'¹⁴⁷ – Hrytsak published a small book, 'The 26th percentile, or how to overcome history,' in which he synthesises and presents his earlier ideas on modernisation in a new form. *'There is a huge demand for renewal in society today.'*¹⁴⁸ The author's starting point is that one cannot look at Ukraine without incredulity. Its territory is larger than that of France, its population is about the same as that of Spain, and its standard of living is on a par with Trinidad and Tobago. Yet, Ukraine has everything it takes to be a rich country and its people are well-off. So where lies the fault?

The first reason is statelessness, which occurred after the break-up of the Kyivan Rus. *'The state is always associated with force and violence.'*¹⁴⁹ *'Geopolitics, like nature, does not tolerate emptiness.'*¹⁵⁰

The second is the question of the nation. Hrytsak cites Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary as examples of the national state (with opposing nation-state). Some argue that states without a large national population or those that assimilate are the most successful. Some Ukrainians share this view and look

145 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2017.

146 Ibid.

147 Грицак [Hrytsak], 2014, p. 9.

148 Ibid. p. 5.

149 Ibid. p. 16.

150 Ibid. p. 17.

to their neighbours. However, this view is incorrect: only a fraction of the world's countries is ethnically homogeneous. Besides, not only 'objective' perceptions (census data) whereby two thirds of Ukraine's population consist of Ukrainian, but also 'subjective' factors, based on sociological surveys, show that the majority of Ukrainians feel Ukrainian, patriotic and are even prepared to fight for their country. Today, i.e. in the mid-2010s, Ukrainian society is much more united than it was in 1991, the year of state independence and the referendum; *'Ukraine is splintering, but not splitting.'*¹⁵¹

The third factor is historical tradition. The example of Italy's administrative reform in the 1970s is used to depict why such reform was successful in the north and not in the south. Ukraine, too has a strong regional division, and one might think that the differences arising from historical traditions are as great as that in the example of Italy. However, this is incorrect; it is clear that the difference between Lviv and Donetsk is smaller than between Lviv and Wrocław in Poland. The common denominator of Ukrainian regions, poverty, is in direct proportion to the level of corruption: the poorer the region, the higher the corruption.

The fourth factor relates asking the right questions. *'Ukrainian historians have been wrestling with the Ukrainian past for more than a hundred years.'*¹⁵² It is no coincidence, Hrytsak believes, that the first volume of Mykhailo Hrushevsky's fundamental *'History of Ukraine-Rus'* began with a quote from the Holy Scriptures: *'Know the truth, and it shall make you free'* (John 8:32). Ukrainian historians, however, were not up to the task, and as a result, the Ukrainian people remained invisible. Quoting the British and Polish historian Norman Davis, Hrytsak points out that this is not because historians are unprepared, but because foreign historians wrote about them (Ukrainians) as Poles or Russians when they did something good, and then the term Ukrainians was used when they did something bad. And Ukrainian historians constantly struggled to separate Ukrainian history from that of neighbouring peoples, to reveal its self-worth. The question was wrongly asked, *'[t]he Ukrainian nation should not be rebuilt, but modernised,'*¹⁵³ which cannot be imagined in any other way than a radical departure from the national paradigm. Modernisation is first and foremost about overcoming poverty, avoiding the pitfalls inherent in moving away from traditional societies. If we want to progress, he notes, we must orient ourselves towards the West. His main conclusion is that *'Modernisation should not be lost in the building or completion of the Ukrainian nation. Ukraine has exactly as much nation as it needs. It is not the nation that needs to be built or rebuilt, but Ukraine itself.'* On this road *'European integration is not a goal, but a tool.'*¹⁵⁴ And the goal is *'We want to join the countries of the rich club, where 25th percentile of the world's population lives. That is, to become the 26th percentile.'*¹⁵⁵

151 Ibid. p. 22.

152 Ibid. p. 28.

153 Ibid. p. 30.

154 Ibid. p. 118.

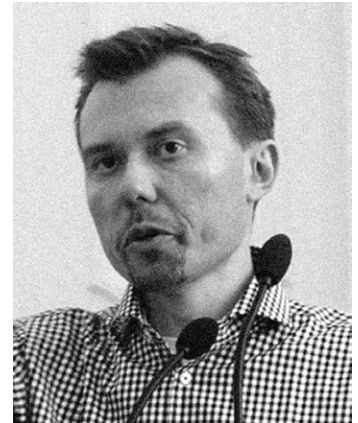
155 Ibid. p. 120.

This was Hrytsak's thinking in 2014, at the start of the Russian-Ukrainian war, and is an interesting comparison to his thoughts in 2022. In a May 2022 interview, he said that there are two competing models in the modern world: the West and the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). Both are based on the free market; the difference is that the latter lacks political freedoms. While Ukraine might have been better off economically in alliance with the latter in the short term, it chose freedom instead. The war that was a result of this decision has a broader implication than merely the question of Ukraine's future; rather, it will dictate the future model of the world. In Hrytsak's optimistic opinion, in the area between the Baltic and Black Seas, Ukraine could be the regional leader, alongside Poland, and thereby be considered a 'new Central European tiger'.

Strange as it may sound, I wished for a crisis in the West. Crisis is the only thing that can shake the West up and awaken it. [...] every European crisis ends with a solution that sets a new direction in the world. This crisis is different because Ukraine has finally become part of this solution. Previously, Ukraine was bracketed out—it belonged to the Russian sphere, and the West could not or did not want to deal with it. Now the situation is entirely different.¹⁵⁶

6. Return to Europe – Andrii Portnov (1979–)¹⁵⁷

Andrii Portnov (17 May 1979, Dnipropetrovsk /now Dnipro/, Soviet Union /now Ukraine/) is a Ukrainian historian, editor, videoblogger, and public intellectual. He graduated from Dnipropetrovsk University and Warsaw University, and defended his academic degree at the Ivan Kryp'yakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Lviv. He has been a researcher at Ukrainian academic institutions and many foreign universities and scientific institutes. Currently, he serves as Chair Professor of Entangled History of Ukraine at the European University



¹⁵⁶ Мысаева and Алиев [Musajeva and Alijev], 2022.

¹⁵⁷ Andrii Portnov, Ukrainian historian, editor, videoblogger, public intellectual, 7 December 2015, author: Nemtsev, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International, source of the picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Andrey_Portnov_in_December_2015.jpg.

Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder), and as Director of the Prisma Ukraïna Research Network Eastern Europe in Berlin.

Andrii Portnov's book 'Between "Central Europe" and the "Russian world"' was published in 2009.¹⁵⁸ The essays in this book deal with various attempts to conceptualise the history and contemporary problems of the region, which some refer to as 'post-communist countries,' others as 'Central and Eastern Europe,' and which the Russian nationalist approach terms the 'Russian world.' With the accession of the former Central and Eastern European socialist countries to the European Union, historical research related to the reassessment of the Soviet heritage has intensified.

Portnov writes that in the early 1990s, a large number of political scientists and historians were optimistic about the emerging post-communist states in Eastern Europe. According to the theory of transformation, the democratisation of political systems, liberalisation of economic relations, and cultural openness to the world, would allow the former Soviet republics to adapt quickly to the new rules of the game. Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history' thesis (1989), i.e. the complete triumph of democracy and liberalism in the world, was taken at face value by many. However, these illusions were dashed in a very short time. The post-communist countries were found to be unequally prepared, unequally capable of transformation, and the communist elites proved excellent at using the mimicry technique, not only to maintain but also increase their influence in some cases.¹⁵⁹

Portnov takes stock of the discourses and interpretations of history in the region, which some summarise as 'post-communist countries,' others as 'Central and Eastern Europe,' and still others as the 'Russian world.' Each territorial-geographical division carries with it a kind of evaluation under the guise of neutrality. However, neither a photograph nor a geographical concept can be considered neutral. With regard to the latter, Portnov cites the example that what is 'Transcarpathia' to Ukrainians is 'Subcarpathia' to Hungarians. Therefore, the division of the world into different regions is never neutral. This now commonplace statement has gradually seeped into academic discourse. According to Portnov, whenever we consider the mental division of Europe into 'West' and 'East' – which has replaced the North–South division (Russia, for example, gradually migrated from 'North' to 'East' in this concept) – the fact remains that after the Second World War this division became axiomatic in Western thinking. Civilizational values were associated with the West, while Eastern Europe remained a transitional zone between the Western power structure and Eastern autocracy.¹⁶⁰

Within this space, the creation of the concept of Central Europe is one of the most successful products of twentieth century political thought. It was only in the 1970s and 1980s that the concept really gained currency, thanks in particular to

158 Портнов [Portnov], 2009.

159 Ibid. p. 4.

160 Ibid. pp. 7–10.

the Czech novelist Milan Kundera, who placed Central Europe in the European cultural space. However, this conceptualisation was betrayed by the West in Yalta in 1945 when it was thrown into the hands of Soviet-Russian communism. Kundera considered the Soviet empire to be 'Eastern Europe' and presented 'Central Europe' as part of Western civilization.¹⁶¹

Quoting the British historian Timothy Garton Ash – *'Tell me your Central Europe and I will tell you who you are.'*¹⁶² – Portnov takes up the question of Ukraine in the conceptualisation of European regions. He notes that, among other things, Ukrainian history is completely absent from European historical syntheses, the only exception being Norman Davies' book (*'Europe: A History,'* 1996), and the Polish tradition, which considers Ukraine to belong, at least in part, to Central Europe. In 1994, Jerzy Kłoczowski, the founder of the Institute for Central and Eastern Europe in Poland, wrote that Ukraine has belonged to Europe since the adoption of Christianity.¹⁶³

The Poles' concept of Central and Eastern Europe could not be left unanswered by the Russians, especially considering that they felt excluded from this space. For the Russians, Kundera's delimitation of cultural borders was particularly offensive, because it deprived Russia of the opportunity to portray itself a victim of communism as well. According to Russian and American poet and essayist Yosif Brodsky, the communist regime was as much a product of Western rationalism as of Eastern emotional radicalism, and Eastern European intellectuals were victims of the geopolitical concept that divided Europe into East and West. Therefore, the concept of Central Europe is nothing other than a desire to become part of the West. The Russian historian Alexei Miller – who is a former lecturer at the Central European University (CEU), and now lives and works in Germany – argues that the concept of Central Europe was ordered by the West, and that the Kundera's essays are propaganda material, has been the main beneficiary of the destruction of Central Europe as an ideological construct. According to Miller, Central Europe is portrayed as a frontier beyond which, according to its inventors, begins a world of barbarism, a world unfit for civilization.¹⁶⁴

Portnov concludes his analysis stating that the concept of Central and Eastern Europe is as conditional and metaphorical as any generalised historical-geographical concept. Like all concepts, it helps us understand certain aspects of historical processes in greater depth, while simultaneously diminishes or excludes others. In other words, it is a concept that both simplifies the interpretation of reality, and provides an explanatory guide to the phenomena.¹⁶⁵

On 22 January 2014 *'[f]or the first time in independent Ukraine's history, people had been killed during a mass protest.'* Events gradually escalated into war, and as

161 Ibid. p. 11.

162 Ash, 1999.

163 Портнов [Portnov], 2009, p. 15.

164 Ibid. p. 21.

165 Ibid. pp. 25–26.

Portnov notes '[d]uring spring and summer 2014, 'eastern Ukraine' as an imagined entity ceased to exist,' and with it, the image of 'two Ukraines,' so popular in the Ukrainian and international media, has become a thing of the past.¹⁶⁶

Portnov was criticised in Western Ukrainian intellectual circles popular discourse for 'othering' the Donbas region— the idea that Ukraine can successfully get rid of the incurably sovietised Donbas. Portnov considered that loyalty to Ukraine and readiness to defend the homeland in a situation of war have pushed the issue of language preferences to the background, reducing the 'East of Ukraine' to Donbas, which has become a brake on the way to Europe, a convenient negative archetype.¹⁶⁷ After Russia's full-scale invasion against Ukraine

[t]he thesis of 'two Ukraines' and the conviction that the Russian-speaking population would be politically loyal to Russia seemed plausible to many. But even the first days of Putin's war showed how simplistic and far-fetched these conceptions are. Why didn't this occur? Ultimately, Russia's attack conclusively demonstrated that Ukraine has formed as a sovereign nation with a specific model of political loyalty and identity that cannot be reduced to language or religion.¹⁶⁸

Opposing Mikhail Gorbachev's vision about a 'Common European Home' stretching from 'the Atlantic to the Urals,' which in the intellectual narratives of former socialist countries 'Central Europe' was a synonym of a Western Europe captured by the 'East.' At the same time '[t]he enlargement of the European Union to the East – sometimes too optimistically called the 're-unification of Europe'—left Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine outside the EU.'¹⁶⁹ Even after the Orange Revolution, the EU's reluctance to promise Ukraine an integration perspective has discouraged Ukrainian elites from thinking more deeply about the country's geopolitical future. The next Ukrainian revolution turned itself into 'an attempt to imagine a new Ukraine.' In his 2018 essay, Portnov voices these tricky questions:

Does this mean that Ukraine will remain in an intermediary state between the EU and Russia (whether we call it a 'grey zone' or a 'bridge')? Will Ukrainian national mythology be forced to re-imagine itself without a 'return to Europe'?

And conversely: what will Europe lose by losing Ukraine? Bigger (in terms of territory) than any other EU member-state, Ukraine is an example of a diverse and heterogeneous society that has so far failed to explain itself to the outside world. It is telling that almost everywhere, talk on Ukraine

166 Portnov, 2016.

167 Портнов [Portnov], 2014.

168 Portnov, 2022.

169 Ibid.

is heavily dominated by stereotypes like ‘clash of civilizations’, ‘deep divisions’ and ‘civil war’. However, cultural diversity can also be seen as an advantage. Ukraine resembles a giant laboratory.¹⁷⁰

Portnov stressed the Maidan of 2013–2014, Russia’s later annexation of Crimea and the war in parts of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts were not only a crucial challenge to the post-Soviet order and international law, but also a test of ideological preferences. The attitudes towards these events, language in which they are described a badge of political affiliation not only in East Europe, but also beyond its border.¹⁷¹ In 1995, the American historian Mark von Hagen, in his provocative and widely debated essay ‘Does Ukraine Have a History?’ recalled an obviously strong stereotypical association of ‘Eastern Europe’ with nationalism, antisemitism, and ethnic irredentism. In a debate revisited in *Slavic Review* 2022, Andrii Portnov and Tatiana Portnova argued that is ‘strong stereotypical association’ and expressed their hope that ‘a paradigm shift is inevitable.’

We are not calling to forget about Ukrainian nationalism and its crimes, but want to focus on the intellectual counterproductivity of the reduction of Ukrainian to the nationalist aspect of its intellectual and political history. [...] The European Union recognized Ukraine’s European aspirations only in the course of a cruel and devastating war, not in 2004, after the peaceful Orange Revolution, not in 2014, after the Maidan and the Russian occupation of Crimea. Let us not be too late this time. Ukraine deserves full historiographical legitimacy right now!¹⁷²

Summarising findings

In this study, we have examined, through the examples of a few prominent Ukrainian or Ukrainian-descent thinkers, the principles along which Ukrainian historians have imagined the representation of Ukrainian history and its place in the European historical space along the North–South, East–West dichotomy. The famous American historian Timothy Snyder pointed to the importance of this perspective in an interview:

My own idea about Europe is that you cannot understand European history without Ukraine, because Ukraine was in the center of the main themes of European history in the modern period. [...] So for me putting Ukraine in

170 Portnov, 2018.

171 Портнов [Portnov], 2016.

172 Discussion: War Against Ukraine, 2022.

the center is the way to connect European and world history. But Ukrainians will say – that is all fine, but we are tired of suffering so that you can understand the world. And we want to figure out our own national history.¹⁷³

The basis of the federalist democrat Mykhailo Drahomanov's development concept for Ukraine was the autonomous-federal system, and he presented the same in his works in the most reasoned, detailed and systematic way. Federalism was the ultimate goal of his political views. In practice, he advocated federalism as a form of government that ensures the rights of every individual and rejected authoritarianism. He denied the need to create an independent Ukrainian state, advocating instead for a programme of federalisation of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. Drahomanov's political ideal was a federal structure of society, which he considered to be the best embodiment of the state system of England and Switzerland at that time.¹⁷⁴ He strove to prove that such a Ukraine has a place in Europe.

Ivan Krypyakevych authored numerous scientific and popular science works on the history of Ukraine from the Middle ages to the beginning of the XX century. The main place in his scientific work is occupied by the study of the Galicia-Volhynia Principality from the standpoint of the evolution of Ukrainian statehood, and the study of the Ukrainian Cossacks, especially the Cossack Hetmanate and Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky, who entered the European political arena under complicated historical circumstances. Krypyakevych argued for the equality of the Ukrainian historical process alongside the historical development of other European nations.¹⁷⁵

Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky's served as an 'intellectual guru' for a many scholars,¹⁷⁶ as his concept of the Ukrainian nation found continuity in ethnicity and discontinuity in politics (questions of statehood). He defined Ukraine as a 'non-historical' nation. Geographically, Ukraine was a corridor between Europe and Asia. The various Ukrainian regions under the rule of different states and empires had acquired a wide range of political and economic experiences, but at the same time they had established a lack of 'feeling of state.' In the 1960s he put it that way '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'.¹⁷⁷ Its transformation into a political nation we can observe today was a consequence of the Russian-Ukrainian war. This fact also points to Lysiak-Rudnytsky's repute as a thinker.

Serhii Plokhly describes the evolution of Ukraine's perception of the impact of the cultural frontiers dividing Western and Eastern Christianity, adding that the North-South division was considered more relevant, based on a comparison of the

173 Cf. Kalenychenko, 2017.

174 Грицак [Hrytsak], 1992, pp. 123–124.

175 Задорожний [Zadorozhnyi], 2002, p. 93.

176 Kasianov, 2009, p. 13.

177 Cf. Kushnir, 2019.

development of settler and steppe areas with different forms of development. For many centuries, Ukraine was a 'gateway to Europe,' 'bridge between Europe and Eurasia' and 'a meeting place (and a battleground) of various empires.' During the collapse of the empires (1917 and 1991), there was no complete break with the imperial past; this could not have occurred, as they had no clear knowledge of their 'otherness' from the Russians, and finally the 2013–2014 turnaround gave impetus to exclusive national identification.¹⁷⁸ Vladimir Putin's thesis groups Ukrainians and Russians as one people, although the mistake was to equate the Russian language not only with Russian culture, but also with the Russian nationality.

Yaroslav Hrytsak focuses on the Ukrainian multicultural and multiethnic nation, and emphasised the links between Ukrainian history and world history. He sought to broaden the framework of nationalised history, asserting that a narrative that excludes non-Ukrainians cannot provide an balanced Ukrainian history. In the 19th century, and at the beginning of the 20th century, Ukrainian towns still had a significant ethnic minority population, the proportion of which was greatly reduced by the ethnic cleansing of later periods. Hrytsak followed, among others, Mykhailo Drahomanov, who also argued for a multiethnic Ukrainian history.¹⁷⁹ Hrytsak is a Eurocentrist, interpreting Ukrainian history as a component of Central Europe. The roots of this are to be found in Western Ukraine, which he sees as linked to Central Europe by the Habsburg heritage.

One of Andrii Portnov's main theses is that getting rid of the illusion of easy understanding of the subject, and indentifying the cultural and historical proximity of the two nations with a common political culture or historical memory is extremely important. The 2013–2014 turnaround proved that Russia was not ready to let go of Ukraine, and Europe was not ready to take it in. Europe has seen Ukraine historically and culturally, as part of Russia or as something 'between' Russia and the European Union.¹⁸⁰ The main task of Ukrainian politics, culture and diplomacy was to break down stereotypes and prove that Ukraine is a subject with its own interests and aspirations.¹⁸¹ Europe needed to discover the 'new Ukraine' so that Ukraine could return to Europe.

178 *Magistra vitae*, 2020, p. 230.

179 Kappeler, 2009, p. 60.

180 Яковленко [Yakovlenko], 2021.

181 Щур [Shchur], 2014.

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