
Russia and Ukraine
Literature and the Discourse of Empire
from Napoleonic to Postcolonial Times

Drawing on colonial discourse and postcolonial theory to reinterpret key writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Myroslav Shkandrij shows how the need to legitimize expansion gave rise to ideas of Russian political and cultural hegemony and influenced Russian attitudes towards Ukraine. These notions were then challenged and subverted in a counterdiscourse that shaped Ukrainian literature.

Concepts of civilizational superiority and redemptive assimilation, widely held among nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals, helped to form stereotypes of Ukraine and Ukrainians in travel writings, textbooks, and historical fiction – stereotypes that have been reactivated in ensuing decades. Both Russian and Ukrainian writers have explored the politics of identity in the post-Soviet period, but while the canon of Russian imperial thought is well known, the tradition of resistance – which in the Ukrainian case can be traced as far back as the meeting of the Russian and Ukrainian polities and cultures in the seventeenth century – is much less familiar. Shkandrij demonstrates that Ukrainian literature has been marginalized in the interests of converting readers to imperial and assimilatory designs by emphasizing narratives of reunion and brotherhood and denying alterity.

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to Postcolonial Times*

MYROSLAV SHKANDRIJ

McGill-Queen's University Press
Montreal & Kingston · London · Ithaca

© McGill-Queen's University Press 2001
ISBN 0-7735-2234-4

Legal deposit fourth quarter 2001
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec

Printed in Canada on acid-free paper

This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Funding has also been received from the Office of the President and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Manitoba.

McGill-Queen's University Press acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP) for its activities. It also acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts for its publishing program.

**National Library of Canada Cataloguing
in Publication Data**

Shkandrij, Myroslav, 1950–
Russia and Ukraine : literature and the discourse of
empire from Napoleonic to postcolonial times
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-7735-2234-4
1. Russian literature – 19th century – History and
criticism. 2. Russian literature – 19th century – History
and criticism. 3. Russian literature – 20th century –
History and criticism. 4. Ukrainian literature –
20th century – History and criticism. 5. Imperialism in
literature I. Title.
PC3012.S46 2001 891.709'358 C2001-900261-1

Typeset in New Baskerville 10/12
by Caractéra inc., Quebec City

For Natalka

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Contents

Acknowledgments	ix
Introduction	xi
1 Literature and Empire	3
2 Imperial Borderlands in Russian Literature	35
3 Ukraine in Russian Imperial Discourse	67
4 Counternarratives in Ukrainian Literature	126
5 A Clash of Discourses	153
6 Modernism's National Narrative	197
7 Subverting Leviathan	213
8 The Postcolonial Perspective	259
Conclusion	269
Notes	277
Bibliography	323
Index	347

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Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for a grant that allowed me to conduct research on this book and to the University of Manitoba for providing me with study leave and grants for travel. Without this support the book would not have been written. The University also contributed to publication costs. *Canadian Slavonic Papers* kindly allowed me to republish the discussion of Domontovych, which appeared in a modified version in that journal.

Many individuals helped me along the way. In particular, I would like to thank George Grabowicz, Marko Pavlyshyn, John-Paul Himka, Walter Smyrniw, Serhy Yekelchuk, Edward Mozejko, and Marusia Petryshyn, who read parts of the manuscript at various stages and offered their comments and advice. I am also in debt to Jaroslav Rozumnyj, Frank Sysyn, Zenon Kohut, and Serhii Plokhii for suggestions and answers to questions in their fields of expertise; to Stepan Yarema for stimulating my interest in Petro Karmansky and for permission to use the manuscript of the latter's *Kiltsia rozhi*; and to Ievhen Nakhlik and Viktor Neborak for sharing their knowledge of literary Ukraine with me. Nevenka Koscevic, James Kominowski, and Vladimira Dzvonic at the University of Manitoba's Dafoe Library Slavic Collection were enormously helpful in tracing sources and providing bibliographical data. Tami Kowal-Denisenko, Maryana Nikoula, and Natalia Lebedin summarized documents and helped me prepare sections of the text. The expertise of Joan McGilvray and Ron Curtis was much appreciated in preparing the manuscript for publication.

x Acknowledgments

My wife Natałka Chomiak, as always, has acted as my first reader and constant adviser and encourager. Conversations with her sparked and sustained my interest in many of the issues raised in this book and continually provided insights.

Introduction

In recent years discourses in European literature have been analysed with a view to understanding their relationship to imperial and colonial practices. The concepts and methodologies that have been developed have provided insights into how political hegemony can be crystallized and communicated or challenged and subverted. Although Edward Said in his *Culture and Imperialism*, proposed that it was important to examine imperialisms other than Western European¹ and although other critics have drawn attention to the need “to complicate the view that Commonwealth literature and criticism are the only ones to see colonialism for what it is,”² the investigation of non-Western empires has only recently begun to attract sustained attention. The colonizer/colonized, hegemonic/subaltern relationship, it is argued here, is an appropriate lense through which to view the literatures of Eastern Europe, which have been heavily marked by a history of conquest and revolt, national self-assertion, and cultural competition.³ This book examines how a discourse of empire appeared in nineteenth-century Russian literature and gave rise to a counterdiscourse in Ukrainian literature.

Empires imagine and describe not only overseas dependencies but also contiguous territories. The construction of a literary Ukraine in Russian writings has analogies in the construction of other literary borderlands: the Caucasus, Poland, and Siberia. Early nineteenth-century writers like Aleksandr Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, Mikhail Lermontov, and Aleksei Khomiakov developed narrative patterns, images, and tropes that constructed these areas as imperial frontiers by, for example,

feminizing them and associating them with the antiquated, the rural, the violent, and the primitive. To the metropolitan civilization was ascribed a contrasting position of superiority, and it was associated with power and prestige, sophistication and modernity. Such imaginative patterns stand in an analogous relationship to those that have been identified by colonial and postcolonial discourses dealing with other parts of the world. During this same post-Napoleonic period, the narrative structures, metaphors, and patterns of characterization that were to conceptualize Ukraine for almost two centuries were developed.

Some historians and political scientists have disputed the appropriateness of the term “colony” as applied to the politics and economy of Ukraine.⁴ This book contends that there is in fact evidence of systemic division along national grounds (sometimes even rationalized in racist terms). More pertinent, however, to the issue of discourse analysis is the fact that many of the literary and cultural phenomena treated in colonial and postcolonial studies are present in the literary descriptions of Ukraine. The legitimation of imperial expansion in Russian and Ukrainian literatures parallels that in texts that now hold canonical status in colonial and postcolonial studies. This fact suggests the appropriateness of methodologies that have analysed political and cultural hegemony in literatures dealing with other situations.⁵ The terms “colonial” and “postcolonial” as designations of the cultural situation of people who find themselves in, or are emerging from, cultural-political subjugation, it is therefore argued here, have relevance to Ukraine’s history and contemporary reality.⁶ In fact, one significant achievement of colonial and postcolonial discourse analysis has been to illuminate common features and facilitate comparisons between countries and phenomena that would previously have been dismissed as incommensurable or incongruent. Postcolonial studies now includes within its scope the experiences of Ireland, Scotland, and North America and explores connections with multicultural, feminist, and subaltern studies. The examples these countries provide, as well as the more “classical” experiences of Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, can illuminate many aspects of Eastern European literatures.

This book argues not only that an imperialistic tradition aligned itself with Russian nationalism from the early nineteenth century but also that there existed an anti-imperialistic counterdiscourse, one that articulated and negotiated its positions against the claims of the dominant discourse, and one that has frequently been overlooked. The outlines of this countercurrent are visible both in the narrative and the metaphorical structures of the literary works themselves and in the wider intellectual debates that have reflected the relations of power between imperial and national forces. Works in Russian and

Ukrainian literature are examined here in the light of this clash of discourses. The term counterdiscourse has, following Terdiman, been used to describe a tradition seemingly permanently locked in struggle with the one it is contesting, suffering the dependencies and complexes of opposition and continually being driven back within the rhetorical boundaries that it struggles to break down.⁷ For much of the two hundred years under consideration this description applies to the Ukrainian assertion of cultural and national claims that have been denied, censored, or simply ignored – to the extent that even today many Russian intellectuals find them fatuous. Whereas the archive of Russian imperial thought is well known, this counterarchive of resistance, which in the Ukrainian case can be traced at least as far back as the meeting of the Russian and Ukrainian polities and cultures in the seventeenth century, is much less familiar. It has frequently been marginalized by the discourse of empire, in the interests of converting readers and listeners to the imperial design by emphasizing narratives of “reunion” and “brotherhood,” by denying alterity, and by requiring history to be seen through the assimilationist lense. Much of the counterarchive was uncovered in the nineteenth century by the Romantics and post-Romantics. Further attempts to recover subaltern voices were made in the latter part of the century by Volodymyr Antonovych and Mykhailo Drahomanov, who anthologized folk-songs and used them to interpret history and popular political attitudes.⁸

Although much has been written on the national question in the West, surprisingly little analysis has been devoted to imperial ideas and hegemonic notions as they have been crystallized or refracted in Russian and Ukrainian literatures. Some studies written in Soviet Ukraine in the 1920s, like Vasyl Sypovsky's, broached the topic, but the line of investigation was essentially closed down at the end of the decade.⁹ Interest in the subject has been restimulated both by postcolonial studies and by the reassessment of Russian/Soviet history that followed the dissolution of the USSR into national states. Methodologies employed in discourse analysis and postcolonial theory have been drawn upon in the present study.¹⁰ In the Ukrainian context several interesting and ground-breaking studies in discourse analysis have recently been produced, among them studies by George Grabowicz, Solomiia Pavlychko, Tamara Hundorova, and Oksana Zabuzhko. The present study attempts to build upon them.¹¹ The concept of discourse employed in this account is a Foucauldian one: it focuses on a group of utterances and texts that appear to be regulated and that possess a coherence and act as a common force. A primary concern has been investigating the underlying rules and structures that produce texts, the systematicity that lies at the core of a discursive structure, and the

interrelationship of discourses.¹² The study also draws upon recent Russian and Soviet histories that have highlighted the development of imperial and Romantic nationalist currents in Russian history, recontextualizing them within European and world history.¹³ Both discourse theory and the newer histories, of course, continue to rethink the relationship between national ideologies, imperial voices, and the voices of native resistance, often, as does this account, by examining wider, comparative frameworks.

Not all scholars are convinced that the paradigm of division between imperial and anti-imperial is suited for inquiry into the Russian national and imperial consciousness. Susan Layton has expressed doubts about its effectiveness in describing the Russian view of Asia because in her view interpenetration has blurred the boundary between cultures.¹⁴ Others have questioned the strength of the link between imperialism and nationalism in the early nineteenth century. Paul M. Austin has asserted that Russian Romanticism was “surprisingly unnationalistic.”¹⁵ It is argued here, however, that there exists a large body of evidence indicating the dominance and increasing aggressiveness throughout the nineteenth century of a consolidating, hegemonizing attitude based on Russian nationalism. Mark Bassin has argued that the alliance of the Russian imperial impulse with nationalist doctrine had already taken shape in the 1830s and 1840s.¹⁶ The expansionist element and the imperial vision were symbiotic and became inseparable from later articulations of Russian nationalism. Panslavism, Eurasianism, national bolshevism and other doctrines – all, in different guises – embraced expansionism, sometimes with messianic fervour. The contradictions and incompatibilities between imperialism and nationalism that have been identified by Hannah Arendt and others were not evident in Russia, where nationalists, whatever their attitude toward the state, embraced, in Bassin’s words, “the entirety of their unmistakably multinational empire, and did so with singular devotion.”¹⁷ The necessity of political-territorial expansion was viewed as axiomatic by reactionary conservatives, progressive liberals, and even socialist radicals.

The present study is in agreement with another thesis of Bassin, namely, that there was an intimate connection between the expansionist foreign policy and the domestic scene, with the latter normally providing the primary impulse. One interesting aspect of the Ukrainian situation is that within the imperial imagination it, in fact, straddled the domestic-foreign divide. It has sometimes been viewed as an organic part of Russia and sometimes as mysteriously different and exotic, and hence its conquest, subjugation, or full assimilation has been justified both in terms of bringing domestic peace and in terms of intervening

abroad. The unanimity of Russian conservatives, liberals, and socialists on the question of Ukraine's incorporation and assimilation stems in large part from the fact that the country has always been seen as an early and crucial test case of successful imperial expansion and assimilation. Any challenge to its success has carried enormous consequences for the Russian self-image and has been dealt with in uncompromising terms. The dissolution of the Russian-Ukrainian link has always threatened the imperial identity of Russia itself, the symbiosis of nation and empire that Russian intellectuals have so frequently extolled. These intellectuals have always been called upon to provide justifications for imperial growth and to defend an increasingly monolithic conception of Russian identity. The very idea of a Ukrainian identity, of course, threatened both.

Because the literary and political history surveyed here cannot be easily condensed, the reader's attention is directed in many places to scholarly works in social, political, and intellectual history. The intention has not been to give a complete account but to examine only some works and figures within a historical continuum, to trace the outline of the underlying discourse and counterdiscourse from the rise of modern nationalism in the wake of the Napoleonic wars to Ukraine's independence in 1991.

Ukraine was, of course, the object of diplomatic calculations for other powers – the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire being among the most prominent.¹⁸ It has generated literary commentary in these states, and they, in turn, have figured strongly in Ukraine's politics and in its self-imaging. For reasons of space, however, they cannot be considered in any depth in this account. After Russia, Poland has been the most influential political-cultural influence on modern Ukrainian literature. Although the primary focus in this book is on the Russian-Ukrainian context, the triangular Russian-Ukrainian-Polish discourse is also adumbrated here. It is an argument of this book that the Ukrainian voice has always existed within this wider three-cornered discourse without always being acknowledged. It is a voice that is audible in the three literatures and the wider discourse of empire that links and interpenetrates them. For most of the nineteenth century the Polish gentry was a leading force in Right Bank Ukraine (which was within the Russian Empire). At the same time it was dominant in Galicia (the Crown land of Austria) until the First World War. In the second half of the 1860s the Austrian government transferred the main levers of power in Galicia from Austrian bureaucrats to Polish magnates and gentry, who considered Ukraine's independent political existence an unrealistic prospect and prepared for its inclusion in a future Polish state. The struggle of

the Ukrainian national movement in Galicia was, therefore, directed primarily against Polish hegemonic claims. When the Polish state was reconstituted in 1918, it fought a war against the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR), defeated it, and established its borders along the Zbruch river, thus reincorporating much of Western Ukraine. This Polish-Ukrainian relationship and the concomitant discourse it generated has only been touched upon, notably in connection with Petro Karmansky's account of the revolution of 1917–20. Also largely untouched is the large body of diaspora writing, which has often reflected the counterdiscourse, while deflecting it in significant ways. The sections on Karmansky and Ievhen Malaniuk are only partial explorations of the rich and varied emigré experience.

The primary focus of this account, however, is the literary reflection of the Russian-Ukrainian political and cultural relationship.

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

A modified form of the Library of Congress system of transliteration has been used in this book. The diacritic and apostrophe have been omitted throughout. In order to approximate English usage and pronunciation, within the text *Ya-* and *Yu-* have replaced *Ia-* and *Iu-* as the initial consonant in surnames, while *-y* has replaced *-ii* or *-yi* in surname endings. These modifications to surnames have not been made in the bibliography or in bibliographical references within footnotes. Whenever the issue seems clear-cut, the preferred spelling of names has been from the language of the nationality with which an individual is identified. Occasionally, names have been transliterated from two languages. This has been done in those cases where an individual wrote in two languages or where, like Gogol and Danilevsky, they identified themselves as Ukrainians but wrote in Russian. Place names are rendered according to the linguistic form used within present-day international boundaries. Ukraine has adopted the form "Kyiv" as the official transliteration of its capital city, and this form has been used throughout. In a few cases the commonly accepted English form has been retained: Volhynia, Galicia, Dnieper.

For works in Russian and Ukrainian mentioned in this book, the English translation of the title is given first, followed by the transliteration in parentheses. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

Russia and Ukraine

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1 Literature and Empire

DISCOURSE AND COUNTERDISCOURSE

The Russian Empire's ambitious Southern campaign under Catherine the Great included two wars against Turkey (1768–74 and 1787–92) that led to the capture of the Black Sea coast, the annexation of the Crimea (1783), and the invasion of the Caucasus. Russia simultaneously gained territories along the western border through three partitions of Poland (1772–94). By the second decade of the nineteenth century it had emerged from the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars as Europe's strongest land power, having gained Finland (in 1809) and Bessarabia and control of the mouth of the Danube (in 1812). The wars with Persia (1804–13) and the Ottoman Empire (1806–12) secured recognition of these conquests. Throughout this expansion, Russia strengthened its rule over Ukraine through the acquisition of the Right Bank (in the second partition of 1793), the destruction of the Zaporozhian Sich (1775), the abolishment of the Hetmanate (1781), and the imposition of uniform administrative rule and serfdom. The wresting of lands from the Ottoman Empire was described in official circles as a Christian success against barbarous Islam. The acquisition of territory from Poland, although celebrated as a victory of the true Orthodox faith over a corrupt Catholicism, was rationalized in more pragmatic fashion: *realpolitik*, it was said, dictated that only one powerful voice should speak for the Slavs and demanded the removal of Russia's historical competitor for this role. The attitude to Ukraine was more complicated. The Left Bank's gradual incorporation

over the preceding century was characterized as the result of wise Ukrainian statesmanship, which had accepted the necessity of a fusion with Russia in the interests of creating a single Slavic superpower. The country was seen as more intimately related to Russia than other recent territorial acquisitions. The Left Bank's incorporation was, in fact, construed as the reabsorption of a former ancestral homeland, a "reunification." The last term had been used in 1654: during negotiations leading up to the signing of the Pereiaslav treaty between the two countries, the tsar's emissary had invoked the image of Kyiv as the former nest of the "tsarist eagle."¹ In accordance with this metaphor, Ukrainians were seen as an essentially "Russian" people returning to the fold. In the nineteenth century the view that Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians constituted one people was captured in the sacral phrase "three-in-one Russian nation" (*triedinaia russkaia natsiia*). The terms "narod" (people or nation) and "otechestvo" (fatherland) have similarly been employed from the time of Peter to describe one nation within a single state.

Cultural and political relations between Russia and Left Bank Ukraine already had a long history before the Napoleonic conflicts shaped the modern ideologies of imperialism and nationalism. Ukrainian statesmen, religious leaders, and artists and writers had figured prominently in Russian life since the time of Peter the Great. In the eighteenth century, Ukrainian culture had wielded enormous influence within the empire. Harold Segel has described the "so-called Russian Baroque" as "not Russian but Ukrainian, and a Ukrainian strongly influenced by Polish models. Its zenith was reached in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries when the 'Ukrainian school' held hegemony over Russian literature."² In 1721, following Peter's victory over Sweden, the designation of tsardom had been adopted and Russia had been proclaimed an *imperium*, or colonial empire. Since that time the ideologists of empire and autocracy had frequently been Ukrainians. Following the Napoleonic Wars, the reassertion of an imperial identity was accompanied by the drive to integrate a millennium of history into an overarching imperial narrative – an operation that required the appropriation of Ukraine's earlier history and cultural identity, a history that predated its political relationship with Muscovy or the Empire. An autonomous Ukraine was by this time no longer needed as a political buffer zone, nor was its partnership essential for joint military action in the South. Pereiaslav was no longer interpreted as an act of union in which Ukraine became a protectorate or a confederate state. In fact, what might be called the "Scottish model" of partnership was refused by the absolutist state after

a favourable peace had been signed with Turkey in 1774. The Russian state began to aim at a monolithic, unified army and regime, suppressing all vestiges of autonomy.

Right Bank Ukraine, which had never been part of the Russian Empire, was initially seen as a more problematic case. It was viewed in ruling circles as “Poland” and only gradually in the middle of the nineteenth century did this attitude shift, as, on the one hand, Ukrainians pioneered research into the history and ethnography of the territory and, on the other, imperial attitudes became more assimilative.

CONSTITUTING THE DISCOURSE OF EMPIRE

The increasing contacts between Russia and Ukraine that occurred after 1654 had led to the realization that there were profound differences. Even at the beginning of the nineteenth century both Left and Right Bank Ukraine were still distinctly foreign entities to Russians; much of the history and geography of these two territories was still presented in integrationist narratives as intractable material. Accordingly, under the pressure of nationalist and imperialist ideologies, the project of “domesticating” Ukrainian history and culture became a priority. This project experienced large-scale interference from Russia’s other imperial narratives, notably those, like the descriptions of the Caucasus and Poland, that were devoted to overcoming strong native resistance. Components of the imperial outlook toward the latter two surfaced periodically in discussions of Ukraine. They are evident in exhortations to demonstrate loyalty to the empire, justifications for the imposition of political rule and cultural homogenization, condemnations of treasonous rebellions, exultations in military victories, celebrations of economic enrichment, and constant reminders of a mission to civilize and improve. Imperial attitudes to Ukraine frequently shift from the seductive wooings of a marriage partner to aggressive cries for the destruction of alterity.³ In this they resemble Polish attitudes to the Ukrainian cossacks in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which similarly swung from offers of “partnership” in times of war to attempts to liquidate them as a nation-class in peacetime. The treatment of the Zaporozhians is emblematic. On the one hand, their services to the empire were lauded, and two decades after the Sich had been razed, they were reinstated as a military formation in the 1790s under the name of the Black Sea Cossacks.⁴ On the other hand, they were treated with suspicion and situated where their escape abroad would be difficult.⁵

Russian writing constructed a literary Ukraine through a series of dominant narrative structures, organizing metaphors, and tropes. These crystallized imperial discourse as a series of fundamental interlocking components: the anarchic nature of the borderland, the existence of a unitary Rus/Russian nation, the vastness, power, and glory of empire, the inevitability of absolutist rule, the organic Russian nation, Russia's unique mission, the legitimacy of expansion, and the redemptive nature of assimilation.

Anarchic Borderland

One fundamental trope is that of the borderland. As such, Ukraine has also figured prominently in Polish literature, which also maintained an imperial frame of reference for much of this period and which claimed Ukraine's history and culture as its own. While Russia was expanding along its southern and eastern borders, Polish society continued to play a prominent role in much of Ukraine. Throughout the nineteenth century much of Polish society still dreamed of regaining within a future Polish state the Ukrainian territory it had lost in the late eighteenth-century partitions. Even after the loss of its own sovereignty, Polish society under Austro-Hungarian rule still dominated the cities, schools, and cultural life of Eastern Galicia, a territory that demographically was overwhelmingly Ukrainian.⁶ In Right Bank Ukraine, which found itself under Russian rule from 1793, the Polish gentry continued to play a leading role for much of the nineteenth century. For many Poles all of Right Bank Ukraine (up to the Dnieper), and sometimes the Left Bank too, was "Polish" territory and "Ruthenians" simply a tributary stream of their own society. Throughout the nineteenth century, therefore, Polish literature, like Russian literature, remained under the sway of ideologies that justified the imposition of cultural hegemony over Ukraine.

There are, consequently, interesting parallels between Russian and Polish representations of what both considered to be their Ukrainian "borderland." In both literatures it is a "wild land," a violent and often degenerate place that constitutes the limits of civilization and the boundary with Asia – a zone of dangerous cultural confrontation and mingling. Sometimes depicted as sparsely populated "virgin" land, sometimes as culturally amorphous, hybrid, or tainted with foreign influences, the borderland is nonetheless always seen as "belonging" to and requiring assimilation into the hegemonic and vastly superior metropolitan culture. In this way Ukraine played the role of a colonized "other" in the development of both a Russian and a Polish identity.

The adoption of the term “Ukraine” (*Okraina, Ukraina*) itself serves as an example of how the colonized must struggle to transform the language of domination. It is generally taken to mean “borderland,” although it has been claimed that when it first occurred in the *Kyiv Chronicle* under the date 1187, it was used in the sense of “the land around” or “the land pertaining to” a given centre.⁷ In the late sixteenth century the term was used extensively as a description of Poland’s borderland region and was adopted by Ukrainians to distinguish their nationality from the Polish. Ukrainians have also called themselves “Ruthenians” (*ruski, rusyny, rutentsi*) and “Little Russians” (*malorosy*). The latter term stems from the Byzantine manner of describing areas closer to Byzantium as “lesser” or “little” and areas more remote as “greater” or “great”: Asia Minor, Graecia Minor and Graecia Magna. There is, of course, a fundamental difference between the term “Rus,” which brings to mind the medieval Kyivan state, and “Russia” (*Rossia*), which was formally adopted by Peter the Great to denote his empire, consisting of what used to be called “Muscovy” or the “Muscovite State” (*Moskovskoe gosudarstvo*) and later territorial acquisitions. One historian has written that “The customary association of ‘Rus’ with ‘Russia’ has thus, in a practical sense, deprived the Ukrainians of a historical name and clouded their national origins. This problem is also manifest in the conflict between Russians and Ukrainians over the medieval Kievan legacy, which has been formally incorporated as part of the Muscovite-Russian state.”⁸ In more recent times the term “Little Russian” (*maloros*) began to take on pejorative connotations, denoting lesser importance and provincial backwardness. Consequently, in order to designate a separate territory and people and to distinguish themselves from both Poland and Russia, from the seventeenth century Ukrainians began to use the term “Ukraine.” In contemporary Ukrainian the term “Little Russian” is derogatory, denoting someone who lacks national consciousness and views their Ukrainian identity as a branch of the Russian nationality.⁹

In Polish literature the idea of Ukraine as a barbarous eastern borderland appeared in the sixteenth century and was current in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when from 1569 to 1793 the country came under Polish rule.¹⁰ The most famous fictional portrayal, however, became Henryk Sienkiewicz’s *With Fire and Sword* (*Ogniem i mieczem*, 1884), whose treatment of the revolt of 1648 has been described as “the base line from which many Poles survey all Ukrainian relations.”¹¹ The defining metaphoric and narrative structures of Russian literature appeared in the early decades of the nineteenth century, when the vast empire was imposing its rule over far-flung territories

and conducting assimilatory policies under the guise of missions to civilize, enlighten, and modernize.

A Single Rus/Russian Nation

The construction of a literary Ukraine in Russian literature was complicated by ambiguities surrounding what constituted a nation and national identity. The pre-Romantic understanding of “natio” as a community of nobles united by political loyalty elided any reference to the peasantry. In the post-Herderian and post-Napoleonic period, the universalism of the Enlightenment was replaced with the concept of national uniqueness. Russian thinkers began to see peasants as the ethnic “source” of the national spirit. Polish and Russian writers turned to the Ukrainian peasantry to discover their own national identity and win broader political support. Like the Orientalist phase of British rule in India, this practice was partly a literary vogue, but it was also born of a political malaise that recognized the enormous and dangerous gulf between the ruling classes and the peasant sea around them: “Underlying Orientalism was a tacit policy of reverse acculturation, whose goal was to train British administrators and civil servants to fit into the culture of the ruled and to assimilate them thoroughly into the native way of life.”¹² A similar gesture was made by the Polish gentry when they attempted to forge a Polono-Ukrainian ideology and identity out of the Romantic revival. However, the revolts of 1830–31 and 1861 made clear the insurmountable religious/cultural/class divide between the Polish gentry and the Ukrainian peasants on the Right Bank. The Russian gentry also felt that the Ukrainian peasantry, by virtue of their Orthodox faith, related language, and history, should be included in a tripartite (*triedinaia*) “Russian” nation made up of the East Slavs (the Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians), which they often designated collectively as “Rus.” The “philo-Ukrainian” attitude could last only as long as Ukrainians accepted their role as members of such an imagined Rus nation. In much the same way as Anglicism, a movement that opposed the promotion of native languages and literatures in India, came to ascendancy in the 1830s, a russifying tendency accelerated when, after the 1840s, it became clear that many Ukrainian intellectuals refused the pan-Russian national identity and even appeared to hold separatist aspirations. In the course of conducting research into their own national character through studies in folklore, ethnography, literature, and history, both Russian and Ukrainian intellectuals frequently reached the conclusion that they were, indeed, distinct peoples. Ukrainians made a point, in particular, of challenging and undermining the idea of a unitary Rus nation.

Vastness, Power, Glory

A literature glorifying imperial rule was a powerful factor in shaping public attitudes and disseminating a pro-tsarist ideology. It formed the background of expectation, the norm against which rare refusals of support or even rarer statements of opposition acquired significance. Extolling the empire's vastness and military invincibility had by the nineteenth century become a well-established tradition among major writers. The Ukrainian Feofan Prokopovich (Prokopovych in Ukrainian) gave the ideology of absolutism a full and early articulation. His encomium to Peter the Great, delivered on 24 July 1709 in St Sophia Cathedral – in the tsar's presence, on the occasion of the victory at the battle of Poltava – stands at the head of a long line of works glorifying state power and military success.¹³ It impressed the tsar and ensured a brilliant career for its author. Prokopovich's celebrations of power in a range of genres were subsequently emulated, so much so that when Adam Mickiewicz delivered his Paris lectures of 1842–44, he complained that Russian literature adored absolute power and expansionism, going so far as to depict the state as an entity without any borders marking the limits of its rule. Gavrila Derzhavin, Russia's greatest eighteenth-century poet, was described by Mickiewicz as "a faithful representative of the idea of conquests. He encourages Russians; he applauds their triumphs; he denigrates and insults their enemies ... In his ode on the fall of Warsaw one sees clearly the pretentious idea of the Russian Empire standing up to the entire universe in its omnipotence. Derzhavin says emphatically: 'We need no allies. What use alliances? Take a step, O Russia, one step more, and the universe is yours!'"

Ewa Thompson has argued that Mickiewicz's voice, like that of others arguing against the "pathologies of nationalism called empires," was unfortunately consigned to "the archives of Central European thought, which the American community of interpretation has ignored, privileging instead the Russian and German interpretive hegemony."¹⁵ Derzhavin's love of the sublime in all forms dovetailed with the idea of empire: he spoke of its glory and power, composing odes to celebrate military campaigns by General Aleksandr Suvorov in Europe and by Valerian Zubov in the Caucasus and Persia.¹⁶ Countless similar genuflections to vastness and invincibility by major talents, as well as by a host of epigones, served to legitimize imperial rule. Eighteenth-century Russian literature was later described by Vasiliï Rozanov as "support of the government" and Georgii Fedotov dubbed it "the cult of empire, a genuine rapture in the presence of autocracy."¹⁷

The Requirement of Absolutism

By giving writers a psychological stake in power and glory, the imperial mystique exerted a seemingly irresistible attraction and conservatizing tendency. Nikolai Karamzin can serve as an example. Later in life he stopped writing literature in order to devote his energies to the influential *History of the Russian State* (*Istoriia gosudarstva rossiiskogo*, 1816–26). In this work, the cult of individual sentiment that had been his literary trademark gave way to the worship of a strong, autocratic state: “beginning as a reforming, almost revolutionary, force,” wrote Mirsky, “Karamzin passed into posterity as the symbol and perfect embodiment of Imperial Russia’s official ideals.”¹⁸ Karamzin felt that “autocracy founded and resuscitated Russia” and that any change in her constitution “has led in the past and must lead in the future to her perdition, for she consists of very many and different parts; what save unlimited monarchy can produce in such a machine the required unity of action?”¹⁹ Here he expressed full agreement with Tsar Alexander I, who stated that the “least weakening of autocracy would lead to the separation of many provinces.”²⁰

Karamzin is an example of the intellectual who assumes the role of explaining and legitimizing the integration and colonization of subject peoples in the name of preserving a powerful state. This motivation led in the 1820s and 1830s to the invention of the concept of *narodnost* (nationality), which was later expanded to include non-Russian peoples and places, the concept of the new, imperial nature of Russian literature (one that served Russians and non-Russians alike), and the elaboration of a literary Ukraine, Caucasus, and Siberia.²¹ The argument that Russia’s size required both an authoritarian regime and drastic assimilatory policies seduced historians over the following decades. Much more recently Christopher Hill has written that “military defence in that country of flat open plains demanded a highly centralized government under a single leader; and the autocracy subsequently survived to give some uniformity to administration for the medley of backward and illiterate peoples who composed the vast Russian Empire.”²² The same triumphalist Karamzinian rhetoric is employed in dismissing the viewpoint of non-Russians (“playthings of world politics”) and sanctioning repression against a supposedly obdurate, reactionary peasantry, as occurred in the requisitioning that led to the famine of 1921: “The grain was extracted, the cities fed and the revolution saved. Less than ten years later the cities repaid their debt by sending hundreds of thousands of tractors and harvesting machines to lighten the age-old toil of the poor and middle peasantry, now organized into collective farms; whilst the kulaks and speculators followed their leaders of the right s.r.’s into oblivion.”²³

Russia's Mission

Size and military successes inspired a sense of divine ordinance or historical inevitability. Like Aleksei Khomiakov, Mikhail Pogodin, and other contemporary writers, Tsar Nicholas I, who ruled from 1825 to 1856, had a powerful sense that Russia's international conflicts had been and continued to be fought in the name of God and the true faith. The theme of a crusading "holy Russia" led by a true "Russian God" had emerged at the beginning of the nineteenth century alongside the contrapuntal theme of the hopelessness of resistance by smaller peoples.²⁴ Orthodoxy, autocracy, and *narodnost* – the three tenets of Official Nationality first announced by Count Uvarov in 1833 – fused into a mystical concept of Russia's uniqueness and were used to justify its global historical mission. Iver Neumann has described this concept as "a variant of Russian Messianism where the Christian idea of Moscow as the Third Rome was played down, but where the Christian historicism underpinning this idea was retained."²⁵ Russian messianism was already evident in Vladimir Odoevsky's *Russian Nights* (*Russkie noch*i, 1844), which foresaw a "young and powerful" Russia showing mankind the way and occupying the "first place" among all nations.²⁶ It reappeared in many guises over the decades, assuming at times the mantle of a Pan-Slavist conquering mission in Europe, at other times a civilizing absorption of Asia or a global calling. Nicholas Riasanovsky has written that "Russia expanded to become Slavdom, Russian destiny advanced to the Elbe, Vienna, and Constantinople. Indeed, the entire world was to be recast in response to this call of fate, through blood and iron if necessary. The Messianic Russian future called for an adventurous, aggressive, even revolutionary, foreign policy that represented the very opposite of the conservative and legitimist orientation of Nicholas I and his government."²⁷

The civilizing mission was linked to the practice of Russification, which began to take hold in the reign of Nicholas I. The tsar demanded the use of Russian at court functions, in place of French, which had been the language of educated society. His administration and the ministry of education under Uvarov "embarked on a great program of spreading knowledge of Russian in the non-Russian areas of the empire. Writers and journalists supported the same cause."²⁸ At the same time the proponents of Official Nationality affirmed the superiority of Russian over other languages. Nikolai Grech, the grammarian, announced that "our language – one can say this confidently – is superior to all the modern European languages."²⁹ His colleague Faddei Bulgarin anticipated a future where everyone knew Russian: "The Russian language, which without doubt holds first place in melodiousness and in the richness and the ease of word construction, is the language of poetry and literature in all the countries of the globe."³⁰

The Organic Russian Nation

Iver Neumann has argued that the Romantic nationalist framework, which arose at the time of the Napoleonic wars, has defined Russian nationalist thought up to the present day. At its root lies the concept of the “organic nation, understood as a living being where each part is dependent on the others, and where no basic conflict of interest can therefore exist. The state is seen as the ‘head’ of the organic nation, embodying its will, defining its interests and defending it against harmful internal microbes and external onslaughts.”³¹ Ukraine, accordingly, was described as a limb of one body: “Little Russia is a living part of Russia, created by the mighty Great Russian spirit.”³²

The Russian state, like the Russian language, was held to have unique qualities and powers that made it irresistibly attractive to other peoples. Organicism and magnetic power became key points in the often-repeated argument that Russian expansion was nonviolent. Pogodin contrasted the growth of Western powers, based on conquest, oppression, and conflict, with the rise of the Russian Empire, which he claimed was based on freely accepted invitations and harmonious relations: “Our state was founded on love, the Western states on hate.”³³ This influential idea was elaborated by Slavophiles like Aleksei Khomiakov and by Nikolai Danilevsky, who in his *Russia and Europe* (Rossiia i Evropa, 1869) spoke of smaller nations within the empire as destined to “gradually and imperceptibly fuse with” the dominant nationality, “be assimilated by it and serve to augment the variety of its historical manifestations.”³⁴ They were, in any case, “simply ethnographic material” serving another nation’s encounter with its destiny.³⁵ Another version of this argument was to admit the reality of violence but absolve the Russian intelligentsia of complicity and, of course, to accept the inevitability of complete assimilation. In 1910 a liberal publication could admit the “terrible denationalizations that have filled the last fifty years” while simultaneously absolving the Russian intelligentsia of all responsibility, claiming that “not a shadow of coercion” was exerted by it on other nationalities.³⁶ In an article published in 1934 in Germany, the leader of the emigré Eurasianists, P. Savitsky, used a modified version of the same argument to claim that the organic nature of Russia’s “Eurasian” identity was unique. He asserted that the “brotherhood of nations” concept had always ruled Eurasia, where “great political unificatory attempts,” such as those of the Scythians, Huns, and Mongols, had always originated. Among the Eurasian peoples there had never been “higher” or “lower” peoples and “mutual attraction was stronger than rejection.”³⁷ The “brotherhood of peoples” slogan was also part of the official rhetoric of the Soviet regime.

Only in the 1920s and 1930s was this idea of organic growth and nonviolent assimilation challenged. Mikhail Pokrovsky, a Marxist historian, indicted the Russian Empire as having been built almost exclusively on aggression.³⁸ “Great Russia,” he declared, “was built on the bones of ‘aliens,’ and it is no great consolation to the latter that eighty percent of its blood flows in the Great Russians.”³⁹

Romantic nationalism, with its characteristic organicism and concern for cultural vitality, was used to justify policies of Russification after the two Polish revolts of 1830 and 1863, and consistently after 1880. It was the driving force behind the thinking of Slavophiles and Russian Panslavists, and it was the core faith behind such twentieth-century ideologies as Scythianism, Eurasianism, Smenovekhism, and Russian national bolshevism.

The Legitimacy of Expansion

Russian nationalists frequently claimed that all smaller and politically weaker peoples were to be made subservient to a morally and culturally superior Russia, which by virtue of its size and military strength was ordained to govern, educate, and assimilate. The literature of empire, in supporting this claim, played a role similar to its counterpart in the West: it was, in Edward Said’s words, if not “the origin and cause,” then at least “the vital, informing, and invigorating counterpoint to the economic and political machinery that we all concur stands at the centre of imperialism.”⁴⁰ Prominent literary figures upheld the right of expansion. Mikhail Lomonosov, in his “Ode on the Coronation Day of the Tsarevna Elizaveta Petrovna” (*Oda na den vosshestviia na vserossiiskii prestol Ee Velichestva Gosudaryni Imperatrity Elisavety Petrovny 1747 goda*), advocated taking the Amur “from the Manchurian,” anticipating that mountains of gold would then flow into imperial coffers; Ryleev and other Decembrists advocated the “liberation” of Mexico from Spanish rule and the annexation of California⁴¹; and Tiutchev called for the conquest of Constantinople by the Russian “state giant” in his “Dawn” (*Rassvet*, 1849) and mused on endless expansion in his “Russian Geography” (*Russkaia geografiia*, 1848–49):

Moscow and Peter’s city, and the city of the Constantines –
 These are the secret capitals of the Russian realm ...
 But where are its limits and where its frontiers
 To north, east, south and west?
 Seven internal seas and seven great rivers ...
 From Nile to Neva, from Elbe to China,
 From Volga to Euphrates, from Ganges to Danube ...

That is the Russian realm ... and it will never fade,
As the Spirit foresaw and Daniel prophesied.⁴²

Dostoevsky, who praised Danilevsky's book *Russia and Europe* (1869), noted his disagreement with the author on only "one opinion": for suggesting that after the Turks had been driven out of Constantinople, the city should be shared with Greece and other Slavic states. He wrote:

Such a conclusion is astonishing, in my view. What kind of comparison between the Russians and the Slavs can there be here? And who will establish equality among them? How can Russia participate in the ownership of Constantinople on an *equal* basis with the Slavs if Russia in every respect is unequal to them – to each little nation separately and to all of them combined? Had he felt like that, the giant Gulliver might have assured the Lilliputians that he was equal to them in all respects, but this would have been patently absurd, surely ... Constantinople must be *ours*, conquered by *us*, Russians, from the Turks, and remain ours forever. It must belong to us alone.⁴³

His reasoning was that "only through Russia and her great centralized power can the Slavs continue to live on earth." Without Russia, they would "disappear into the European ocean." Their destiny was to merge into a "union of the Slavs" over which Russia would rule. Dividing the city would, in his opinion, only cause bickering and "hinder the union of the Slavs and halt the course of their proper existence."⁴⁴ As for the non-Europeans, the cultural and racial superiority of Russians over Asiatic races, he argued in his *Writer's Diary* (*Dnevnik pisatel'ia*), justified a civilizing and colonizing mission in Asia. He described Russia's war against the Turks as "a great Christian cause" and called for the victory of the tsar.⁴⁵

Contemporary Russian nationalists often echo these sentiments. Neumann reports that the editor of *Our Contemporary* (*Nash sovremenik*), Stanislav Kuniaev, was asked in 1990 by an Italian journalist to explain the revival of Russian nationalism and answered, "The question is asked in an incorrect manner. Nationalism is for small peoples who fear extinction. The Russians are a great people ... Russia speaks like Christ used to speak: come to me and share my spirit."⁴⁶

Redemptive Assimilation

The expansionist rhetoric, particularly in times of military conflict, was bolstered by the idea that Russia's size, might, and superior religious and cultural life were so irresistibly attractive to neighbouring peoples that they would willingly embrace an opportunity to become part of

the state. Nineteenth-century ideologists argued for the redemptive nature of incorporation into the Orthodox and Russian state. Echoing the claims made by romantic nationalists for the Russian faith and language, they affirmed that “holy” Russia, as opposed to the sinful West, demonstrated a humane culture. Universal “responsiveness” was most famously claimed by Dostoevsky as “the principal capacity” of the Russians, something no other nation possessed. In his speech on the unveiling of Pushkin’s monument he claimed that this quality made Pushkin a national poet: “The very greatest of these European poets could never exemplify as intensely as Pushkin the genius of another people ... *Pushkin alone, of all the poets of the world, possesses the quality of embodying himself fully within another nationality.*”⁴⁷

Katya Hokanson has pointed out that this supposed capacity of writers to represent the other “authentically” is “a version of reincarnation – in other words, they do not merely represent, but actually embody, incarnate, the other.” Such a “capacity for mimetic simulation,” in Dostoevsky’s opinion, made Russian writers superior to European and excused them from having to see or represent themselves as they appeared in any other people’s narrative.⁴⁸ It is an argument for the complete appropriation of another’s voice, a justification for the imperial monologue: the other language and author, it is being suggested, are not required; Russians, because they best understand foreigners, may assume the authority to speak for and about them. In fact, of course, Russian writers were merely mapping their own desires, fantasies, and ambitions, which frequently mirrored the imperial aspirations of the state or of nationalists. Apotheosizing the supposedly universalist spirit of the Russian “soul” over several generations was the literary counterpart to and equivalent of colonialism; it went hand in hand with the reality of conquest and forcible assimilation.

The Slavophiles and native soil conservatives (*pochvenniki*) of the 1850s and 1860s were particularly prone to such faith in the universality of Russian culture. The idea, however, had already been expressed with reference to history, literature, and philosophy by Karamzin, Petr Viazemsky, Petr Chaadaev, and Mikhail Pogodin.⁴⁹ One *pochvennik*, Apollon Grigorev, however, sympathized with Kostomarov’s assertion of an independent Ukrainian cultural-historical tradition. He was a “cultural federalist and political decentralist who believed in regional self-administration but not in political separatism.”⁵⁰ His localism led him in 1863, as editor of the journal *The Anchor* (Iakor), to publish an unsigned article that defended the right of Ukrainian nationality to a life of its own.⁵¹ Other *pochvenniki*, like Dostoevsky, quickly distanced themselves from this position after the Polish revolt of 1863, fearing that localism would result in separatism. After 1864

Dostoevsky bolstered his faith in Russian cultural universality by combining it with the idea of Russian Orthodoxy as the highest point of human evolution.

Liberal thinkers, too, were caught up in expansionary schemes and redemptive scenarios. Vissarion Belinsky developed – this time out of universalist, Hegelian principles – a theory of nationality that ranked nations globally and insisted on Russia’s right, by virtue of her racial and cultural superiority, to assimilate them. The argument for a “progressive” Russian assimilatory policy resurfaced in various contexts throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was an article of faith for Russian liberals like Struve and for many bolsheviks. A similar argument for the progressive nature of large nation-states and for the “reactionary” nature of small ones was also part of the Marxist tradition and, significantly, was vigorously contested by Ukrainian Marxists.⁵²

Russians, of course, borrowed their arguments for the redemptive and progressive nature of assimilation from Europe, appropriating the latter’s claims to be the initiator of cultural processes, the natural source of culture and innovation. The Russian ideology patterned itself on hegemonic ideas used by Western imperial powers: just as they claimed historical advantages and qualities of race and intellect, culture and spirit, that gave them permanent superiority over others, Russia, which by the end of the nineteenth century covered one-seventh of the earth’s surface, justified the conquest and assimilation of neighbouring nations and territories by claiming the same advantages, while simultaneously asserting that these neighbours lacked an intrinsically interesting history because they had been cut off from universal historical processes. Moreover, Russians were often motivated in their need for territorial expansion by a desire to emulate Europe, in order to establish imperial credentials. A sense of insecurity vis-à-vis Western states lay behind this desire to emulate. Dostoevsky’s comments from 1881 can serve as an example. He had carefully followed the Russian advance into Central Asia, and when the Turkmen fortress at Geok Tepe fell to Russian forces, he commented that Russia would finally gain Europe’s respect only by making further conquests in Asia. He described Asia as Russia’s “outlet to our future” and as an “undiscovered America.” The push toward Asia would provide a “renewed upsurge of spirit and strength.” Above all, he admitted candidly, “In Europe we were hangers-on and slaves, while in Asia we shall be the masters. In Europe we were Tatars, while in Asia we are the Europeans. Our mission, our civilizing mission in Asia will encourage our spirit and draw us on; the movement needs only to be started.” He spoke of the riches – metals, minerals, and coal fields – in these

boundless lands, that would “at once become Russian land in every place the Russ settled.” The subjugation of Asia would impress Europeans like no other arguments: “Europe is crafty and clever; she’ll guess what we’re up to at once and, believe me, she’ll begin to respect us immediately!”⁵³

The conviction that cultural hegemony was Russia’s birthright permeated the concepts of race, nation, religion, class, and gender, penetrating a wide range of official and unofficial publications that systematically legitimized colonial attitudes. Conservatives, liberals, and radicals strove to preserve the state’s integrity, expand its boundaries, and laud the benefits of assimilation to a superior Russian culture. Alfred J. Rieber wrote that “outside the extreme left, beginning with Chernyshevsky, there was no anti-imperialist sentiment among Russian intellectuals and political leaders comparable to that in Western Europe in the middle decades of the nineteenth century.”⁵⁴ Alexander Herzen’s statement that “Ukraine must be recognized as a free and independent country,” which appeared in the thirty-fourth issue of *The Bell* (Kolokol), published in London on 15 January 1859, stands as one of very few – startling – exceptions to the rule.⁵⁵

Even though the violence of empires was condemned by some liberals and radicals from a humanitarian standpoint, nonetheless, as Georgii Fedotov put it, “the results of that violence were accepted as inevitable,” just as assimilation was accepted as “the inevitable result of civilization.” It was only a question of time: “Half a century more and all Russia will be reading Pushkin in Russian ... and all ethnographic remnants will belong in museums and specialized journals.”⁵⁶ By ignoring imperial history and the question of nationalities, added Fedotov, the liberal camp surrendered the field to Russian nationalist interpretations. As a result not only liberals but also, in part, the revolutionary intelligentsia accepted the “naive idea that the Russian state, in contrast to all other Western states, was built not on violence, but through peaceful expansion, not through conquest, but through colonization. Similar convictions are typical of nationalists of all nations.”⁵⁷

There was also a profounder lesson that went unassimilated. A contributor to *The Bell* described the government as a vampire sucking the blood of the non-Russians and noted the deliberate policy of denationalization: “Our government, which dislikes pure nationalities, has always tried to mingle and reshuffle them as much as possible. Disjointed tribes are usually meeker, and it seems that the governmental stomach digests mixed blood more easily, there is less sharpness in it.”⁵⁸ This view, which was shortly afterwards echoed by Engels in his comments on the Irish question, connected internal despotism with the oppression of another nation, insisting that the violence and

cynicism inherent in such a policy inevitably rebounds upon and corrupts the perpetrator nation. The contributor to *The Bell* described the desire for territorial expansion as evidence of infantile and immature desires:

The unity of the agglomeration, the preservation of its excrescences, the defence of undigested pieces swallowed with difficulty – all this is extraneous and inimical to the fortunes of a people. In the name of a strong, invincible empire the people were crushed and fleeced; in its name serfdom, bureaucracy and compulsory conscription were maintained ... The common people, those complete slaves, were robbed of all civil rights, while the conceited notion of the Russian Empire's invincibility was maintained in them, as a result of which they developed both an arrogance towards foreigners and a cringing servility before the invincible authorities.⁵⁹

This argument – that the political practices and ideological justifications of imperialism ultimately profoundly damaged Russians as well as Ukrainians – was used in several contexts by advocates of Ukraine's national rights, from Mykhailo Drahomanov in the 1870s to Viacheslav Lipinsky in the 1920s and Ivan Dziuba in the 1960s. The refusal of even the "Scottish variant," which would have provided for partial recognition and a "limited form of assimilation," led irrevocably to the growth of fierce opposition.⁶⁰

The Economic Benefits of Empire

Already in the eighteenth century historians had observed that the union with Ukraine had been the most important factor in the rapid growth of Russian power.⁶¹ In the nineteenth century the economic motives for conquest were frequently stated frankly, as the above comments by Dostoevsky make clear. In the conclusion of a play written in 1845, which described Ermak's conquest of Siberia on behalf of the empire, Nikolai Polevoi wrote:

One eagle's wing has touched
The diamond mountains of rich India.
The other is resting on the floes of ocean ice,
Waves of gold are flowing from the mines and sands of Siberia.
The Bashkir, the Persian, the Mongol, the Indian,
and the Chinaman.⁶²

Urging the annexation of the Caucasus, one commentator wrote in 1862, "A territory will be annexed which abounds in metals, crops

and cattle.”⁶³ In the early years of bolshevik rule Engels’ words that Russia should only be mentioned as the “detainer of an immense amount of stolen property” could be cited approvingly at party congresses,⁶⁴ and Mikhail Pokrovsky could examine the stark economic reasons for imperial expansion: “While the empire of Peter and Catherine only knew wars for commercial routes, the empire of Nicholas I opened the age of wars for markets, one of which, the Persian, very quickly fell almost entirely into the hands of young Russian capitalism. By the 1830s people had been dreaming about a campaign to India, and practical preparations were being made for the capture of all Near Eastern markets.”⁶⁵ Pokrovsky and later historians have linked plans for the capture of Constantinople and the straits to assurances of grain exports. The empire made great efforts to settle the Black Sea littoral and develop its agricultural production. Soon the Ukrainian territories became known as the granary of Europe and more grain was shipped through Odessa than any other port in Europe. Because the trade was of major significance to the imperial economy, keeping the Black Sea and the Dardanelles open to shipping became a preoccupation of domestic and foreign policy. Calls for the conquest of Constantinople cannot be divorced from this economic imperative. The conquest of the Caucasus and Transcaucasia has been similarly linked with the perceived need to extend the Russian customs boundary, and the Russian “spiritual mission” in Afghanistan and Central Asia has been described as a cover for commercial reconnaissance.⁶⁶ Some imperialists even had their eyes on ousting the British from China. Nineteenth-century Russian protectionism, concludes Pokrovsky, confronted English free trade “almost everywhere across the face of the earth.”⁶⁷

In the context of this inter-imperial rivalry it is useful to recall that the acquisition of Ukraine was frequently touted as the prelude to an economic bonanza, in the same way as its potential loss was frequently described as an irreversible blow to the empire’s treasury and strategic geopolitical requirements.

Mazepists, *Little Russians*, and Khokhols

Andreas Kappeler has suggested that three different attitudes toward Ukrainians should be distinguished.⁶⁸ Disloyal Ukrainians, those who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were considered revolutionaries or suspected of conducting an independent foreign policy or of maintaining an anti-Russian orientation (pro-Polish, pro-Crimean Tatar, pro-Ottoman, and so on), were called *cherkasy*. After the revolt of Ivan Mazepa in 1708 they were collectively branded as

mazepists (*mazepintsy*). The term was revived at the end of the nineteenth century, when supporters of the national movement were similarly described as *neo-mazepists*.

Members of the elite who were not perceived as a threat, who had been coopted into the imperial gentry and were making their way up the social hierarchy through imperial service, were viewed as “Little Russians” (*malorossy* in Russian). These loyal servants of empire, whose armies had helped defend and extend its borders and who had contributed greatly to imperial culture, once acculturated and integrated into the gentry as a whole, were not considered a separate ethnic-national group but merely a colourful, regional variant of the Russian people.

The third term used to describe Ukrainians, *khokhols* (*khokhly*), denoted a peasant people, innocent and uncivilized, who lacked political leadership or rights and constituted human material to be consciously exploited by political elites. As the Ukrainian elite lost its local leadership function, it either assimilated and fused with the Russian hierarchy or dropped in social rank to the lowest level, that of the disenfranchized peasantry, or *khokhols*.

Ukrainians, as a people who were considered to be racially, confessionally, and linguistically related to Russians, were not discriminated against individually; indeed, as Little Russians they were encouraged and expected to assimilate. As an ethnos, however, they were fiercely discriminated against legally, socially, and politically, dispossessed of their very language, history, identity, and name in a way that racially, confessionally, and linguistically distant peoples were not. The choices for Ukrainians, therefore, were complete assimilation, persecution as *mazepists*, or being held in contempt as *khokhols*. The door, in short, was open to complete assimilation, but the refusal of this invitation was liable to the strictest punishment.

This conceptual framework has considerable heuristic value and allows for a nuanced reading of the colonial archive. It helps to explain the apparently incompatible attitudes held toward Ukrainians as a people by the mythmakers of empire, who might treat them as “brothers,” condemn them as duplicitous and disloyal, or ridicule them as ignorant serfs. They could appear in literature as honourable partners in empire building (Little Russians), treacherous enemies (*mazepists*), or colonized masses (*khokhols*). This conceptual framework also allowed imperial administrators and Russian writers to shift between depictions of a delightfully picturesque, related ethnic group, a brutal and inscrutable population of terrorists, and a malleable, naive peasantry. The various ideological operations justified the structure of inequalities in society and worked to convert people to the imperial design.

OPPOSING THE DISCOURSE OF EMPIRE

Ukraine, whose different regions have spent generations under Polish, Russian, and Austrian rule, has been profoundly affected by the experience of political subordination. For generations Ukrainian intellectuals have faced the dilemmas of accommodating to or resisting assimilationist pressures. Hegemonic attitudes expressed in neighbouring societies and literatures have been either absorbed, challenged, or transformed in Ukrainian writing. This heritage of interaction with a dominant cultural force is a prominent feature of contemporary literature, because redefining what it means to be Ukrainian still necessitates a dialogue with hegemonic views. The counterarguments aimed at Russian colonial discourse might be summarized in negative terms: denial of a single Rus nation that included Ukraine and Belarus, rejection of the claims of an organic Russian nation and of the authoritarian imperative, refusal of the legitimacy of Ukraine's conquest and subordination, and denial of the idea that Ukraine's union with Russia had produced or would produce economic riches. The fundamental constituents of the national counterdiscourse have emphasized the earlier existence of a protonational consciousness and the reconstitution in the modern period of a strong national sentiment, continuities across generations, the country's cultural distinctiveness, and historical integrity.

National Consciousness

The rise of Romantic nationalism in the first half of the nineteenth century not only generated the political and literary narratives that constructed the imperial vision and the identity of the Russian national state but also produced a counterdiscourse of national self-definition in Ukrainian society. While Russian writers were giving expression to a national consciousness of an imperial state, Polish and Ukrainian writers were "nation-building" in a different sense: they were attempting to instill pride in popular history and folklore, to "revive" or "construct" the national consciousness of stateless peoples. Different dynamics were shaping the three cultural processes: Russia was consolidating an empire; Polish society was developing an irridentist ideology aimed at the recovery of an independent state (which often, in their minds, included Ukrainian territories); and the Ukrainian intelligentsia was engaged in the creation of a self-conscious national movement. Writers sought to represent each nation as a cultural entity with its own history and unique identity, while establishing claims to cultural and territorial integrity.

There is a distinction, however, to be made between the kinds of nations represented by the Russians, Poles, and Ukrainians. Hegel and Engels had designated nations that had a long tradition of independent state life, like Poland and Russia, as “historical.”⁶⁹ In the nineteenth century they had a nobility and a more differentiated class structure, and they controlled the cities both on their own ethnographic territory and on territories where Ukrainians were a majority. Because in the nineteenth century they could not point to a recent tradition of independent state life (a history), Ukrainians, on the other hand, were designated by Engels as a “nonhistorical people.” Ukraine’s past had been marked by greater discontinuities between epochs; it had lost most of its gentry to Russification and Polonization over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, after the cossack rebellions had failed to create a lasting, viable state; and by the nineteenth century Ukrainians were a predominantly “peasant” people. There was therefore a distinction to be made between “state nations” like the Poles and Russians (even if in the case of the Poles statehood had recently been lost) and “stateless people” like the Ukrainians. Members of Russian and Polish societies were significantly better educated and had a more mature national consciousness. Consequently, there were important differences in the manner in which the claims of the three intelligentsia of the three societies could be presented and the “debate” conducted. Russia, for all its backwardness compared to Europe, summoned the resources of a powerful empire. Poland, formerly an enormous power, mobilized an influential social elite that was dedicated to regaining its statehood. Ukraine, whose claim to exist as a political entity was vigorously denied by both Russian and Polish societies, necessarily relied on tactics of agitation and education by a small cultural elite. The first spoke from a position of strength, indeed hegemony; the second defended its case for much of the nineteenth century in a situation of political subordination but social dominance, not only in the Polish heartlands but also in Eastern Galicia and Right Bank Ukraine; and the third entered the debate from a position of both political and social subordination.

Ewa Thompson has recently argued for a taxonomy of nationalisms that could distinguish between defensive and aggressive models. The effort to “know and cultivate one’s own history and idealized traditions” ought to be delineated from “Self-assertion through conquest and suppression of other traditions.”⁷⁰ For most of the last two centuries Ukrainians have treated their nationalism as a defensive posture, in the same way that Franz Fanon treated nationalism in *The Wretched of the Earth*. It was a reaction of the oppressed to the sickness of colonialism. Recent postcolonial theorists, like Leela Gandhi, have

similarly argued that the interpretive community in the West has often failed to make these distinctions: “the antinationalist phobias of first-world thinkers and their readiness to attribute chauvinism to the assertions of nationhood by stateless or empire-dominated nations are echoes of a Hegelian perception of a ‘lack’ characterizing all but the strongest nationalisms of Europe.”⁷¹

Some limited advantages could be gained by Ukrainians from inter- and intrainperial rivalries. The Russian Empire tolerated a “loyal” Ukrainian patriotism in the 1820s as part of its search for a Russian identity and, after the Polish revolt of 1830–31, as a way of undermining strong Polish influences in the Right Bank territories. By the second half of the century, however, as concerns about separatism spread, publication of Ukrainian books was banned or severely restricted by the Valuev and Ems edicts (1863 and 1876 respectively), and the national movement was outlawed.⁷² In Western Ukraine such an outright proscription did not occur, because the Austro-Hungarian Empire supported a weak version of the Ukrainian movement as a counterbalance to Polish dominance.

Throughout its history Ukraine generated intellectual elites who endeavoured to define and defend its separate cultural identity. They represented it as a nation with a history, contradicting mainstream Russian and Polish intellectuals who throughout much of the modern period represented the national movement both to the West and to Ukrainians themselves as an “invention,” a “plot,” of Germany, Austria, or the Ottoman Empire, or of a few ambitious intellectuals. At stake, of course, was Ukraine’s right to exist as a political entity, a right that was resisted in Russia by the military, social, and economic powers of a repressive state. In the nineteenth century tsarist authorities, Slavophiles like Nikolai Danilevsky and liberals like Belinsky all argued, moreover, that Ukraine was already fully assimilated. Even the name “Ukraine” was avoided: “Little Russia” served official purposes, but this name was usually elided to “Russia” (or to “Rus,” which had the added advantage of amalgamating pre-Muscovite and non-Muscovite history into an apparently seamless whole). Ukrainian intellectuals presented the counterargument of historical agency: at points in history Ukraine had been an independent actor in the Polish-Russian-Ukrainian contest; Ukrainians had played a role in constructing views of the “other” and “our” in the literatures of the three nations; they had a separate identity, and the failure to recognize this distorted the real picture of Polish and Russian identity as much as that of Ukrainian identity.

The identity issue is particularly difficult to disentangle in the first half of the nineteenth century, when many Ukrainian intellectuals appeared to speak with a Russian voice. The official Russian policy of

encouraging pride in a Ukrainian identity (albeit as part of the wider imperial one) in order to counteract Polish influence led to the publication of Ukrainian histories and songs, the appointment of Mykhailo Maksymovych as the first rector of Kyiv University in 1834, and the growth of a “Ukrainophile” literature in Russian with strong anti-Polish and anti-Jewish sentiments. However, the doctrine of Official Nationality also fostered the idea of a purely Russian identity, as opposed to the “greater” Russian or imperial one.⁷³ Imperial military successes against Turkey and Persia and particularly against Napoleon in 1812 encouraged writers to speak of a universal mission for “Russia” and the “Russian people” and to attach metaphysical or mystical connotations to the term “holy Rus” (*sviataia Rus*). By the second half of the nineteenth century “holy Rus” came to signify a “greater” Russia into which the Ukrainian and Belarusian identities had been unceremoniously collapsed. George Luckyj has written of the two contradictory stimuli – a tolerated, weak, loyalist, local Ukrainian patriotism and a powerful, aggressive, statist Russian nationalism – as generating the tension fundamental to a sense of Ukrainian identity at this time and as igniting the “slow-burning fuse of national consciousness.”⁷⁴

Continuities

Beneath the loyalist stance of many nineteenth-century Ukrainian patriots there lay inadmissible links with earlier oppositional attitudes. As Frank Sysyn has pointed out, the country was no tabula rasa for nation-building before the nineteenth century: the traditional elite had not been entirely extinguished, nor had it lost the memory of the two eighteenth-century polities abolished by the empire – the Zaporozhian Sich, and the Hetmanate.⁷⁵ The recollection of being a distinct political nation in control of a *patria* fuelled oppositionist attitudes and an emerging anti-imperialism among the new intelligentsia. Nineteenth-century intellectuals could turn for evidence of an earlier Ukrainian political consciousness to the eighteenth-century chronicles, particularly those of Hryhorii Hrabianka (1710) and Samuil Velychko (1720), which were republished in the mid-nineteenth century.⁷⁶ They could find this evidence in political documents like the anonymous “On Improving the Situation” (O popravlenii sostoianiiia) from the 1750s, which argued for national state autonomy as a requirement of Ukrainian society, and in the “Appeal of the Little Russian Gentry” (Proshenie malorosiiskago shliakhetstva) from 1764, which proposed that Russia and Ukraine were equals and asked that the legal accords originally signed between the tsar and the hetman be respected.⁷⁷ The appeal, for example, called for a high level of internal autonomy, free election

of the hetman, an independent Ukrainian judicial system, control of the financial-budgetary system, territorial integrity of Ukrainian lands with clearly defined borders and custom-houses, an end to appointing priests from Russia who were unfamiliar with Ukraine, a return of debts owing in Turkish and Prussian wars, and the establishment of universities, gymnasia, and printing presses. Other examples of oppositionist and pro-Ukrainian attitudes can be found among enlightened nobles like Count Aleksandr Bezborodko, Hryhorii (Grigorii) and Ivan Poleytyka, and Vasyl (Vasilii) Kapnist.⁷⁸

Analogous attitudes were expressed in literature. The best-known examples are the long poem by Semen Divovych entitled *A Conversation of Great Russia with Little Russia* (*Razgovor Velikorossii s Malorossiei*, 1762), the anonymous *History of the Rus People* (*Istoriia Rusov*), which was probably written in the early nineteenth century and soon circulated in scores of copies, and Ivan Kotliarevsky's *Eneida* (*Aeneid*) (1798–1842), which has been described as a rallyingcry for the Ukrainian gentry elite, “through and through an argument for a modern, relevant national consciousness.”⁷⁹ By writing in the Ukrainian vernacular, Kotliarevsky was projecting a non-Russian readership, a different identity with its own evolutionary dynamic, sensibility, and horizon of expectation.⁸⁰ In recent times his work has been interpreted as a veiled critique of imperial policies.⁸¹

Even the supposedly apolitical writings of Hryhorii Skovoroda can be read as a form of protest. His celebrated desire to escape from the world's vanity and avoid a loss of identity can be read as a refusal of the Russian state-nationalism. “I refuse to follow the drum and enslave cities,” he wrote, “or to use my state position to intimidate the poor.”⁸² Strong antimilitarist and anti-imperialist sentiments occur in several poems: he quips that in search of peace “armies march, set fire to and destroy cities, continue bombardments for entire ages.”⁸³ In his “Conversation on True Wisdom” he has Wisdom inform Man that she exists in all countries. When Man asks in astonishment whether this means that she also exists in China and other “barbaric” countries, she answers positively.⁸⁴ The writer's message is that all national forms of life are equally valuable because the eternal meaning of life can be expressed in all of them.

Skovoroda's belief in the secret inner light that provides identity and guides each conscience was an implicit rejection of civilizing missions and hegemonic notions. In both his teachings and his life he waged a countercultural struggle against the spirit of his time, with its “striving for profit, for power ... greed, cupidity, careerism, luxury and worldly cares.” To all of these he counterposed purity of heart, modesty, and simplicity.⁸⁵ When set against the metropolitan glorification

of military campaigns and disparagement of foreign lands, these statements reverberate with subversive undertones. Russian scholars, as Chyzhevsky has pointed out, have completely ignored the Ukrainian context in order to interpret Skovoroda in terms of Slavophile views, going so far as to falsify quotations.⁸⁶ Chyzhevsky makes the point that Skovoroda's sources (which were German and classical), his language (a modernized version of Ukrainian Church Slavic that served as the literary language of contemporary Ukraine), and his style all make him a typical representative of the Ukrainian baroque.

One of the key issues here is the evidence that a national elite had survived into modern times and was able, out of Romantic nationalism, to generate a new ideology of national consolidation and rebirth. It has been pointed out that in the last decades of the eighteenth century, as autonomy was being liquidated, the Cossack leadership, or *starshyna*, became extremely active in literature, publishing journals and newspapers and translating French philosophes, ancient literature, and scholarly works of geography and medicine.⁸⁷ The use of the Ukrainian recension of Church Slavic had continued in the Kyiv Academy until Russian was introduced in 1784, and locally published books were used in educational institutions until they were banned by an imperial edict in 1785. It was the Left Bank gentry that succeeded in 1805 in founding and funding Kharkiv University, an event that had such an important effect on intellectual life in the early part of the century. The university's staff and programme reflected Ukrainian demands for cultural visibility.⁸⁸ The various journals and almanacs that came from its press made a conscious attempt to portray the land and country in a positive light. In the first decade of its existence 210 books appeared – as many as in all the rest of the empire. The selection of themes and the purpose of the research conducted by intellectuals in the first decades of the nineteenth century (sometimes described as the “unconscious” awakening of patriotic feelings, the “unwitting” setting apart of the Russian and Ukrainian people, and “loyal” investigations of racial differences and separate origins in studies by Mykhailo Maksymovych, Osyp Bodiansky, Mykola Kostomarov, and others) were indicative of a cultural-political agenda and perhaps not as innocent as their own declarations or as later critics have maintained. Even purportedly loyalist writings, when analysed in the light of imperial-national dynamics, reveal profound anxieties concerning the imperial vision. The surface of texts might not reveal ripples of dissent, but their deeper mythical and metaphorical structures describe powerful political feelings. It is difficult not to agree with Sypovsky, who, in surveying Ukrainian themes in Russian literature in the first half of the nineteenth century, argued that the emergence

of an anti-imperial Ukrainian literature reflected the survival of an old heritage. He saw the appearance of Shevchenko not only as a new beginning, an initiation *ex nihilo* of a new paradigm, but also as the culmination of a submerged, denied – yet potent – tradition.⁸⁹

Distinctive Culture, History, and Identity

Whatever the historical and political interpretation put on Ukraine's cultural differences by intellectuals, the fact of its distinctiveness was attested to by a host of observers. Russian, German, French, British, and other travellers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries attested to the profound differences between Russians and Ukrainians. Feeding a separate political and historical identity was a vital indigenous, vernacular culture that existed just beneath the surface of officially Russian, imperial life. To quote Mirsky, "Before the centralising reforms of Catherine, Ukrainian civilization remained very distinct from Great Russian. The people had their rich store of folk poetry, their professional itinerant singers, their popular puppet theater, their highly developed artistic handicrafts. Wandering scholars strolled the land; churches were built in the 'Mazeppa' baroque style. The one language spoken was Ukrainian and the *Moskal* was an exotic figure so seldom seen that the name was synonymous with soldier."⁹⁰

Ukraine had developed a wide network of schools attached to the churches and serviced by deacons. But this popular education system, which was entirely lacking in Russia, was destroyed by Catherine when she eliminated the cossack order and enserfed the population. The historian Dmytro Bahaly calculated that the ratio of schools to population in Ukraine was higher in 1732 than in 1884 and observed a strong connection between the level of popular education and the strength of national consciousness: protests against Catherine's reforms were strongest where the level of education was highest.⁹¹

The evidence of a distinctive popular culture was used by Ukrainian scholars to bolster claims to nation status. Published literature, songs, stories, and dramas were analysed by Mykola Kostomarov, Volodymyr Antonovych, and Mykhailo Drahomanov to demonstrate the existence of a protonational identity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁹² Works of art, such as the painting of the Cossack Mamai, which enjoyed enormous popularity over centuries, have also been seen as encoding in symbolic form the national identity and will to survive.⁹³ It is important to remember the influence of this common, quotidian culture in considering the circumstances that influenced writers to take pro-Ukrainian and anti-imperial positions. Separated by political boundaries, nineteenth-century Ukrainians could still recognize a

shared culture, history, and sense of identity, which they shaped into a national movement that led to the establishment of a state in 1917–19.

The nature of government in conquered territories, like the nature of colonialism, can, of course, vary. There were two distinctive features of the colonization of Ukraine. The first was the inclusion of Ukrainians among those who benefitted from conquest and settlement. Drahomanov points out that the evidence of the political songs points to Ukrainians supporting and identifying strongly with the anti-Tatar and anti-Turkish campaigns.⁹⁴ This was partly because they had suffered for generations from military raiders from the South who had carried off booty and slaves and partly because they hoped to benefit from the imperial conquest of the Black Sea littoral. Although some Ukrainians did indeed benefit from the securing and settlement of new lands, as soon as the Turkish and Tatar threats had been eliminated, hundreds of thousands of free peasants and cossacks were thrown into another form of slavery – serfdom – or suffered from the imposed system of tsarist military colonies. The tsarist administration, in the words of one observer, was more fortunate than England, which had to travel to New South Wales in pursuit of its imperial designs, or than Holland, which had to purchase its own territories. Tsarist colonialism involved not expansion into overseas territories but into neighbouring lands.⁹⁵

The second distinctive feature of the colonization of Ukrainians was the imposition, alongside a colonial administration and economic exploitation, of a policy of full assimilation on a “consanguineous” people. The goal of full assimilation, according to Ivan Dziuba, was justified by a unique ideological construct: the state first recognized neighbouring peoples as equal citizens of the empire and bestowed all “rights” upon them. Only then did it make war upon them “to affix to them by any means whatsoever this equality and these rights. One result of this unique approach was that any resistance against the conquerors was designated in advance as ‘treason to the Fatherland.’”⁹⁶ Dziuba has described as “clever, complex and flexible” the tactics employed to suppress, corrupt, and denationalize subordinated elites. The state made use of the “hypnotic power” of the universal and invincible mission of tsardom as the Third Rome, or as the liberator of the Slavic people from the Turks or other peoples, the policy of divide and rule, the use of informers, and Russification.⁹⁷ Especially effective, in Dziuba’s view, was the wide dissemination of the theories of a common Fatherland and consanguinity, which allowed Russian chauvinists like Mikhail Katkov, the “faithful Cerebus of absolutism,” and Vasili Shulgin, a “symbol of antisemitism and Ukrainophobia,” to employ a particular rhetoric of brotherhood, love, and liberation that is characteristic of Russian colonialism. These discourses

constituted part of a Machiavellian process aimed at breaking down inward resistance, and they were often successful.⁹⁸

This political-ideological counterdiscourse of national resistance has been an inextricable part of the story of the emergence and evolution of modern Ukrainian literature. The latter's rapid development in the nineteenth century has been described by George Grabowicz as a move from an underground existence in manuscript form in the early decades, to the status of a provincial addition to imperial literature, and finally, at the end of the century, into a differentiated, dynamic, and self-defining entity.⁹⁹ Grabowicz has also noted the rejection, from the first, of the imperial semantic system and normative poetics. In an important article on the different "horizons of expectation" of Russian and Ukrainian readers, he has pointed out that although the Ukrainian literature emerged from a wider context that it shared with Russian literature, the horizon of expectation for both literary publics quickly diverged. The awareness of a Ukrainian consciousness among Russians and the internal self-awareness of Ukrainians were quite different things. Russians held to an uncrystallized, single-culture consciousness throughout the century, continuing to view Ukrainian literature as nothing but a literary experiment, a witty prank (*umnaia shalost*), as Nikolai Polevoi called it, long after it had developed into a form of national self-assertion for Ukrainians.¹⁰⁰ This development of Ukrainian writing into a differentiated literature was underestimated by Russian intellectuals. The reason lay partly in proscription but also partly in a politically induced myopia: the Russian readership's horizon of expectation in the century's second half embraced a *nil admirari* attitude at the same time as large sections of this public actively supported the government's refusal to allow any publishing in or public use of Ukrainian.¹⁰¹ It is the thesis of the present study that the diverging visions conditioned by the two horizons were created by two contradictory dynamics: the imperial-colonial modelling of Ukraine in one and the generation of counterimages and competing narrative structures in the other. The denial of literary status was implicitly, and toward the end of the century explicitly, a denial of national status. The existence of a certain kind of writing – usually defined as educational, ethnographic, folkloric, or historical – could be registered as long as it was accepted that the writings were investigations into a dead literature. The theme of the death of Ukrainian literature, the Ukrainian polity, and sometimes the language were, in fact, prominent in both Polish and Russian Romantic writings. Throughout the century, political considerations, consciously expressed or unconsciously absorbed, continued to deny the literature any role as a serious intellectual medium.

THE ROMANCE OF AMBIVALENCE

To this account of conflicting discourses and diverging national identities should be added a note on ambivalence. The formation and portrayal of national identities in the cross-currents of debates on empire is a complex and fascinating aspect of Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian literatures. Polish literature “orientalized” Ukraine, just as Russian literature orientalized the Caucasus and, to a degree, Ukraine, in order to strengthen its own claims to membership in the “civilized” part of the globe and the empire-building club of nations. An often-cited complication in discussions of Polish and Russian identities, however, is their own ambiguous relationships to Europe. The instability in Polish and Russian self-imaging stemmed from the fact that both identities were viewed by Westerners, and sometimes by themselves, as semi-European or “oriental.”

Self-definition vis-à-vis Western Europe was inextricably intertwined with self-definition vis-à-vis one’s neighbours. Since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when Poland and Russia first came into contact with an “alien” Ruthenia (Ukraine and Belarus) situated between them, writers of the different nations had traded in identity myths and stereotypes. The early writers distinguished between Ruthenia, or Ukraine, and Russia. Nineteenth-century writers drew on these earlier myths and stereotypes to produce canonical literary formulations. It is significant that the focus gradually shifted to a binary opposition between Poland and Russia and the elision of Ukrainian society. Mickiewicz, in his lectures at the Collège de France, his “Road to Russia” (*Droga do Rosji*, 1832), and his *Forefathers’ Eve, III* (*Dziady, III*, 1832) provided what Czesław Miłosz has described as “a summation of the Polish position toward Russia.”¹⁰² Mickiewicz described Russia as radically foreign. The Polish-Russian relationship was portrayed in terms of antinomies: good and evil, faith and heresy, culture and barbarism, freedom and despotism, spirit and matter.¹⁰³ Whereas Poland was seen as a leader among freedom-loving nations, Russia was portrayed as a threat to the world. The clash between nations was solved in an unforgiving manner. The “Wallenrod complex,” after Mickiewicz’s *Konrad Wallenrod* (1828), described a pattern of behaviour that sanctioned hatred and revenge against the enemy. On the other hand, already in Catherine the Great’s time Russian literature portrayed Poland as an equally foreign and inimical “hydra” that required slaying by heroic figures. Anti-Polish attitudes became particularly prominent in Russian literature during the two Polish insurrections of 1830–31 and 1863. Before the nineteenth century the Polish-Russian hostility

reflected two states with competing imperial ambitions; after the partitions of Poland it demonstrated two hostile national consciousnesses.

Such attitudes naturally influenced the Russian and Polish views of Ukraine. However, competition for the territory and patrimony of Ukraine restrained both Polish and Russian writers from drawing too radical a division between themselves and “the land of the cossacks.” In the Romantic period both literatures in fact created Ukrainian schools, which aimed at domesticating Ukrainian history and folklore within their own literatures. In Polish literature Juliusz Słowacki, Antoni Malczewski, Józef Bogdan Zaleski and Seweryn Goszczyński, as well as the minor writers Tymko Padura (Tomasz Padurra), Tomasz Olizarowski, Michał Grabowski, and Michał Czajkowski wrote on Ukrainian themes. In Russian literature the Ukrainian school was represented not only by Ukrainians like Vasilii Narezhny, Vasilii Kapnist, Orest Somov (pseudonym Porfirii Baisky), Aleksei Perovsky (pseudonym Antonii Pogorelsky), and Nikolai Gogol but by Russians like Kondratii Ryleev. These writers generally discounted separatist political claims but recognized and attempted to subsume Ukraine’s cultural identity within the larger Polish or Russian identity.

The literary Ukraine therefore had a highly ambivalent status in Russian and Polish literature. It was sometimes viewed as a sister Slavic culture and people, sometimes as a branch of the “greater” Polish or Russian. Moreover, it must be remembered that it was still possible in the nineteenth century, as it had been throughout the early modern period, for individuals to live in two cultures, to maintain a dual identity and loyalty. Before the age of Romanticism a member of the elite order could express allegiance to two or more political-national communities (the larger state structure and the local realm). The recorded culture of a political nation (such as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or the Russian Empire) could therefore be seen as a *lingue franche* – like medieval Latin, the medium and heritage of more than one nation. At points in their history Ukrainian intellectuals viewed the use of Polish in the commonwealth or Russian in the empire in precisely these terms. From the mid-seventeenth century, as Ukrainian clerics moved to Muscovy and effectively took over Muscovite religious, educational, and intellectual life, a Ukrainization of Muscovite culture occurred that resulted in an attempt to produce a common high culture based on a shared literature and ideology. In the eighteenth century, as imperial Russia moved to develop a high culture based on the Russian vernacular and a secular literature, this common high culture was challenged by a process of Russification.¹⁰⁴ Nonetheless, in the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth century, Ukrainians could still

claim to be making contributions to Russian imperial culture without denying their Ukrainianness. Writers like Prokopovich (Prokopovych), Kapnist, or Gogol, simply by virtue of writing in Russian, were not making uncomplicated declarations of identity.¹⁰⁵

By the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, however, those who still tried to maintain a dual Ukrainian-Russian identity were, increasingly, struggling with the issue of a divided loyalty. George Luckyj has described the choice for Ukrainians in the first half of the century as the horns of a dilemma: Gogol or Shevchenko? Empire or Ukraine?¹⁰⁶ As assimilatory tendencies progressed and the imperial concept of a political nation became closely identified with a single ethno-linguistic, or cultural, nation – the Russian nation – the idea of a disappearing Little Russian identity was frequently mentioned.¹⁰⁷ Ukrainian nationalists reacted by increasingly enjoining their countrymen to reject this imperial identity and work in their native language for their own cultural nation, in expectation of eventually forming a separate political entity. As George Grabowicz has pointed out, it was only toward the end of the century that a shift to monolingual systems and to the demand that a “high art” (previously the prerogative of the cosmopolitan, or “imperial,” function) occurred.¹⁰⁸ A similar pattern held in Galicia under Austrian rule, where the national movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries increasingly demanded a clear statement of loyalty and branded as apostates those who, like Ivan Vahylevych or Mykhailo Yatskiv, worked in Polish.¹⁰⁹

The important point here is that the intersection of political and cultural identities produced a wide spectrum of responses to the issues of empire and nation that is not amenable to simplistic formulation. The importation of Ukrainian churchmen, intellectuals, and artists begun by Peter the Great and continued by subsequent monarchs made imperial “Russian” writers out of many Ukrainians. It also produced writers like Prokopovich, Kapnist, and Gogol, who manifested an acceptable dual identity: politically they were imperial Russians, culturally Ukrainians. As assimilatory processes accelerated in the nineteenth century, the trend moved toward an unambiguously Russian identity, both politically and culturally. There are many examples of a slow assimilation or denationalization, a drifting across lines of demarcation and sometimes back again. However, at the same time as many individuals assumed a Russian (or, in Right Bank Ukraine, a Polish) identity, others moved in the opposite direction, exchanging their Russian (or Polish) identity for a Ukrainian one – a fact that caused consternation among members of the rejected culture, which claimed to be more progressive and enlightened and therefore entitled to assimilate but not be assimilated. Significantly, the reasons

given for making the transition to a Ukrainian identity were political: they were connected to an identification with the peasantry, a covert anti-imperialism or incipient nationalism. Volodymyr Antonovych and Tadei Rylsky made public cultural identifications of this nature in the 1860s, exchanging a Polish for a Ukrainian identity in Right Bank Ukraine. Mykola Kostomarov and Marko Vovchok (Mariia Vilinska) are famous, though more ambiguous, examples of a commitment to move from a Russian to a Ukrainian identity. This transfer of national and cultural allegiances is a largely unexplored phenomenon that affected many prominent figures in all three Slavic groups. There were also examples of the Wallenrod complex, individuals who hid their real loyalties while harbouring dreams of betrayal and revenge. Vasiliï Kapnist, the Ukrainian nobleman who carried out a secret mission to Berlin in 1791 to request Prussia's help in throwing off the imperial yoke in the event of a Russo-Prussian war, was one example.¹¹⁰ Imperial anxieties concerning such repressed national aspirations surface in nineteenth-century literary portrayals, particularly of Mazepa, Ukraine's most famous Wallenrod.

There were stigmas attached to being associated with the less well-situated and frequently despised Ukrainian identity. The self-hatred that resulted from internalized class, cultural, and national stereotypes has been a feature of writing by Ukrainians for centuries. David Frick has described how in the seventeenth century the pressures of adapting to the ideal of becoming a "political Pole" demanded a distancing from the societal image of the "unpolitical" Ruthenian bumpkin and caused intellectuals to shift ground in the confessional and cultural wars.¹¹¹ The loss of the Ukrainian upper classes to Russian and Polish cultures was lamented by intellectuals who criticized Ukrainians for lacking self-respect. Panteleimon Kulish did so in his postscript to *Homestead Poetry* (*Khutorna poeziia*, 1882).¹¹² Ivan Franko, Mykola Khvylovy, and Ievhen Malaniuk made the analysis of national self-hatred an integral part of their creative work and polemical writings.

Examples of identity-confusion among writers have been equally disconcerting for observers. They have been seen as the product of various forms of dissimulation, border crossing, passing, and mimicry. Ivan Franko, examining Ivan Vyshensky's response to Polish cultural dominance in the early seventeenth century, marshalled evidence to indicate a typical response of the subaltern: "they [the Ruthenians] learned to hide within themselves their real thoughts, to say and do one thing, and to think another thing, whereby with time the mask became one with the face, such that individuals did not themselves even realize what was genuine and true in them and what was masked."¹¹³ Writers were frequently caught at the conjunction of several

opposing discourses, and as a consequence, the disjunctions displayed in their works traced the lines of discursive conflicts. One insight of feminist theory into discourse analysis is that

individual subjects should not be seen simply to adopt roles which are mapped out for them by discourses; rather, they experience discomfort with certain elements implicit in discourses, they find pleasure in some elements, they are openly critical about others. Individual subjects are constantly weighing up their own norms against what they assume other individuals or groups perceive their position to be. In this way, the process of finding a position for oneself within discourse is never fully achieved, but is rather one of constantly evaluating and considering one's position and, inevitably, constantly shifting one's perception of one's position and the wider discourse as a whole.¹¹⁴

The writers and texts analysed here present many examples of such instabilities in self-assessment and shifts in self-positioning.

The two major interlocking discourses discussed might be viewed as forming what Mary Louise Pratt has called a "combat zone" in which "cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination."¹¹⁵ The Russian-Ukrainian power relationship was a complex one that displayed reciprocities. It would be wrong to view it simply as a top-down model, a strictly ruler-ruled relationship. The presence of Ukrainians in the imperial administration at various levels, their involvement in contributions to Russian as well as Ukrainian cultural life meant that attitudes among Ukrainians toward imperial culture ranged from acceptance of assimilation in exchange for the recognized role of junior partner in empire-building, through various forms of coexistence, to the stubborn refusal of an alien civilization. Most often, however, it was a complicated negotiation that involved some complicity in the interests of survival, while allowing "native" resistance to be inscribed into cultural production in a wide variety of ways.

2 Imperial Borderlands in Russian Literature

CONQUERING THE ORIENT:
ALEKSANDR BESTUZHEV-MARLINSKY'S
AMMALAT-BEK (1832)

After securing the Crimea and the Black Sea coast, the Russian Empire began to conquer the Caucasus. General Aleksei Petrovych Yermolov, a hero of the Napoleonic wars, had been appointed governor and chief administrator of Georgia and the Caucasus in 1816. He began the subjugation of the mountain peoples with a ruthlessness that earned him the nickname “the Caucasian Cromwell.” It was a major effort, and it met with fierce resistance. From the early 1830s to 1859, under the leadership of the legendary Shamil, the rebels tied down some two hundred thousand troops, a third of the tsarist army. Russian losses were ten to thirty thousand annually. Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian soldiers deserted or went over to the enemy; and the cost of the war bankrupted the economy.¹ Shamil’s eventual surrender to Russia in 1859 was followed by the expulsion or emigration to Turkey, in one of the darkest chapters in nineteenth-century Russian imperialism, of an estimated 493,000 people.² One Russian officer commented that “this was the funeral of a people that was disappearing ... At the abandoned hearths of the doomed Cherkes people there now stood the great Russian people ... The weeds have been uprooted, wheat will sprout.”³ It was an ideological formulation that he might easily have come across in the metropolitan press.

The war had a profound psychological impact: it gave rise to ethnographic and political studies and outstanding literary works, from Aleksandr Pushkin's "Captive of the Caucasus" (*Kavkazskii plennik*, 1822) to Lev Tolstoi's *Hadji Murad* (1904). While official circles in St Petersburg minimized or denied the reality of the violence, claiming that the government was merely extending Christianity and the benefits of stable rule to the area, many Decembrists who served their sentence in the army formed a different opinion. Their position toward imperial expansion has been described as an "enlightened colonialism." While objecting to the aggressive colonial policy and advocating instead the development of friendly economic and cultural ties, they nonetheless accepted Russia's right to expand in a region they considered *pars patriae*.⁴ It was an attitude that could simultaneously lament the brutality involved in the subjugation of the mountain peoples while concurring that their absorption was indispensable for Russia. This ambivalence characterizes literary portrayals of the mountain peoples: on the one hand, they are seen as noble tribesmen who will become loyal servants of the empire; on the other, as fanatics who obstinately refuse to accept the necessity of assimilation. Bestuzhev-Marlinsky captured the duality when he wrote to a friend that "they would be a wonderful people if they could only rid themselves of plague, cholera and Mohammedanism."⁵

Russia as Double-Headed Janus

Descriptions of the war reflected views of Russia's mission as a superpower. The empire had emerged from the Napoleonic wars as Europe's dominant land power and as an arbiter in international affairs. Intellectuals were aware that its political strength ought to be complemented by an equally brilliant cultural identity. Educated Russians knew Madame de Staël's influential *De l'Allemagne* (1813), in which she maintained that the literature of a nation should reflect its indigenous characteristics and national genius, and Johann Peter Friedrich Ancillon's *Analyse de l'idée de la littérature nationale* (1817), in which the author insisted that only fully developed nations were capable of a truly national literature. What, then, was Russia's national genius? What cultural path was it following? "The philosophical epoch," as the 1830s and 1840s have been called, sought the answer in the writings of German Romanticism, particularly of Schelling.⁶ The Romantic idea of organic wholeness derived from this philosophy was used to support both the idea of expansionism and that of slow, "natural" growth; it was claimed that Russia's destiny, as demonstrated by historical laws and geopolitical facts, lay in assimilating its southern

and eastern regions while preserving and spreading its cultural heritage. These ideas, which some found contradictory, could be reconciled, it was urged, through the imposition of a Russian cultural heritage on all subjugated territories.

Many prominent figures subscribed to the idea of Russia's great Eastern mission. Count Sergei Uvarov presented what has been dubbed the "classic statement of purpose by an early nineteenth-century Russian orientalist" in 1810 with his "Projet d'une académie asiatique."⁷ Since, he urged, it was Russia's fate to act as mediator between Europe and the Orient, serious study of Asia was vital on both political and civilizational grounds: "jamais la raison d'état n'a été aussi bien d'accord avec les grandes vues de la civilisation morale."⁸ In 1833 Bestuzhev-Marlinsky described Russia's own nature as that of "a double-headed Janus" that "gazed simultaneously on Asia and Europe; her mode of existence comprised a link between the settled activity of the West and the nomadic indolence of the East."⁹ Some saw Russia's future literary greatness as conditional upon fulfilling this Eastern mission. Shevyrev said that "a Russian wishing to acquire European fame has no other road but to the Orient ... Only the Russians are in a position to explain the Orient to the Europeans, and indeed they have been created for the purpose of being a conductor [between East and West]."¹⁰ Lermontov caught the same mood on the eve of his departure for the Caucasus in 1837 when he wrote to a friend: "I shall write to you about the country of marvels, the East. Napoleon's words console me: 'Les grands noms se font à l'Orient.'"¹¹ Such personal testimonies both reflected and shaped imperial attitudes. They show how the desire for personal fame became fused with the perceived need for imperial aggrandisement and how both could appear to be dependent upon the subjugation and ensuing cultural interaction with what has been called "the domestic Orient of the Russians."¹² Territorial acquisition became associated with an enlarged national and personal self-awareness while at the same time holding out the promise of a brilliant military or literary career.

The idea of intercourse with Eastern peoples as a means of spiritual regeneration could appeal for sanction to Western attitudes, where enchantment with the Orient was a popular literary topic. In Romantic literature it could sometimes be explained by the idea of the moral and cultural, though not military, superiority of the East. Victor Hugo, in the preface to his *Les Orientales*, which caused a furore when it appeared in 1829 following the successful Greek war of independence against the Turks, claimed that "for both empires and literatures, the Orient is called upon to play a role in the West. Already the memorable Greek war has made all peoples turn in this direction. The equilibrium

of Europe appears ready to break; the European status quo, already rotten to the core, is cracking on Constantinople's side. The entire continent is leaning in the direction of the Orient. We will see great things. The old Asiatic barbarism is not perhaps as deprived of superior men as our civilization believes."¹³

West and East in Ammalat-Bek

Bestuzhev, the Decembrist conspirator whose frank confession of his role in the uprising was rewarded by the tsar with permission to publish under the pseudonym Marlinsky, crystallized many of these pro-Oriental attitudes in his prose.¹⁴ After serving two years of exile for his role in the revolt of 1825, he was assigned at his own request to military service in the Caucasus, joining many of his co-conspirators.¹⁵ His Caucasian stories won him a phenomenal popularity, in particular *Ammalat-Bek* (1832), *Mulla-Nur* (1836), *Letters from Dagestan* (*Pisma iz Dagestana*, 1831), and nine ethnographic descriptions of Azerbaidzhan (1834–36).¹⁶ He learned Azeri Turkish, the dominant language in the region at the time, which contemporary Russians termed “Tatar,” and developed wide contacts among the people. As the most fashionable writer of his day, a Russian Kipling, he exerted enormous influence on officers of the army, who viewed him as their guide in regional affairs. The general public saw him as the best source of authentic ethnographic information and thrilling plots. One contemporary wrote that “the public, in fact, focused its attention not upon Pushkin ... Marlinsky was still considered the day's most popular writer.”¹⁷

Ammalat-Bek brought Marlinsky his greatest fame. It describes the fate of Ammalat-Bek, a young Muslim chieftain who is captured and later pardoned by General Yermolov. The youth is befriended by a Russian officer, Lieutenant Verkhovsky, who undertakes his reeducation through readings in European literature. Tribesmen, however, conspire to turn him against the Russians. He kills Verkhovsky and from that moment fights against the tsarist army. The killing is followed by the disinterment and decapitation of the body – an act so horrible that he is shunned by his own people. He dies torn between two civilizations.

This action is framed by a narrative that describes the conflict between the “European” mentality (represented by Russia) and the “Asiatic” (the Caucasus), making it the “type of story which belongs to the mythology of imperialism.”¹⁸ Marlinsky, as Layton has shown, constructs the Orient as a place of religious bigotry, slave trafficking, sensual indolence, and political despotism, while omitting any mention of serfdom or despotism in Russia.¹⁹ The wise general has his

doubts about releasing Ammalat-Bek because “A European can be convinced, admonished, touched by gentleness, won over by forgiveness, captured by prosperity, but for an Asiatic all this is a clear sign of weakness, and out of pure humanity I am mercilessly ruthless with them. One death will preserve a hundred Russians from death and a thousand Muslims from treason.”²⁰

Verkhovsky nonetheless convinces the general that the young man might be influenced by kindness and enlightenment. Schooling at first appears to produce the desired results as the pupil learns how to “think,” and realizes from “descriptions of the earth” that “the Tatars occupy a corner of the world, that they are pitiful savages in comparison with European peoples and that no one spares a thought for their aggressors or for them as a whole.”²¹ The device of the diary that records these admissions of Russian superiority, however unconvincing psychologically, reinforces the political message that the imperialist monologue has now penetrated native consciousness.

Critics have drawn attention to the fact that Ammalat-Bek is an inventory of Oriental stereotypes: he is innocent and uncomprehending (the narrator compares him to a falcon that does not understand why it is hooded and a horse that has no idea why people shoe it),²² and his behaviour is unstable (first passionate and uncontrolled, then suspicious and deceitful). These qualities of mind and temperament, which Verkhovsky ascribes to all the mountain people, have, readers learn, been “imbibed with his mother’s milk and the air of his native land. The barbaric despotism of Persia, which ruled Azerbaidzhan for so long, developed the lowest instincts and the most contemptuous intrigues in the Caucasian Tatars.”²³ The same qualities are in fact unhesitatingly assigned to the entire Orient. Verkhovsky, in preparing to leave the Caucasus, says:

I am very glad to be leaving Asia, the cradle of the human race, where mind has remained in its infancy. The immobility of the Asiatic way of life over so many centuries is astonishing. All attempts at improvement and education have been smashed to pieces against Asia: it belongs most assuredly to space rather than time. The Indian Brahmin, the Chinese mandarin, the Persian *bek* and the chieftain of the Caucasian mountains are today exactly the same as they have been for two thousand years. The swords and flails of the subjugators left no scars on them, as though on the surface of water; books and the examples of missionaries have not made the slightest impression. Sometimes they changed their prophets, but they never acquired foreign knowledge or virtues. I am quitting a fruitful land, to return to a land of labour, that great inventor of everything useful, inspirer of everything great, that awakener of the human spirit, which here has fallen asleep on the breast of a beautiful nature.²⁴

Layton has pointed out that this passage rehearses stereotypes of the Orient as a bountiful Eden, a female, a producer of an indolent and sensual people, an unchanging, blissfully inert, primordial culture.²⁵ By contrast Russia and Europe represent industry, ingenuity, creativity, and change. The message is repeated throughout the text in comments by soldiers and by the narrator. Verkhovsky, for example, receives a warning from another officer: “Ammalat is, after all, an Asiatic, with all that word attests.”²⁶ The word “Asiatic,” repeated like a mantra, each time with a new shade of meaning, constructs and homogenizes the native in the language of the military-colonial administration. The same message is also inscribed in the structure of the story: racial degeneracy and obduracy justify imperial conquest and rule, but – the reader is led to understand – the mental outlook of natives is so different from the Russian outlook that integration will be a long process requiring great caution.

Verkhovsky glorifies the foresight of Peter the Great for his role in tearing Russia itself out of this orient and setting it the goal of conquering Eastern barbarism: “I wandered in the footsteps of the great *Peter*, I imagined him, the founder, the transformer of the young tsardom on the ruins of the rotting tsardoms of Asia, out of which he had torn Rus and with his mighty hand rolled it into Europe ... His fatherland’s great future spread out before him along with the horizon; in the mirror of the Caspian Sea he saw the future prosperity of Russia, sown by him, watered with his bloodied sweat. Not empty conquests, but the victory over barbarism, the welfare of humanity were his aim.”²⁷ This passage reflects the Decembrists’ view of literature as a civic mission – the inculcation of a sense of patriotic duty and national pride – and the involuntary admiration (bordering on idolatry in the case of Marlinsky’s narrator) for both Yermolov and Peter.²⁸

However, much of the story’s interest stems from ambiguities in the discussion of the border between Europe and the East. The Caucasus have traditionally been regarded as the dividing line between Europe and Asia.²⁹ Contemplating the ruins of Alexander the Great’s wall, Verkhovsky notes that it ends abruptly, as though its builder had been unsure of its further direction. This raises the question of where the Orient actually begins and of Russia’s insecurity concerning its own identity as a country that spans the two continents geographically and culturally. Bestushev-Marlinsky, like other Russian writers of the day, affirms the empire’s *mission civilisatrice* in the Caucasus but displays ambivalence toward the European/Oriental opposition. Ironically, Alexander’s line of defence had been thrown up against the barbarians from the North to protect the Southern civilization of the Greek

Empire. In Marlinsky's text the civilized West faces the barbaric East from the other side of the wall. Moreover, Verkhovsky is a torn, unsuccessful colonialist who is suffering an identity crisis.

The real border was a fluid, culturally confusing zone, a place of cultural symbiosis where the natives were "civilized" and Russians "nativized." It has been described as a place of "demographic mobility, shifting allegiances, cultural sharing, economic interdependencies" that led to a range of "interactions, conversions, acculturations and desertions."³⁰ Yermolov himself, "the most repressive and chauvinistic Russian 'hero' of the Caucasus, was 'married' to three Moslem women."³¹ Marlinsky's story can, therefore, be interpreted as an allegory in which the delights and terrors of such a mingling are explored and the native point of view glimpsed.

The story challenges and then restores faith in the original "civilizing" mission. The colonial subject is allowed to articulate different cultural norms, most daringly in Akhmet-Khan's protest following the humiliation of a fellow Muslim by a Russian officer, in which he rebukes his co-religionists for passively observing while "your brother is yoked, while they ridicule your customs to your face, trample your faith under their feet! And you weep like old women instead of taking a revenge worthy of men! Cowards! Cowards!"³²

Although personal circumstances (particularly his love for the enchanting Seltanet) and his own weakness of character prepare the moment for the Othello-like transformation in Ammalat-Bek, the key point is that it occurs in a climate of racism and mistreatment that has been created by the conquering army. This is clear from the officer's letters describing the destruction of villages, the passionate speeches of the tribesmen urging their countrymen to revolt, and Yermolov's brutal attitude. Much of this commentary was edited from the first edition of the work and not fully restored in subsequent editions.³³ It is the experience of subjugation that allows Ammalat to interpret Verkhovsky's comments as another aspect of the official policy that is aimed at terrorizing the natives. His reaction is consistent with his people's resentment of colonial rule.

Verkhovsky's disastrous attempt at re-educating the local elite, therefore, not only indicates the enormous gulf separating West from East but suggests that military conquest was widening it. Two strategies for the "domestication" of natives are given: Verkhovsky's enlightenment and Yermolov's terror. The former's views concerning the treatment of the Caucasian peoples might be more humane, the reader is led to understand, but will inevitably prove futile: the officer's murder suggests a reversion to savagery by a native who has managed to acquire

a thin veneer of civilization. It can also be interpreted as the inevitable native response to a brutal tsarist policy of conquest. Ammalat, in the end, joins the jihad, confirming Yermolov's predictions.

Ammalat-Bek's personal tragedy is magnified by his conversion to a belief in Russian superiority, a fact that humiliates and emasculates him. Courageous and quick-thinking, skilled in martial arts, physically attractive and faithful in love, he holds the reader's sympathy until the murder. When he escapes back to the mountains, however, he is spiritually broken, isolated, and doubly victimized: the inculcation of European values has robbed him of his cultural identity, while the military operation has destroyed his homeland. The young chieftain becomes a pariah among both peoples.

Layton has indicated ambiguous subtexts that display an unconscious attraction to two aspects of the "Oriental" nature: uninhibited eroticism and ferocious violence. The "Daghestani savage" who embodies these traits "operates as a secret ideal, running counter to the professed values of Christian Russia."³⁴ The decorous attitude to love displayed by Verkhovsky, for example, is contrasted unfavourably with the passionate, instinctive response of the *Naturmensch*, whose understanding of human nature is richer than that of the refined, but socially inhibited, officer. In a similar way the author reveals a hidden attraction for what he considers the native's ability to indulge in violence. The local sport of beheading bullocks with swords and daggers, in which the soldiers and Yermolov excel, celebrates the army's machismo and aligns it with violence and blood-lust. Layton has suggested that the bullocks here stand in for tribesmen as victims of army slaughter.

Marlinsky's stories had a profound effect on readers. Many male readers were so excited by these tales that they enlisted, hoping to experience combat and "test their mettle against the legendary heroes of Asia."³⁵ Much of the attraction lay in the way the opposition between civilization and savagery is subtly undermined so that "barbarous" Asia's eroticism and violence can be romanticized. While experiencing such transgressive thrills, readers were still provided with reassuring representations of Russia's civilizing mission. As in other accounts of "civilization" at war with "barbarism," the former is enjoined upon to match the latter in strength and ferocity, to borrow, when necessary, from the latter's vitality and determination.

Marlinsky dramatized positions within the practice of colonialism, modelling attitudes and interpretations for readers.³⁶ Although the story reflects the malaise among Russian officers who witnessed the cruelties of Yermolov, Veniaminov, Grabbe, and other commanders, in the end it confirms many prejudices held by these generals and agrees with their goals. The overwhelming historical evidence is that

Yermolov “set himself the aim of destroying any non-Russian nationality in the country.”³⁷ He and his successors felt that ruthless violence was the only option. They were convinced that “fear and greed,” as General Tsitsianov explained to the tsar, “are the two mainsprings of everything that takes place here.”³⁸ The great majority of what have been called the “men of Suvorov’s school” (after the legendary general of Catherine the Great’s day who gained notoriety in the Caucasus by slaughtering the Nogai nomads when they refused to resettle on the Volga) held firmly to the view that “Asiatics” could understand only force, and the few, like Yermolov’s predecessor General Nikolai Rtishchev, who were unwilling to resort to harsh measures were, in Baddeley’s words, “stigmatised as both weak and incapable.”³⁹ Few Russian authors criticized Yermolov. Marlinsky’s work does so implicitly by dramatizing the clash between Yermolov’s violence and Verkhovsky’s Christian charity but ultimately reconciles itself to the inevitable necessity of the former.

Ambiguities in Marlinsky’s attitude were amplified by the mystery of his death. The writer was killed in action on 7 July 1833 in what many believed to have been a suicide. Volunteering for action in a forest held by Circassians, he left the detachment and was cut to pieces. Because his body was never recovered, rumors circulated that he was still alive, fighting alongside the tribesmen and living with native wives. There were even suggestions that Shamil was really Marlinsky in disguise. These speculations can be taken as evidence of the attraction many readers felt toward the escapist fantasy of untrammelled aggression and eroticism.⁴⁰ They can also be seen as evidence of a fascination with the evolving imperial identity, whose enormous span across two continents, movable and porous borders, unclear lines of demarcation, and apparent selection by providence to explain the mysteries of Asia to Europe all stimulated exciting transgressive urges in the name of gaining both national and personal awareness.

POETICS OF RAVISHMENT AND REMORSE:
MIKHAIL LERMONTOV

I hear everywhere spoken the language of philosophy, and
everywhere I see that oppression is the order of the day.

Marquis de Custine, on his trip to Russia in 1839

Lermontov was sent to the Caucasus in 1837, after his poem on Pushkin’s death became known. When threatened with demotion to the ranks, which, as one writer put it, “entailed automatic loss of status as a noble, the risk of corporal punishment and other frightening

penalties,"⁴¹ he apologized to the tsar, confessing that his friend Raevsky had helped him distribute the poem, a fact that resulted in the latter's exile. Upon joining his regiment later that year, Lermontov wrote to the banished Raevsky: "I've already made plans to travel to Mecca, to Persia ... It only remains for me to ask to join the expedition to Khiva with Perovsky."⁴² Lermontov was not allowed to join General Perovsky's disastrous expedition to Central Asia, in which nearly all members perished and which has been described as "one of the tsar's least successful imperial adventures,"⁴³ but the statement's bravado shows that for him, as for many officers, a brief stint in the Caucasus was seen as an enjoyable way of redeeming a tarnished reputation while benefitting from the imperial push to the East.⁴⁴

Careerism, financial motivations, and the idea of military service were inextricably interwoven.⁴⁵ In fact, officer careerism was an important factor in the war: "After the close of the Napoleonic wars, promotions came slowly for Russian officers, but the mountain wars gave them the opportunity to rise more rapidly through the ranks, and they were sorry to see the campaigns end."⁴⁶ Lermontov's desire to belong to the highest circles was strong. Count Vladimir Sollogub described the poet as excluded from the quintessential Petersburg society, "but loving it and raving about it, even when ridiculing it."⁴⁷ His aunt Vereshchagina could see that his financial status would deny him entry into this upper echelon: "These people catch either rich ones or persons of rank, and Misha is too poor for them. What is his income of twenty thousand, a hundred thousand is too little, they call it 'une petite fortune.'"⁴⁸ A military career – what Lermontov called "the path of vice and stupidity" – was, therefore, accepted out of necessity.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, it offered compensations. As a writer he was able to taunt the *beau monde* that had excluded him with shocking pictures of war. There was, moreover, a combativeness, even a cruel streak in his character, which came out in his goading of colleagues, his love of boxing matches, which he organized among his peasants,⁵⁰ and his cruel behaviour toward women. The best-known example of the last characteristic is his pursuit and humiliation of Ekaterina Sushkova in revenge for her earlier refusal to fall in love with him. Two other cases are worth noting for their conjunction of sexism with power. The first is the (frequently censored) early letter to Raevsky in which he comments that his life in the country is boring and he could not avail himself of the usual sexual relations with peasant girls "because they stank."⁵¹ The second is his "Hussar poetry" of 1832–34, which is devoted to the sexual escapades of fellow officers. The most popular poem, "The Uhlan Girl" (Ulansha, 1833–34), describes a gang rape that leaves the woman bruised, bitten, and barely recognizable as the company moves off the following morning. The joke is at the expense of the powerless woman;

the soldiers exploit a situation for personal gratification.⁵² This poem can be read as an internalization of military violence, an acceptance of its necessity, and, ultimately, a dismissal of its consequences.

Ravishment

A major theme in Lermontov's work is domination – of one individual over another (usually a male over a female), a state over a colonized people, or a more powerful natural force over a weaker one. The love of women is linked to their control, just as the admiration for the savage tribesmen is inseparable from the idea of their conquest. The writer's stories of seduction, rape, kidnapping, love, rejection, and separation along the borders of imperial expansion – whether they involve women, as in the stories "Taman" and "Bela" from *A Hero of Our Time* (Geroi nashogo vremeni, 1841), or boys, as in "Ismail-Bei" (1832), "Boiarin Orsha" (1842), and "The Novice" (Mtsyri, 1840) – can be read as eroticizations of violence and allegories of an imperial-colonial relationship that ends in every instance with violence and destruction.

Lermontov could draw upon military reality for the love-slave theme: on occasion captured women were sold as slaves or distributed to Russian officers so that in winter quarters "for the officers, at least, the Commander-in-Chief setting the example, the time passed pleasantly enough in the company of native wives."⁵³ General Yermolov himself, as has been noted, kept three Muslim consorts and fathered a daughter "who remained for all her life an object of curiosity and pilgrimage for Russian officers passing near her village."⁵⁴

In literature the sexual subjection of colonized and conquered women frequently represents the relationship between an empire and a conquered territory. Among such women in Lermontov's tales one could name the Circassian Bela, the Georgian Tamara from "Demon," the Ukrainian nymph from "Taman," and "The Lithuanian Woman." Already colonized politically, their men removed from the scene, they are, in Anne McClintock's words, "made available for the sport of sexual conquest," becoming "the living flesh of the national body, unveiled and laid bare for the colonial's lascivious grip."⁵⁵ Always resistant, at least initially, and frequently dangerous, they are examples of the erotics of sexual/political ravishment and boundary markers for the empire. However threatening these encounters may be for the Russian soldier, he invariably belongs to the conquering military. Lermontov's heroes play the sport of sexual conquest, deriving little spiritual satisfaction from it: they are ultimately either denied the love they seek, or they discover their own incapacity for it.

Denationalization of native elites is encoded in these encounters with conquered nations. It was tsarist policy to draw members of this

native elite into Russian service to serve as “enlighteners” in their own countries. Lermontov came into contact with acculturated natives like Shora Nogmov, a former Mullah who had become an officer in the Caucasian Highland Guard. The poet even studied Eastern customs from such individuals, made an attempt to learn Azeri Turkish (“Tatar,” in his words), and gained an acquaintance with local folklore and literature. A favourite plot structure in his work is the conflict of loyalties stemming from the time a native has spent in the enemy camp. His heroes and heroines find themselves temporarily on the “other” side of national-cultural boundaries. “Izmail-Bei” tells of a Circassian boy who is sent to Russia by his father to obtain an education and military training. Like Marlinsky’s Ammalat-Bek, he returns to lead his tribes against the Russian army. After he is killed by a brother suspicious of his Russian past, a hidden locket of blonde hair and the Cross of St George (the coveted imperial distinction for bravery in combat) are found hidden on his body. In this way he is revealed to be a man of ambiguous national sensibility and religious commitment.

The imperial army, with its code of ruthless violence and absolute loyalty, was a primary agency of depersonalization and denationalization. Any dissident feelings required concealment. Dissimulation is such a common feature in Lermontov that it almost appears to be the natural state. Those who are incapable of it or who admit their true feelings are destroyed. Ismail-Bei, the orphaned youth in “The Novice,” like other victims in Lermontov made homeless by imperial expansion, pretends to maintain a Russian identity, but he has been among Russians for so long that he has largely lost his “native” identity. The same plot structure occurs in stories devoted to the empire’s western borderlands. “The Lithuanian Woman” (Litvinka, 1830) is the story of a captured beauty who eventually escapes captivity (both matrimonial and national) and kills her former prisoner and national oppressor in battle. In “Boiarin Orsha,” Arsenii, who has been raised by Orsha, also defects to the Polish-Lithuanian side and kills his former lord in combat. Upon learning of his beloved’s death under Orsha’s imprisonment, his life loses all meaning. His better feelings evaporate, and he sees only the career of a heartless mercenary in front of him:

Now only one thing is left to me:
I go. Where? It is all the same,
To one side or the other?⁵⁶

Deracination and hatred is the tragic imperial legacy on both the western and the eastern front.

Russian officers, however, can return to their cultural origins relatively unaffected after a sojourn in a foreign environment. One of

Lermontov's last works, "The Caucasian" (*Kavkazets*, 1841) is a short prose sketch of a war veteran who, after long service at the frontier, has apparently assumed a hybrid identity. However, the cultural transvestite is revealed to be a poseur. Cultural-racial identity, at least for Russians, runs deeper: Lermontov suggests a firm, undilutable essence beneath the surface of any acquired exoticism.⁵⁷

These narrative structures indicate that the poet saw war through imperial eyes. His relatively sympathetic portrayal of native rebels was a conventional Romantic sympathy for freedom-loving outlaws derived from Byron and Walter Scott. Poems like "Dagger" (*Kinzhal*, 1837) and "Poet" (1838) suggest the army's need to borrow some of the mountaineers' passion in order to "harden" its own character. As in Marlinsky, the courageous, ruthless native is admired for a barbaric energy and machismo, which contrasts favourably with effete, "civilized," metropolitan society. The Caucasus, it is made clear, have a revitalizing role to play for Russians, who must use the energy of the colonial war to restore their strength. The captured *kinzhal*, in the poet's hands, symbolizes appropriation through conquest. One historian has written that "weapons for the mountaineers were more than a practical necessity; they were their pride and signified their manhood and freedom. Weapons were handed down through generations from father to son, and were regarded as among a man's most precious possessions. Disarmament was, therefore, a terrible humiliation."⁵⁸

The dominant message is that in the long run, resistance is doomed, the empire will prevail. The third canto of "Izmail-Bei" begins:

Resign, Circassian! Both West and East
 May soon share your fate.
 A time will come – and yourself you'll proudly say:
 A slave I may be, but of the universal tsar!
 A time will come when a new fearful Rome
 Will grace the north with a second Augustus!⁵⁹

Remorse

And yet Lermontov, like Marlinsky, did have first-hand knowledge of the brutality of the war and was one of the first to describe it in passages that have become famous indictments. The words placed in the mouth of the Cherkess in "Izmail-Bei," like those of Marlinsky's angry native, convey a rebuke to the complacent:

Why with jealous hand
 Have you disturbed our fate?
 We wretched will not part

With our freedom and steppe
For gold, luxury and finery
Because we revere
What you coldly despise!
Do not fear, speak out:
Why do you hate us?
By what rudeness has a simple people
Caused you offence?⁶⁰

It took considerable courage, in the face of a public consciousness automatized by state propaganda, to describe the war in the following demystificatory terms:

The villages burn; they provide no haven,
The enemy has vanquished the fatherland's sons ...
Like a savage animal in a quiet home
The conqueror rushes in with bayonets,
Kills the old men and children,
Innocent maidens and young mothers.⁶¹

This comes close to recognizing the mountaineers' right to self-defence and rejecting the ideological premise that the war represented a struggle against "savagery," "banditry," and "treason." Such lines, at least momentarily, subvert what Dziuba has called the "classic opposition in the Russian mentality" between fatherland (Russia) and enemy (warlike mountaineers and all insubordinate peoples) by reversing the positions so that the Caucasus of the mountaineers is the fatherland and Russia the enemy.⁶²

In a meditation on the results of the battle on the Valerik River, in which Lermontov participated, the narrator asks:

And with a secret and heartfelt sadness
I thought: pitiful man,
What does he want! ... The sky is bright,
Under the sky there is room for everyone,
But ceaselessly and vainly
He alone makes war – why?⁶³

Susan Layton has argued that this poem demonstrates a profoundly divided identity behind the writer's apparently successful integration into the army. According to her these lines describe a state of shocked alienation produced by the killing: "Lermontov's lyric persona comprehends war as murder rather than invigorating machismo only when he

has blood on his hands; and as a result of combat, he becomes disconnected from his own comrades.”⁶⁴ Tormented by a sense of his own culpability, he pens what is in fact a confession and self-condemnation. By placing the action in a natural setting (“beneath the sky there is room for all”) the poet suggests that the Earth itself has been violated.

This is perhaps an overinterpretation of the officer-poet’s divided identity. The moment of remorse is but a hint of the reality of the war and the feelings it inspired. Henri Troyat has written that the tribes “exterminated the women and children who could not follow them into retreat. Often in reprisals they mutilated captives and sent them back, bloodied, to Russian lines. Exasperated by these ferocities ... the Russians in turn executed the wounded.” A witness to these battles reported that “The day’s trophies were several corpses of mountain people, whose heads had been severed and wrapped in sack-cloth. For every head General Veliaminov would pay a *chervonets* (three roubles) and the skulls would be sent to the Academy of Sciences.”⁶⁵ General Grigorii Zass also collected tribesmen’s heads, impaled them on stakes around his house, and sent some to anatomists in Russia and Berlin.⁶⁶ Veliaminov was a freethinker whose moral and religious views had been formed by reading the French encyclopaedists and whose favourite books were *Gil-Blas* and *Don Quixote*. Yermolov was also known for his liberated views and independent mind, which led the Decembrists to designate him head of their provisional government following their planned seizure of power. Nonetheless, in a dangerous theatre of war, where the rules of the civilized conduct were suspended, these generals executed a ruthless, calculated policy of razing villages to the ground and exterminating hostile populations.

Lermontov himself fought courageously and was on two occasions recommended for, but denied, decoration. He was given command of a detachment composed of cossacks, Tatars, and Kabardians who were all veterans, specialists in guerrilla warfare, and famous for their daring and lack of discipline. They were described by Baron Rossilieu, a major-general, as dirty, unshaven, and negligently dressed men who took the most dangerous assignments: “Lermontov has assembled a band of ignoble cut-throats. They despise fire-arms, wander through enemy villages, conducting a guerrilla war and glorifying themselves as *Lermontov’s regiment*.”⁶⁷ In front-line action the poet tasted the forbidden attractions of a life ruled by violence, where men of the margins were, in Mary Douglas’ words, “licensed to waylay, steal, rape.” The anti-social behaviour was even encouraged: it was “the proper expression of their marginal condition.”⁶⁸ Following their segregation from society, these liminal men were allowed to return with a new status. Marginality, segregation, and reintegration was therefore a pattern repeatedly rehearsed by colonial discourse.⁶⁹

The Elemental Force

Any sense of culpability did not shake the poet's faith in the inevitability or legitimacy of imperial conquest. Frequently anthologized poems like "Borodino" (1837), "Motherland" (Rodina, 1841), and "The Dispute" (Spor, 1841) merge patriotism with the defence of the state. The last poem combines what has been called "a dirge for the age-old freedom of the independent peoples of the Caucasus"⁷⁰ with a condonation of Russian aggression in the Middle East as a historical fatality. It is, in fact, the latter attitude that provides the framework for Lermontov's views on national liberation. In April 1841 he took "The Dispute" to the Slavophile Iurii Samarin and asked him to pass it on to the editor of *The Muscovite* (Moskvitianin), the last periodical anyone would have accused of liberal or seditious views. It has been suggested that Lermontov heard from Aleksei Khomiakov the view that *smireníe* (meekness or resignation) was the distinguishing Russian philosophy and that his purpose in submitting the poem might therefore have been to challenge the Slavophile attitude to Russia's historic mission and cultural-political identity.⁷¹ Khomiakov, however, was no critic of Russia's conquering mission, and Lermontov's poem is not a challenge to but an alignment with Khomiakov's views. "The Dispute" pits two cultures, the European and the Asiatic, against one another. It describes Russia "moving East as the representative of European culture and the industrial age," as part of the "unavoidable and natural course of history."⁷² Sympathy for native resistance is totally eclipsed by state egoism and the Russian national will. Although the accent differs from Khomiakov's, the message of forcible conquest and assimilation is the same. In "Motherland," which Eikhenbaum has argued was a response to Khomiakov's "whole political world-view,"⁷³ the poet explains that he does not love Russia for its military glory bought with blood or for its ancient traditions but "organically and spontaneously," as Eikhenbaum puts it, simply for what it is.⁷⁴ This message is implicit in the final image of the lively Russian village dance. It was natural for Russia to be herself, a wisdom the poet claimed to have learned from the East. In a conversation with Andrii Kraievsky he said: "We should live our own independent life and make our own particular contribution to general humanity. Why should we always drag ourselves after Europe and the French? I learned much from Asiatics, and I would like to penetrate the mysteries of the Asiatic world-view, the origins of which are little understood both by Asiatics themselves and by us. But believe me, there in the East lies a secret cache of rich discoveries."⁷⁵ Orthodoxy and religious messianism are here unaccented, but the belief in the Russian people and the assertive, assimilatory message in

these two poems is the same as Khomiakov's. "Being herself" for Russia meant being an empire, appropriating territories and cultural treasures. Lermontov's Russia is represented as a powerful, self-confident civilization developing an intimacy with a culturally seductive, but politically insignificant, East. Like the Decembrist officers who served in the army before him, he may have been uncomfortable with messianism and jingoism, but he shared the expansionist vision.

Given Lermontov's character and biography, however, another interpretation suggests itself. As the universalism of the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason receded, a new activist form of Russian nationalism emerged. It challenged Nicholas I's reactionary Official Nationality policy, counterposing a passionate nationalism and an assertive, interventionist foreign policy to his cautious policies. Mark Bassin has written that "an active desire for the export of national, and ultimately political, influence became interwoven into the very fabric of Russian nationalist thought in the 1840s" and that this desire "formed one of the most important sources of nationalist opposition to Official Nationality."⁷⁶ The stultifying conservatism of Nicholas's reign could be portrayed as failing to sufficiently promote national interests. Lermontov's temperament and situation would have aligned him with this opposition.

Drawing on Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*, Lermontov pictured the empire as an elemental force, a self-constituting struggle of opposites. Extraordinary natural forces and powerful personalities could both be seen as functioning in an elevated realm where they were beyond morality, outside the rules of normal human conduct.⁷⁷ Napoleon, the great empire-builder himself, was such a superhuman power and law unto himself. Hugo, who had been convinced by the Greek revolution that violent insurrection was permissible in a just cause, wrote a paean to empire-builders in his preface to *Les Orientales*: "One should remember that it is she [the old eastern barbarism] which produced the only colossus which this century can place against Bonaparte, if Bonaparte can have a counterpart; this man of genius, Turk and Tatar, is in fact Ali-Pasha, who is to Napoleon what the tiger is to the lion, the vulture to the eagle." The East here appears as a teacher in the science of power and conquest. It is suggested that imperial competition and political violence on a global scale are governed by laws of nature – laws that it is senseless to oppose.

Since they were operating within such a philosophical context it is not surprising, therefore, that neither Pushkin nor Lermontov showed any sympathy for the Polish insurrection of 1830. Pushkin, in his "Poltava," saw imperial domination of Ukraine as a providential occurrence, and Lermontov, in the introduction to "The Novice," argued that the protectorate of Georgia was prospering behind the

“barrier of friendly [Russian] bayonets.” Moreover, Lermontov produced a salute to Napoleon’s greatness in “His Last Move” (Poslednee novosele, 1841) and a sympathetic, “Napoleonic” portrait of Ivan the Terrible in “Boiarin Orsha.” In this last poem the poet represents the tsar, who is viewed as beginning Muscovy’s imperial expansion, in a sympathetic light. Belinsky was deeply moved by the poem and was especially intrigued by the personality of Ivan, whom he defined as “a fallen angel” deserving of our sympathy.⁷⁸

The empire as an elemental force may also be read into Lermontov’s nature poems. They exhibit a typical structure: peace, an eruption of conflict, and a restoration of equilibrium imposed by the greater power. His “Terek” is an example. In it the freedom-loving stream tempts the quiet Caspian Sea to passionate, impulsive activity and is then subdued by it. The poem suggests an eternal relationship of stimulus and reaction in which aggressive but weaker forces challenge stronger ones to action and then retire when their energy is spent. It is a struggle that takes place at a high level of abstraction, in an amoral realm where passion and violence require no justification. Imposing abstractions – size, vitality and freedom – as Susan Howe has pointed out, have always hallowed the imperial exploit, providing it with an aura of “national or racial destiny, a mission, as of something inevitable, dynamic, not made by human agency but set in motion by some impersonal life-force.”⁷⁹ It is, of course, a short step from such abstract speculation to the outright justification of political violence, a fact recognized by the Romantics and one that stimulated their concern with nature’s dark side. Schelling wrote, “When the abysses of the human heart open themselves in evil and those terrible thoughts come forth which ought to remain eternally buried in night and darkness; only then do we know what possibilities lie in man and how his nature is for itself or when left to itself.”⁸⁰ These remarks, Andrew Bowie has suggested, “could be directly applied to Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, where Kurtz is precisely concerned to find out ‘what possibilities lie in man.’”⁸¹

In chapter 4 of *Ammalat-Bek* Bestuzhev-Marlinsky had described the Terek’s progress and transformation from ferocity in its higher reaches to calm accommodation in its lower reaches. Lermontov’s “Terek” describes the river as bringing gifts to and arousing the mighty sea. The poem contains a strong political subtext. The Russian imperial forces were at the time securing the Caspian coast by building a string of forts that would seal off the mountain peoples. The Terek’s constant provocations can be seen as a metaphor for native resistance, which ultimately produces a large-scale response by the tsarist military and a subduing of the mountaineers. The poem would also have recalled to readers Pushkin’s “To the Slanderers of Russia” (Klevetnikam Rossii,

1831) in which the poet had compared smaller nations to “Slavic streams” and foresaw their engulfment in “the Russian sea.”

There are, however, instabilities in Lermontov’s attitude to imperial conquest, which can be illustrated by anticolonial readings of two works: “Taman” and “The Demon.”

Taman as Colonized Ukraine

Taman in Lermontov’s famous story of the same name is the quintessentially mysterious colonized identity. The legendary Tmutorakan was first conquered by Prince Sviatoslav, the father of Volodymyr (Vladimir) the Great, in the tenth century and incorporated into the Russian Empire only in Catherine’s reign. It bore the marks of successive colonizing civilizations: Greek, Tatar, Ukrainian, and Russian. At the time the story was written, it was a stronghold of the Black Sea Cossacks, the remnants of the Zaporozhian army who had been transferred there by Catherine with the mandate of guarding the coastline. Edward Daniel Clarke, who travelled through the region in the early nineteenth century, described them as “now the possessors of the country.”⁸² He also observed the hostility and sense of caste-like distinction between them and the local Russian settlers.⁸³ The Black Sea Cossacks remembered and resented the liquidation of the Sich in 1775. Many had initially escaped to the Danube Sich, where they had lived under Turkish protection, and had only later made their way to Taman and the Kuban in a second wave of resettlement. Moreover, the imperial attitude to them remained suspicious. A hotbed of resistance to imperial rule in the eighteenth century, they had been assigned to the defence of the empire’s eastern borders, in part because there was less chance of their escaping abroad from that location. The identity of Taman is therefore layered. The hostility, which the intruding imperial officer in the story feels instantly and instinctively, is probably historically accurate: it comes from the mysterious, resistant, local identity that blends both Ukrainian and Tatar and has inscrutable eastern traits ascribed to it.⁸⁴

Several features define the town in the story. It is an outermost point, a frontier, the edge of the world known to and controlled by the empire, a geography of precipices, shorelines, and horizons. Two other features are closely linked to this liminal condition: Taman’s association with night and with danger. The town, it is immediately made clear, is a mysterious place of nocturnal, secret trafficking with forbidden, foreign, perhaps even occult, forces. The conflation of foreign hostility with supernatural evil makes it a perilous place for a Russian officer to venture: one in which a soldier may lose his life.

The visitor is thrown into proximity with these local people against his will in the course of military service. It is an unwelcome encounter from which there is no escape. The ensuing entanglement almost proves fatal and uproots the lives of some local smugglers.⁸⁵

The local language is Ukrainian. The blind boy speaks it to the officer. However, when not in his company, he speaks perfect Russian. His mother also feigns deafness but appears to be perfectly capable of hearing and understanding conversations. Simultaneously able to move within Russian culture and yet part of a transgressive and potentially disloyal underworld, they are dangerously equipped with the ability to understand without being themselves understood. The young girl appears to invite him to a tryst, but in fact, her intention is to drown him. All three characters practice deception. The blind boy, the old woman, and the young girl can be read as the deformed, weakened structure of an incomplete society. Its men-folk are elsewhere; those left behind carry on the struggle to survive using whatever means are available: shunning, misdirecting, and if necessary, murdering outsiders.

The officer-narrator describes the manless world of this outpost in terms that Nikolai Danilevsky would later use to justify imperial conquest: it was not a healthy body but deformed and defective. "I admit," he says, "to having a strong prejudice toward all blind, lame, deaf, dumb, legless, armless, hunchbacked etc." He suspects a connection between physical and spiritual deformity: the loss of a limb or a sense is, in his view, accompanied by the loss of some human attribute. Taman, like its inhabitants, is therefore a physically and spiritually crippled hinterland. The ambiguous adjective *nechisto* (dirty, or evil) is used to describe both its physical appearance and its spirit.

The visiting officer's disorientation is in large part due to his exclusion from the local world. The cataracts on the boy's eyes are impenetrable; the old woman refuses contact; the young girl speaks in riddles. The lack of familiar symbols, such as icons on the walls, is disturbing. His only security is his weaponry, and even this, in the end, is stolen from him.

The officer's attitude to the girl is emblematic of his attitude to the colonized region. She is the anthropological other: mysterious, with an exotic appearance, strangely beautiful and beguiling. Yet she has to be subdued and overcome; her seductive invitation is an entrapment. He describes her in the way he would a fine horse, full of spirit and health but requiring taming. This creature of nature derives from Romantic literature's fascination with the *Naturmensch*. It is reminiscent of the description of Caucasian tribesmen and their beautiful women in other Russian fiction of the period. At first he thinks of her as Goethe's

Mignon, a graceful, beautiful child whom he can rescue from an unhappy life and who would become devoted to him. Like Bela from Lermontov's story of the same name, she excites and attracts him. Unlike the passive Bela, however, this girl extends the invitation and sets the trap. The expectation of sexual adventure remains unfulfilled.

Yanko, who is in league with the girl, exhibits the same vigour, courage, and daring. He is described as wearing a Tatar hat but sporting the distinctive cossack hairstyle. This appearance associates him with both the unassimilated Tatar and Ukrainian identities. His trade is to ferry goods through the straits while avoiding the imperial coastguard, which links him to foreign lands and illegal activity. The girl leaves Taman with him after their smuggling conspiracy is uncovered, and the officer survives an attempt to drown him.

In the end, when the officer realizes the situation, he expresses both regret for overturning the precarious existence of the community he has stumbled upon, whose members he calls "honest smugglers," and an administrator's contempt for the petty lives of the folk he must disturb on imperial service: "What do I have to do with the joys and sorrows of humanity, I, a wandering officer, and to boot one on official service!" This final sentence captures the irony of his position. He represents a ruthless force that unintentionally disrupts and destroys local lives. The result of his adventure might be cause for personal regret, but human feeling cannot stand in the way of military duty – a duty that he claims absolves him from feeling compassion for those whose lives are affected. The story aligns a Ukrainian alterity (in this case the Black Sea Cossack settlement) with the foreignness of a border outpost, expressing the narrator's ambiguous attitude to the exercise of imperial power. The structure of seduction followed by remorse and half-hearted self-justification is here rehearsed in a Ukrainian colony.

The Imperial Demon

Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, Layton has said, pinpointed the incoherence of Russian cultural mythology, when he wrote of the angel of death in paradise and hinted that a Russian national tragedy was under way. According to Layton he posed the questions, "Can we murder our way into the restorative garden?" and "Can we secure Eden by exterminating the natives?"⁸⁶ But it was Lermontov who made this theme most famously his own in "Demon," the poem on which he worked for most of his life. Its final version is set in the Caucasus and describes the Demon's ravishment of a helpless maiden. The poem has often been criticized for superficiality: the cascading rhetorical effects, it has been argued,

disguise a lack of philosophical or psychological depth. However, it has also been pointed out that many artists – Vrubel, Aleksandr Blok, and Boris Pasternak among them – have found the poem’s attractions irresistible.⁸⁷ Mirsky has suggested that the reason lies in “an unusual quality of poetic appeal audible to poets if not to critics.” It is, he ventured, “the tragedy of the individual opposing himself to society and mankind, and seeking to overcome his tragic and unbearable solitude by romantic union in love with another human being.”⁸⁸ Another explanation of the poem’s power lies in its communication at a subconscious level of disquieting, forbidden emotions: the attraction of imperial power and the guilt of complicity in conquest. Beneath the surface, wrote Mirsky, “there is what can hardly be described otherwise than as the real presence of demons.”⁸⁹ When read in the light of colonial expansion, the poem yields a meditation on the dilemmas of power.

The Demon’s nature is ambiguous. This demiurge is neither an angel nor a terrible visitor from hell. He is neither day nor night, neither light nor dark. He appears to have been exiled from some original state of blessedness, although his description could be read either as “the banished spirit” or as “the spirit that banishes” (*dukh izgnaniia*). He wanders the earth’s expanses, sowing evil wherever he goes but deriving no pleasure from this ceaseless activity. His all-conquering but joyless gaze surveys the glories of the land under his power. Catching sight of Tamara, he falls in love.⁹⁰ To win her love he offers not happiness but an elevated perspective, a realm where one stands above personal grief and enjoys the benefits of power.

The Demon’s appearance and eloquence dazzle Tamara, who finds his offer seductive but remains alarmed and confused. For all her innocence, she is described as a “sinner,” full of “criminal thoughts,” inaccessible to “pure raptures.” Her soul prays to the Demon. This vacillation on her part and a desire for love and self-reform on his allows a momentary hope for shared happiness. The Demon enters prepared to change his ways, but the sight of a Guardian Angel who threatens to take Tamara from him brings out the violence in his nature; jealousy, hatred, and the urge to possess overcome him.

His claim to Tamara is based on the rights of familiarity:

Leave her, she is mine!
 Too late you’ve come, defender,
 And who are you to judge her or me.
 On a heart, filled with pride,
 I have placed my imprint;
 This is no longer your temple,
 It is I who rule and love here!⁹¹

When Tamara asks the Demon's identity, he replies by summarizing the temptations and the price of power. Tamara asks him to renounce the use of power for evil. He then swears to reject vengeance and pride and offers to make her empress of the world: she will gaze without pity or empathy on an earth where there is no real happiness or permanent beauty; she will inhabit a realm far removed from petty human passions, from where the great drama of history assumes monumental patterns; she will have wealth, knowledge, and servants. The price, however, is a transmutation of hope and passion into a mausoleum-like beauty. He overcomes her, but his embrace proves fatal: poison penetrates her breast, transforming her appearance into that of lifeless marble. Tamara's awakened sexuality "tarnishes her," according to one critic: by experiencing erotic desires, she introduces "shades of moral dissolution" into the narrative.⁹² Although this interpretation is persuasive, it omits the fact that it is the conjunction of imperial power with eroticism that defines evil. The Demon does not merely deflower Tamara, he seduces her with an irresistible offer of partnership in power.

Several details of the Demon's speech and actions that have been criticized for their lack of psychological motivation acquire greater credibility as the voice of *realpolitik* or the siren-call of imperial glory and permanence. For example, the Demon's ostensible motives, like the empire's, are justified in the language of international diplomacy: the rationale for action is minding one's own ("national security") interests while driving off competing powers. The attractions he offers can tempt even a saintly nature, and understandably he assumes Tamara's silence signifies compliance. The desires of the powerful male, like those of the empire, initiate activities and structure the action. The female subaltern is reduced to scrutinizing motives. Her decision to share in the benefits of imperial power entails a modification of her personality, a spiritual impoverishment and isolation. This is the price to be paid by the willing collaborator.

It is telling that the Demon arranges the murder of Tamara's bridegroom, in this way removing the local and legitimate contender for her love. In any case, we are informed, she is being given over to matrimonial slavery in the patriarchal Georgian world. The heroine's surrender to a more powerful and enlightened despotism (as in Pushkin's "Poltava") can therefore be justified from the imperial Demon's viewpoint as an improvement in her meagre prospects.

The poem has been interpreted as an allegory of the struggle between good and evil, and the motivation of the action has been criticized for obscuring this allegorical focus. One commentator wanted the Angel and the Demon to struggle for supremacy in Tamara's attentive presence, so that her decision would be a clearly conscious

choice made in the hope of saving the Demon.⁹³ This, however, would have eliminated the subtle message conveyed by the poem's eroticization of violence, the insight that empires do not merely coerce but also seduce. It has also been argued by those for whom the poem is a question of theodicy that it handles "an important and complex topic" in an "intellectually impoverished context."⁹⁴ The Demon, it is charged, "behaves remarkably like a Hussar officer" who chases after women but longs for the serene pleasures of Paradise, who is not consistently defiant and has even grown bored with doing evil. These details, however, assume a coherent appearance when the Demon is read as an incarnation of the imperial will to power and Tamara as an emblem of the land he covets.

The pastoral elements that Tamara represents – love, the organic community, nature – are counterpoints to and inevitable victims of conquest. Only after her death, when she is being carried to heaven in the arms of the Guardian Angel, does she recognize the Demon as the spirit of darkness. Her moral purity earns God's forgiveness. The Demon, his desire denied, is left to curse fate. This ending has been criticized as incongruous, as has the fact that the Demon does not exercise his power to embrace Tamara earlier or that the Guardian Angel does not intervene sooner to save her. But this line of criticism neglects the fact that "it is always expedient to 'love' what you covet."⁹⁵ Even the most despotic power prefers willing, ideologically committed support to cringing flattery: "incense wearies the idol," Custine wrote.⁹⁶ The dominant discourse aims at a hegemony that obviates the use of force. However, a monologic uniformity, once achieved, leads to spiritual impoverishment and loss of identity: surrender to the Demon's power inevitably poisons the dazzled innocent.

Lermontov's verse frequently asks the reader to consider the issue of overpowering another through violence, rape, or seduction. As in the Greek myths this sometimes involves negotiation, temptation, or deception. In the Russian poet the overpowering leads to defeat: it does not engender the new but brings a fruitless love and proves to be an impossible pairing leading to remorse. Lermontov's poetic greatness comes in significant measure from such insights into the psychology of power, particularly the power to do evil, something Baudelaire sensed when he wrote that the Russian writer would be one of the few poets he would include in his own pantheon. Pechorin, the hero of Lermontov's novel *A Hero of Our Time*, is precisely such a study in the psychology of power. He sees all human relations as political, rejecting the possibility of equality: "I'm incapable of friendship. Of two friends one is always the slave of another, though often neither will admit it. I can never be a slave, and to command in these circumstances is too

exacting, for you have to pretend at the same time ... my chief delight is to dominate those around me. To inspire in others love, devotion, fear – isn't that the first symptom and the supreme triumph of power?"⁹⁷ These glimpses into the fetishization of power, the link between eroticism and violence, and the conflicting desire to learn reciprocity and love, provide the tension and tragic pathos of Lermontov's poem.

The writer's work resonated with the public because he drew on wider discursive practices echoing the regime's blandishment, cajolment, and disciplining of its own intellectuals and their seduction by and collaboration with the imperial project. He employed references that were a part of contemporary political and philosophical literature, borrowing, for example, from Enlightenment views of Eastern Europe as a despotic, backward "orient."⁹⁸ De Custine, in describing his travels through Russia in 1839, used many of the same images and terms to describe Russia, the tsar, despotism, and autocracy; he viewed political problems through similar philosophical concepts and also defined Russia in terms of fate and natural forces. For De Custine the Russians ("the North" in the terminology of the day) were driven: "Remaining fixedly attached neither to persons nor to things – willingly quitting the land of their birth – born for invasions – these people appear as though merely destined to sweep down from the pole, at the times and epochs appointed by God, in order to temper and refresh the races of the South, scorched by the fires of heaven and of their passions."⁹⁹ Not surprisingly, the Frenchman did not view such refreshment with the same equanimity when it was directed toward Western Europe. Towards the end of his book he comments, "The Russians, when they turn against the West the arms which they employ successfully against Asia, forget that the same mode of action which aids their progress against the Calmucs, becomes an outrage of humanity when directed against a people that have been long civilised."¹⁰⁰

THE POETICS OF MESSIANISM:
ALEKSEI KHOMIAKOV

I would annex the planets if I could.

Cecil Rhodes

Nineteenth-century liberal ideals of individual freedom and societal progress were not, as the cases of Bestuzhev-Marlinsky and Lermontov suggest, incompatible with adherence to the idea of a colonizing mission. The conservative Slavophile camp, which was guided by a faith in tradition and the superiority of the Orthodox faith, was even less

conflicted about supporting imperial goals.¹⁰¹ The writings of the early Slavophiles have been described as the “first formulation of Russian nationalism,”¹⁰² and Aleksei Khomiakov’s poetry serves as one of its more unabashed manifestations. Khomiakov was more of a nationalist than Ivan Kireevsky or Konstantin Aksakov, the “romanticists of Slavophilism.” Andrzej Walicki has described him as “a chauvinist ... given to enthusiastic visions of military victories and Russian power.”¹⁰³ From his first poem “Message to the Venevitinovs” (*Poslanie k Venevitinovym*, 1821) in which he describes himself as “heart and soul in the midst of a bloody war” on the side of Orthodox Greece against the Turks, his leading theme became combat in the cause of Slavdom and Russia. Until the end of 1830, wrote one commentator, “Khomiakov in his lyrics did not devote a single line to Russia that was not connected to the question of its military glory, and until the thirties he extolled not so much Russia’s glory as his own thirst for battle.”¹⁰⁴

The Russo-Turkish war of 1828, in which he served, inspired him to initial poetic statement. The Polish revolt of 1830 moved him to compose an “Ode” (*Oda*, 1830) in which he criticized Polish renegades for taking up arms against their fellow Slavs. This poem ends with a vision of a “new age of miracles” in which the Slavic eagles “bow their powerful heads before the senior Northern eagle” of Russia, which acts, in the words of one critic, as the “big-brother protector over small Slav nations.”¹⁰⁵ The eagle as an image of state power had been used at the signing of the Treaty of Pereiaslav in 1654 and became a common way of depicting tsarism in the eighteenth century. Khomiakov exploits this image in his poem entitled “Eagle” (*Orel*, 1832), which is an encoding of his political ideal for Slavdom. In it he calls upon the powerful northern eagle of Russia to turn its attention to its “younger brothers” who suffer oppression in a number of regions: in southern lands, along the distant Danube, beneath the Alps and Carpathians, and in the Balkans. Ivan Dziuba has pointed out that Khomiakov’s support for the liberation struggles of the Bulgars, Serbs, and Croats here signified did not extend to those of the Poles, Ukrainians, and Belarusians: violent revolutions, in other words, were only welcomed abroad, wherever they were “convenient from the viewpoint of a great-power, Orthodox-nationalist strategy.”¹⁰⁶ Utilizing another key imperial metaphor, the sea or flood, his “Source” (*Kliuch*, 1835) depicts Russia as a pure, ceaselessly flowing fountain that creates a stream running ever deeper and stronger. The poet believes that this stream, grown to a mighty river, will inevitably overflow its boundaries. Foreign nations will then come to its flooded banks as to the source of a revitalizing spirituality. In “To Russia” (*Rossii*, 1839) he tempered this optimistic message with a warning that greater

empires than Russia's had fallen in the past. Consequently, she should not forget that her strength lay in the Orthodox religious mission: having "embraced all nations in love" the empire could bring them the "secret of love" and the "light of faith." Here Orthodoxy appears to be an extrapolation of Khomiakov's nationalism and serves as a justification for expansion. In "Kyiv" (1839) he envisages the city as the fount of "Russian" Orthodoxy and integrator of all "Russian" traditions, foreseeing the recovery of the Western Ukrainian lands of Volhynia and Galicia. In his opinion, these territories had been "taken from us by sword and flattery, deceit and fire" and now found themselves under a "foreign flag," governed by a "foreign voice." They would return upon hearing the clarion call of Kyiv, like "children who have been torn away" from their "father."

In "To Russia" (Rossii, 1854) the poet welcomed the Crimean War, which was also greeted enthusiastically by the Slavophiles Konstantin and Ivan Aksakov.¹⁰⁷ Whereas Konstantin Aksakov suggests in his "Russian Eagle" that the goal ought to be the capture of Istanbul-Constantinople, Khomiakov's vision of liberation for the Southern Slavs leads him to call for a Russian military advance far beyond this city to the Aegean Sea. "To Russia" describes the conflict as a "holy war" waged by God's "chosen people." The great expansionary mission, Khomiakov feels, may be beyond Russia's ability because of the "terrible sins" that lay upon her. His suggestion that social evils, particularly serfdom but also "Godless flattery" and "corrupting lies," might make her incapable of fulfilling her calling caused a storm of critical protest. Although contemporary public opinion and some subsequent commentary viewed this poem as indicative of his critical attitude to Russia, this was, in fact, a misreading of the poet's intentions. As Walicki has pointed out, Khomiakov was suggesting that Russia was "a chosen country; God himself had summoned her to a holy war and victory would therefore be hers."¹⁰⁸ He ends the poem by calling upon Russia to prostrate herself before God, then to arise and "throw herself into the heat of bloody battle." His contribution to the war, it might be noted, was not merely rhetorical: during the campaign he invented an improved rifle, ordered an armament factory to produce it, and offered it to the Russian government free of charge for the arming of its infantry.¹⁰⁹

Khomiakov's next poem, "A Penitent To Russia" (Raskaiavsheisia Rossii, 1854), which was cast in the form of a public apology for the scandal caused by "To Russia," aimed at answering his critics. In it he suggested that the desired moral transformation of Russian society had already been achieved. Russia was portrayed as a terrible "angel of God with a fiery brow" whom nations were calling to go forth "with

love in her heart and thunder in her hand” in order to liberate her Slavic brethren.

It is significant that Khomiakov was deeply concerned with the entire strategy of imperial expansion. In letters he described Ivan the Terrible’s decision to move west as a mistake. The tsar, in his opinion, should have moved further east after the successful conquest of Kazan, taking the advice that “Christian and educated nations can be tethered by treaties,” as he phrased it, “while Mohammedan and nomadic peoples would always remain enemies of Russia, both because of their faith and on account of their nomadic, lawless customs.”¹¹⁰ Khomiakov carefully studied Russia’s campaigns in the East and asserted that the empire’s expansionary activity should be concentrated there. In 1853, in a letter to O.M. Popova he wrote:

The tale of Bekovich, the diplomacy of the Italian, and the fear which Russia instilled into the entire area beyond the Caspian Sea shows, in my opinion, our great and age-old blindness. All our attention was directed toward European affairs; but our true advantages called us to stronger activity in the East, which would have come to us very easily. We ought to have, and could have, transferred the cossacks there; they were out of place on the Don. Of course, it would have been a quiet activity and *almost* unforced. Persia would have been continuously in our hands, etc. The morality of such an expansion is as obvious as the justice of Algeria’s conquest, and in the course of almost a century our own Russian forces would have grown in the Caspian area, which, naturally, would have helped us to handle the Caucasus, especially the left flank that causes us so much trouble. Peter seems to have grasped things, but his system pulled us too far into European conflicts and suppressed our *natural instincts*.¹¹¹

Khomiakov’s first play, *Ermak*, written in Paris in 1825–26 but published in 1832, deals with Russia’s conquest of Siberian peoples under Ivan the Terrible. It conveys the message that the spirit of every people “requires bloody sacrifices” in order to reconcile foreign lands to its rule.¹¹² This is the price exacted by history. Russia paid dearly for Ivan’s conquest of Kazan; it will inevitably and necessarily be required to pay the same high price for Siberia. In the dénouement Yermak is killed by the natives, but the former criminal and outcast dies willingly, assured of a pardon and a place in Russian history. His last words, and the last words of the play are, “Siberia is no more; from now on this is Russia!”¹¹³

It might come as a surprise, therefore, to read that at times Khomiakov denied the conquering nature of this expansion, claiming instead that Russia was a product of “organic, living development; she was not built, but grew.”¹¹⁴ At other times he expressed the conviction that the

very idea of conquest and glory was foreign to the Russian people, who only “thought of [their] duty, of a *holy* war.”¹¹⁵ This idea of an organically growing empire as a natural expansion of Russian domination demonstrated, in his estimation, that the Russians alone had evolved without internal struggle or foreign influences and that consequently their “moral virtues were far superior to the best regions of any country on the globe.”¹¹⁶ Unsullied by foreign heresies, they alone were equipped to carry the gospel of Orthodox enlightenment abroad. These views, typical of Romantic nationalists, were to be reiterated in many later contexts.

Ukrainians, in his view, had been cut off from the sources of the true faith for too long. Although he admired the militancy of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, which he attributed to their fanatical commitment to Orthodoxy, Khomiakov thought in terms of a Russian monolith. He viewed Ukrainians as “an organic and inseparable part of a single, Orthodox, Russian nation, with perhaps some dialectal differences in conversational language.”¹¹⁷ Holding such fiercely assimilationist views, he would therefore be expected to react negatively to news of any Ukrainian political activity that appeared to contemplate separatism. On learning of the arrest of Shevchenko and the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood, he wrote a letter on 30 May 1847 that recalls Belinsky’s response to the same news: “The Little Russians have apparently been bitten by political folly. It is disappointing and painful to witness such foolishness and backwardness. When the social question has just been raised and is not only unsolved but not even near solution, even apparently wise people take up politics. I do not know how criminal the misguidedness of the Little Russians was, but I know that their stupidity [*bestolkovost*] is very evident. The time for politics has passed. Kireevsky wrote about this more than two years ago, and people are still rehashing the old ideas.”¹¹⁸

Christoff has described this letter as an example of the artfulness that so enraged Herzen and other opponents. In it Khomiakov avoids reproaching Ukrainian patriots for their separatist and leftist views, “the real issue,” as Christoff puts it, and instead concentrates on their privileging of political matters rather than “the social question,” which he must have realized was inseparable from the issue of autocracy.¹¹⁹ The letter dismisses the Ukrainian group as a provincial phenomenon: belated, derivative, and insignificant, still rehashing what Kireevsky wrote “more than two years ago.” He does not admit the possibility of a national dimension to Ukrainian politics or accept the legitimacy of any national struggle within the empire.

Projecting this view of Russia onto the past, he assumes a monolithic “Rus” (which includes Ukraine as a junior partner), destined to

expand to its “natural boundaries” and express its “natural instincts.” Heroic conquest and the assimilation of smaller peoples is therefore one of his primary themes. Unlike Lermontov, he did not lament the tragic loss of human life in the course of military action. Khomiakov’s focus is on the just cause and the glory to be found on the front lines. One Russian critic has written that “Khomiakov did not once condemn war as a method of deciding life’s contradictions; it would always remain an evil for him, but an inevitable one, sanctified by God and the state. He found harmony only within a Russia that was surrounded mainly by hostile (non-Orthodox) nations; Khomiakov’s ideal was the transformation of the entire planet into an Orthodox world, but this process was viewed as a long one, linked to gigantic, cataclismic wars. Therefore, in spite of Khomiakov’s disgust with war it is never denounced ethically or aesthetically, and only one palliative appears – mercy for the fallen.”¹²⁰ As a result, Khomiakov’s apotheosis of war frequently fails to reveal any revulsion or sense of armed conflict as an evil; he seldom finds it necessary to overrule a humane instinct of protest: “more often than not his aggressive pathos is completely unclouded.”¹²¹

The elevated tone of his hymns to greatness, the diction reminiscent of official tsarist proclamations, the “geopolitical” obsession with capturing points on the compass, and the analogies with Rome, Albion, and other great powers all suggest a complete identification with imperial might. Because of this, it is difficult not to see his sense of togetherness (*sobornost*) in the religious sphere and community (*obshchinnost*) in social life as a nationalist attempt to cement ideological unity and counteract the possibility of conflict within the unitary state. He approves of cultural borrowing as long as the Russian “organism” proves capable of absorbing and transforming the borrowed material. It was axiomatic to him that the Russian nation and its Orthodox faith would be the assimilatory force that gave homogeneity to the state. Although the Russian Slavophiles spoke of federalism, their vision was not a nation-freeing, republican federalism, such as that espoused by Shevchenko and other members of the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood who were arrested in 1847, but a romanticized version of Russian imperial messianism, and, as such, it can be considered republican federalism’s contradictory and opponent.¹²²

Khomiakov’s poetry provides opinions on Russia’s national character and mission. These opinions reveal a curious alternation between two seemingly incompatible conceptions of Russia: the pastoral and the martial. Russia is both a peaceful, idyllic country and a powerful, aggressive one. According to Berdiaev, this constitutes a fundamental dichotomy in Khomiakov’s messianism. On the one hand, the Russian

nation is meek; on the other hand, precisely this quality privileges it among others, making it most fit to conquer and assimilate its neighbours: “national meekness alternates in Khomiakov with ‘let the thunder of victory sound.’ Khomiakov wishes to convince us that the Russian people are not warlike, but he himself, a typical Russian, is full of warlike spirit, and this makes him captivating. He rejected the temptation of imperialism, but simultaneously desired Russia’s domination not only of Slavdom, but of the entire world.”¹²³ Berdiaev wrote sympathetically of the “inevitability” of the contradiction that the people who display the most meekness (*smirenie*) must simultaneously be the proudest (*samyi gordyi*). He argued that there could be no “rationalistic” explanation for it; it simply had to be “accepted and lived.”¹²⁴

One of Khomiakov’s most brilliant ideological creations was the image of a poor, unrefined people and a materially backward country that was spiritually superior and destined to conquer the world. The combination of humility (of origins, manners, and spirit) with power (military, physical, and ideological) fused in the identification of Russia with Christ. This “tsar,” who is described in the poem “Shiroka, neobozrима ...” (Wide, Boundless ..., 1858) as “weak, pale, surrounded by fishermen” will nonetheless conquer the earth. It is an image that was to be widely exploited, perhaps most notably by Dostoevsky and Aleksandr Blok in his “Twelve” (Dvenadtsat, 1918).

The messianic aspect of Khomiakov’s thought found admirers in his own time and later in the century with Danilevsky and Dostoevsky, and it enjoyed a renewed popularity in the years of reaction after 1905. In emigré circles of the 1920s and 1930s there existed what Walicki termed a “downright cult” of the author.¹²⁵ But the poet and thinker also had his detractors. Within Russian literature the portrayal of military violence in some works by Bestuzhev-Marlinsky and Lermontov can be considered contrapuntal to Khomiakov’s. Shevchenko, not surprisingly, was markedly cool toward Khomiakov’s alignment of Slavophilism with an aggressive imperial policy. The Ukrainian poet’s principled anti-imperialism was the antithesis of Khomiakov’s views.¹²⁶

Significantly Khomiakov, like Belinsky, criticized Shevchenko without having read him. Belinsky, as shall be seen, assumed that the poetry that had offended the tsar must be scurrilous, much as Khomiakov assumed that the brotherhood’s political activity was uninteresting and “backward.” If intertextuality is one of the discursive mechanisms that brings about change within discourses, the Russian discourse, by cutting off access to antithetical Ukrainian utterances, limited the field of legitimate expressions. The acceptable polarities were Romantic nationalist and liberal or Slavophile and Westernizer.

The more radical critique of colonialism was pushed into the realm of the unacknowledged and unread. It is telling that Belinsky stated that he would not even read Shevchenko's "Dream" (Son) if it were available. These comments on Shevchenko and the brotherhood from both conservative Slavophile and liberal Westernizing positions constituted an attempt to marginalize the counterdiscourse. They assessed the debate on Ukraine's identity as peripheral and refused to countenance any discussion of its political rights. Whereas Ukrainians read Russian literature and were compelled to react to the discourse of empire, the Ukrainian counterdiscourse, particularly in its most outspoken and effective manifestations, was refused consideration and forced to develop as an illicit, underground counterdiscourse.

3 Ukraine in Russian Imperial Discourse

THE DISCOVERY OF UKRAINE:
EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY RUSSIAN
TRAVEL LITERATURE

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, Russian readers considered Ukraine a recently incorporated, relatively unfamiliar land. It could be both exoticized and domesticated in Russian travelogues, in a manner analogous to the treatment of the Caucasus, Siberia, and Poland during the same period. By making the land, its people, and their culture and history available to the interpreting eye of the metropolitan traveler, by presenting them as “unvisited and unknown,”¹ the travel-narrative opened these topics to various speculations: geographical, anthropological, ethnographic, and historical. As Said has pointed out, the richly expressive formulas that travelogues employ should be seen as central to the development of a colonialist canon.²

The travel-narrative literature of the early nineteenth century that was devoted to Ukraine evidences a fluctuation between hostile and admiring assessments at the same time as it projects the sense of an entity simultaneously foreign and familiar: the literary Ukraine is aligned sometimes with the alterity of Polish civilization and at other times with the sameness of Russian civilization. For the portrayal of alterity, writers could draw on a repertoire of narrative myths and stereotypes already long deployed in descriptions of Poland. Right Bank Ukraine, which had been obtained from Poland after the partition of 1793 and was still dominated by Polish gentry society (*szlachta*),

was viewed by many travellers as still a largely Polish land, and consequently, depictions of Polish alterity in fact frequently serve as unconscious expressions of a hostile attitude to Ukraine's cultural difference. In the first part of the nineteenth century they form an essential backdrop to any discussion of Ukraine's distinctiveness.

Polish Alterity

Polish and Russian civilizations had been brought into close contact at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, when, as a result of the partitions, large numbers of Russians and Poles were thrown into personal contact with one another. The Polish insurrections of 1794, 1830–31, and 1863–64 and the war of 1812, in which many Poles fought on the side of Napoleon, ensured that the "Polish question" continued to occupy Russian statesmen. Writers generally constructed hostile images of the Poles. Waclaw Lednicki wrote in the thirties that "ideologists who represented Russian national consciousness, found in the act of morally degrading the Pole and Poland a kind of moral soporific: in that act of degradation they drowned out in themselves and their society the voice of conscience which the bloody injustice done to Poland could not fail to awaken."³ Russian intellectuals, on the other hand, spoke of the suppression of Polish activities as an unfortunate but necessary political act: only one Slavic state could, it was said, be dominant in Eastern Europe, and consequently, in the interest of Slavdom the Polish competitor had to be eliminated. The negative stereotyping of the Pole as an intriguer and rebel that prevailed in the nineteenth century had long been spread by state propaganda.⁴ In literature from the time of Catherine the Great, Poland had frequently been described as a treasonous, revolutionary "hydra," a latinized renegade of Slavdom. Odes by major figures like Gavriil Derzhavin, Ivan Dmitriev, Vasilii Petrov, Mikhail Kheraskov, Vasyl (Vasilii) Ruban, Ippolit Bogdanovich, and Ivan Krylov had celebrated the empire's expansion at Poland's expense and the suppression of the Polish uprising of 1794.⁵ In the early nineteenth century the former commonwealth was referred to as "old Poland" (a concept that was used later by Fedor Dostoevsky, among others), associating the country with an irretrievable past.⁶ No longer considered the West or the conduit for Western ideas, Poland lost its allure as civilization and came to be regarded as merely a transitional zone to Europe, a territory that for security reasons required immediate political and military consolidation. In his "Memoir on Ancient and Modern Russia" (*Zapiska o drevnei i novoi Rossii*, 1811) Karamzin expressed the view that there could be "no Poland under any shape

or name. In politics, self-preservation is the supreme law.”⁷ And in his “Creed of a Russian Citizen” (1819) he protested against any proposal to grant Poland a constitution, which he felt would revive ideas of a resurrected Polish state: “Poles were never our genuine friends, or faithful allies ... It is necessary to totally squash dreams of returning Poland’s independence within its old boundaries ... The restoration of Poland will be the fall of Russia.”⁸

More sympathetic views were held by figures like Aleksandr Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, Petr Viazemsky, Aleksandr Herzen, and Nikolai Chernyshevsky. Nonetheless, Marlinsky, a friend of Polish gentry families from Polotsk and Minsk and considered something of a Polonophile for his relatively positive portrayal of Polish gentry in “Evening at a Caucasian Spa in 1824” (*Večer u vod Kavkazskikh v godu 1824*, 1830) and “Raids: A Tale of the Year 1613” (*Naezdy, Povest 1613 goda*, 1831), expressed outrage at the uprising of 1830–31. “The Poles,” he said, “were never honest friends of Russians ... The Polish nation was always well-treated by the Russians, who saved it from further oppression by Polish lords – and in spite of this they do not love Russians, I do not know why.”⁹ He expressed the hope that the bloody crushing of the uprising would “forever” suppress Polish rebelliousness. Like many of his compatriots he found it impossible to imagine a Russia that did not rule Poland. Even Petr Viazemsky, who spent the years 1818–21 in Warsaw, who translated Mickiewicz and Krasiński, and whose contacts with Poles were so extensive that he was accused by his countrymen of seeing the world “through Polish eyes,” revised his liberal attitudes after 1830 and totally jettisoned them after 1863. He came to view the Poles as incapable of independent state life due to an endemic lack of political realism.

The revolt of 1830–31, in particular, released a wave of anti-Polish writing in Russia. Among those who lent their voice to this chorus were poets of the stature of Vasilii Zhukovsky, Aleksandr Pushkin, Fedor Tiutchev, and Aleksei Khomiakov. Pushkin and Zhukovsky collaborated in publishing a brochure entitled *On the Taking of Warsaw* to celebrate the defeat of the uprising.¹⁰ Pushkin contributed his “To the Slanderers of Russia,” in which he foresaw all Slavic rivers joining the Russian sea, and his “Anniversary of Borodino” (*Borodinskaia godovshchina*), which ridiculed threats from the West, greeted the capitulation of Warsaw as a new Russian “triumph” and assured readers that “Poland’s fate was sealed.” Zhukovsky contributed “An Old Song on a New Note” (*Staraiia pesnia na novyi lad*), in which he expressed excitement at the idea of “avenging bombs” raining “like flaming clots of blood” on “the city that boiled with revolt.” In another poem published at this time, “Russian Glory” (*Russkaia slava*, 1831), he

joyfully contemplated Russia's past victories, particularly against the "treacherous, hostile Pole." The slaughter of the Warsaw suburb of Praga in 1794 is retrospectively seen here as history's revenge for the ancient Polish contempt for and mistreatment of Muscovy.

Tiutchev's "On the Taking of Warsaw" (1831) avoided the triumphalism of the above poems but stressed the historical and political necessity of Poland's subjugation. Its statehood was to be a sacrificial offering on the altar of Slavic unity and Russian security. Tiutchev viewed Poland's future through Slavophile concepts as an "eagle of the same tribe" that would be reborn in a unity with Russia. This sense of a decisive and final historical triumph over Poland as a vindication of Russian civilization was reinforced in a large number of works devoted at the time to the figure of Dimitrii Samozvanets (Dimitrii the Impostor), the Polish-supported pretender to the Russian throne during the early eighteenth-century "time of troubles."¹¹ The most famous work devoted to these events, Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* (1825), has been interpreted as contrasting two types of national culture, each of different origin: the Russian national culture, which is rooted in old Slavic popular culture, and the Polish, which is presented as a feudal creation, a denationalized, Latin-Catholic civilization of the West. This fundamental difference in traditions is seen as the cause of the eternal conflict between the two peoples and states.¹²

Ukraine as Residual Alterity

Russian travellers in Ukraine in the first three decades of the century were often influenced by these attitudes to Poland. Their comments on Ukraine, which range widely, surveying distinctive features of the land, people, and culture, serve as expressions of the political mythology and stereotyping that governed the metropolitan imagination. In the light of contemporary postcolonial theory, they can be seen as manifesting an array of tropes that construct the land and people as a society that was immature but nonetheless good empire-building material. These accounts were mostly written by members of the Russian aristocracy and gentry. Beginning with Vladimir Izmailov's *Puteshestvie v poludennuiu Rossiiu* (Travels in Southern Russia, 1800–2), Pavel Sumarokov's *Dosugi krymskago sudi ili vtoroe puteshestvie v Tavridu* (Leisure Times of a Crimean Judge, or Second Travels in Tavriia, 1803–5), and Prince I.M. Dolgoruky's *Slavny bubny za gorami ili puteshestvie moe koe-kuda v 1810 godu* (Glorious Drums beyond the Hills, or My Travels to Various Places in 1810 (1811, 1870)) and ending with Ivan Sbitnev's "Poezdka v Kharkov" (Trip to Kharkiv, 1830), Vadim Passek's *Putevoye zapiski Vadima* (Vadim's Travel Notes, 1834), and I. S. Vsevolzhsky's

Putshhestvie cherez iuzhniuiu Rossiuu, Krym i Odessu (Travels through Southern Russia, Crimea, and Odesa),¹³ they invariably portray the country as foreign, an exotic destination that must be explained to Russian readers. Some even include vocabularies with translations of Ukrainian words. Sumarokov was so struck by the differences in appearance, manners, clothing, and language that the moment he crossed the border into Ukraine, he exclaimed “Is this really the empire’s borderland? Or am I entering another state?”¹⁴ Twenty-five years later Ivan Sbitnev repeated, “the fertile Ukraine, a land that differs from our localities in language, customs, clothing and even in the very appearance of people, their life, agriculture and soil.”¹⁵ Recognition of an alienness only recently integrated into the empire occurs both among writers who report on town and gentry life (schools, hospitals, theatres, and the entertainments and customs of landowners) and among those who describe the life of common people.¹⁶

Since the tsarist government’s support for investigations into a Little Russian identity was governed by the need to counteract Polish influence, particularly in Right Bank Ukraine, it is not surprising to find that the Ukrainian alterity there is often constructed as a residual Polish influence or temptation. In some reports the Right Bank is simply referred to as Poland or as a land shared by Poles, cossacks, Little Russian peasants, and others. From the time Catherine acquired this territory, it had been considered Polish; the Polish gentry owned most of the land and was allowed to strengthen its grip on serfdom. This gentry refused to acknowledge the existence of a Ukrainian nation and culture on the territory. As a result, Russian travellers, who had no awareness of the Right Bank’s earlier history, accepted the idea that they were entering a Polish land. In fact, this perception remained prevalent throughout the nineteenth century: Nikolai Turgenev thought Kyiv was part of Russia, but Podillia (Podolia) part of Poland; in 1859 Ivan Aksakov wrote his “Letter from Poland,” passing himself off as a Polish writer with Zhytomyr as a mailing address. Knowledge of the history and ethnography of this area was so poor that even as late as the 1880s Drahomanov complained,

When at the beginning of Alexander II’s reign a liberal thaw occurred, Great Russian circles, which set the metropolitan tone for social opinion, were well disposed toward the Polish movement, and not having a good awareness of the real boundaries of Poland, were prepared to recognize as Poland everything that was not Great Russian, excepting, of course, those lands which the Russian government had become accustomed to ruling, namely Little Russia (Malorossiiia) and New Russia (Novorossiiia), which no one could even recall being settled before Catherine and which were known as the “Free Lands of

the Army (or Society) of Zaporozhians.” Only Kyiv, that pan-Russian Rome, stirred some doubts in Russian literary society, but it was prepared to recognize the land to the west of Kyiv as Poland.¹⁷

Consequently, the first Russian observers often made a sharp distinction between Left and Right Bank Ukraine. Naked *raison d'état* served as the supreme argument for integrating Right Bank Ukraine with Russia. Dynastic claims and the rights of conquest were invoked by Karamzin, for example, to retain these and other Western territories for the empire. In the case of Left Bank Ukraine the chief argument was that of a cognate identity. Gradually, as the history and ethnography of the Right Bank became better known, the same argument of likeness of identity was used to bolster claims to this territory.

In the travel literature of the first three decades of the century Khmelntsky's revolt of 1648 was frequently used as evidence that “Little Russia” had definitively rejected Polish domination and an alien Polish civilization. The ensuing long association with Russia and gradual incorporation of ethnic Ukrainian lands into the empire was also proffered as proof not only that the country represented a less indigestible “other” than its western neighbour but that it was Russian in its essential nature. Although “old Ukraine” was described as a partly occidentalized culture, like “old Poland” it was emphatically represented as an anachronism.¹⁸ Contemporary Ukraine's rediscovery of the popular roots it shared with Russia was offered as evidence for the “naturalness” of the union with Russia. The high culture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was viewed as an artificial imposition from above, a Polish accretion, and Ukrainian society was redefined as a folk culture. From now on its high culture was to be that of imperial Russia.

Reports of the Ukrainians' distinctive appearance, customs, and manners by early travellers were accompanied by exhortations to include them in the imaginative geography of the empire, a move welcomed by several Ukrainian writers, who wished their unique character and distinguishing features to be recognized. The Ukrainian Orest Somov, who arrived in St Petersburg in 1817 and can be identified as a proponent of a “pan-Russian” national identity, congratulated Pushkin in 1823 on representing “all sides of the land,” from the Baltic to the Caucasus. Implicitly drawing an analogy between literary and political assimilation, he recommended that writers continue to conquer outlying regions for Russian literature and civilization, urging particular attention to “the blossoming orchards of bountiful Ukraine, the beautiful banks of the Dnieper, Psol and other rivers of Little Russia ... The very woodless steppes have their poetry:

one can find *chabany* and herdsmen there, who do not see their settlement all summer, but wander with their herds through the valleys; estranged from society, they are betrothed to silence; the zealous horse and faithful dog are their favourites.”¹⁹

Whereas Ukrainians like Somov proposed these descriptions in order to heighten awareness of an identity that was unique and closer to nature than the metropolitan one, Russian travellers often expressed anxiety, even alienation, in the presence of such exoticism and such intimacy with the natural world. Dolgoruky spoke candidly of the non-Russian nature of the territory, describing the disturbing feeling of “being in foreign lands” and suggesting that this was due to one “simple” reason: “I no longer understood the popular language; the local people spoke with me, answered my questions, but did not entirely understand me, while I required translation for three out of every five words. We won’t go into a labyrinth of details and refined considerations; we will give voice to a simple idea, with which many, I think, will agree, that where the local language [*narechie*] ceases to be comprehensible to us, there the boundaries of our native land, and, in my opinion, even of the fatherland end.”²⁰

The message of a resistant otherness was underscored by the frequent acknowledgment of a strong local patriotism: “Little Russians,” wrote Vladimir Izmailov, “love their fatherland and its glory, because their ears have become familiar with these names, whose glory was always closely connected with patriotic obligation. They remember that they defended their fatherland themselves against numerous foes.”²¹ Moreover, these observers were occasionally surprisingly frank about the Ukrainian dislike of Russians. “Unfortunately,” wrote Levshin, “I must, in conclusion, tell you of their hatred of Great Russians. You can easily confirm this for yourself, because you often hear them saying: ‘A good man, but a Muscovite.’”²² Travellers affirmed that the population refused to understand Russian speech. Ivan Sbitnev wrote: “The locals mock and dislike Muscovites and people from beyond the Desna, or Lithuanians as they call them. Seeing some of them driving by, they drop their work and strike up an abusive or satirical song aimed at them, accompanied by loud laughter and long echoes.”²³ Passek reported that since 1709, when Peter I had stationed fifteen regiments in Ukraine, the granting of lands to commanders in the Russian army and subsequent settlement upon them of Russian serfs had led to tensions that had the appearance “not of a family argument, no! It became a struggle of two races!”²⁴ Dolgoruky, too, was aware that thousands of Russian serfs had been moved onto these lands that had been populated by Ukrainians “from most ancient times,” causing “enormous difficulties and complications.”²⁵

Panoptical Time

Both the civilization and the language of Ukraine were the subject of speculation. Occasionally they were seen as an unpleasant hybrid of Polish and Russian. Dolgoruky, for example, expressed this view after observing a Uniate church service.²⁶ The language was also sometimes described as a dialect of Polish.²⁷ More frequently it was assumed to be a dialect of Russian that had been spoiled by the admixture of Polish elements. The general trend in the century's first decades, however, was toward elaborating the view that both the civilization and the language were archaic forms of Russian. Some, like Dal, even argued that Ukrainian had best preserved the "full, pristine simplicity and force" of Russian and suggested that words from Ukrainian be incorporated into contemporary Russian in order to enrich the latter and bring it closer to its original, popular roots.²⁸ Journals like *The Beacon* (Maiak) and *The Muscovite* (Moskvitianin) argued that the language best manifested the Russian nationality (*narodnost*) because it was closer to the spirit of popular speech. As a consequence, they welcomed the occasional publication of a work in Ukrainian, viewing this as nothing more than a linguistic experiment, an investigation into an ancient branch of Russian that was rapidly being assimilated and would soon disappear altogether. The position of liberal periodicals like *Notes of the Fatherland* (*Otechestvennye zapiski*) was substantially the same. Both conservatives and liberals drew the line, however, at the idea of the Ukrainian language developing a contemporary literature of its own.

An explanation for this attitude can be found in the fact that both language and culture were grasped through a trope described by Anne McClintock as the construction of "panoptical" time, according to which "the axis of time was projected onto the axis of space and history became global. With social Darwinism, the taxonomic project, first applied to nature, was now applied to cultural history."²⁹ The Ukrainian language was generally apprehended as the voice of Russia's past, frozen in its pristine, folkloric innocence. Any return to such an anterior time was, of course, out of the question: it served merely as a reminder of a former condition, to be enjoyed just as one enjoys a picture of childhood, its passing lamented in the way sentimentalist writers of the day lamented the passing of a life of rural simplicity.

The discussion of the language, it soon became clear, pitted two views against each other. On the one hand were those who saw it as an ancient but disappearing dialect whose study was justified for academic reasons. On the other were those who defended the language's aptitudes and saw the possibilities of its literary development. Ukrainians

like Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko, who published in the early Kharkiv journals *Ukrainian Herald* (Ukrainskii vestnik, 1816–19) and *Ukrainian Journal* (Ukrainskii zhurnal, 1824–25) and various contemporary almanacs or who contributed to Russian journals, not only set themselves the task of presenting a more positive image of their language and culture than the one projected in Russian journals but also began to argue that the language had a right to serve as a literary medium.³⁰

A Natural Paradise

Alienness and exoticism had their desirable aspects. They could be embraced as enrichments of the still-developing culture of an empire proud of its recently acquired superpower status and one that imagined itself as youthful and therefore capable of absorbing new impressions from a variety of sources. If the Caucasus was referred to as Russia's Algeria, Ukraine was most commonly described as a second Italy, an Eden or an Arcadia.³¹ The term "second Italy" evoked a land with a warm climate and lush vegetation. The newly acquired Black Sea littoral was described in the most extravagant terms as "the best and most fruitful lands of Russia."³² In conformity with the *théorie des climats* current in Russia in the first decades of the century, this natural paradise was portrayed as having produced an aesthetically gifted population that loved music and song and artists who delighted in painting the beauty of the land. The common people were described as living in a village idyll: they were lyrical and emotional; their homes were praised for their cleanliness and tasteful internal décor; they were admired for their colourful arts and crafts, their deep religiosity, decorous manners, honesty, hospitality, and attachment to patriarchal traditions.³³ The dominant Sentimentalist construct is that of a noble and innocent peasantry, unspoiled by contact with the corrupting influences of urban life. Such an image of a naturally gifted but simple folk even led Karamzin, in his "Pantheon of Russian Authors" (Panteon rossiiskikh avtorov, 1801–2), to introduce the largely fictitious Semen Klymovsky, whose portrait and biography he included among a list of twenty writers from the legendary medieval Boian to Lomonosov. Karamzin was convinced that the "Little Russian cossack and poet" wrote "many fine poems, without, however, adhering to a definite metre." He attributed a well-known folksong to him and offered the following assessment: "a student of nature, he unfortunately was a dilettante in matters of art." Karamzin exhorted the other Russian authors included in the book not to be ashamed to see him in their midst.³⁴ Such comments capture the condescending but anxious concern that the folk heritage of Ukrainians

(in Pushkin's words the "singing and dancing tribe")³⁵ be incorporated into Russia's national treasury.

Anachronistic Space

Offered as a journey into the landscape of the past, the type of pastoral idyll considered here has been described as constructing anachronistic space.³⁶ As "Russia's Italy,"³⁷ the land serves as the scene of Russia's own great medieval past and the picture of her own earlier, innocent self. "Little Russia," writes one traveller, "is the land where the *first elements* of our fatherland emerged, from where the light of *Christianity* first flowed *within it*."³⁸ Another refers to the country as reminding him of "patriarchal, happy times."³⁹ As a picture of origins, however, the trope contains an internal contradiction, a tension between the celebration of a great founding past, in what now appears to be a half-alien land, and the assertion of a superior present elsewhere. The contradiction is resolved through maintaining a double focus: by expressing reverence for the medieval scene where the healthy shoots of Russian culture first appeared, while simultaneously glorifying this culture's mature flowering in Moscow and St Petersburg.⁴⁰ All in the local culture that can be absorbed by these tropes of anterior time and anachronistic space is in this way aligned with the atavistic, comically quaint, or hopelessly provincial.

Arrested Development

An intimation of a primitive and undeveloped version of the Russian self is attached to the characterizations of Ukraine and Ukrainians. The Enlightenment had already provided the key concepts by directing the viewer's gaze to the past behind the present, to the barbarism beneath the veneer of civilization. Voltaire, in his *Essay on Manners*, had projected the Cossacks back into ancient times: "Their life is entirely similar to that of the ancient Scythians and the Tartars on the shores of the Black Sea. To the north and the east of Europe (*l'orient de l'Europe*), all that part of the world is still rustic: it is the image of those so-called heroic centuries when men, limited to the necessary, pillaged that necessary from their neighbours."⁴¹ Gibbon, too, had assured readers that Ukraine's "modern face ... is a just representation of the ancient, since, in the hands of the Cossacks, it still remains in a state of nature."⁴² In the spirit of Sentimentalism, at the turn of the century Russian travellers saw some of this "backwardness" in a positive light. However, praise for simple manners and sincere attitudes easily shifts into a criticism of naivety or a contempt for backwardness. This

occurs most pointedly in reports indicating the absence of a high culture: "Society has developed minds, but has not raised them to what might be called the level of intellectual splendour, that in conversation demands refined feelings and vital ideas, philosophy and charm, in jests Attic salt and Voltaire's epigrammatic humour, the spark of Diderot's enthusiasm, and in language the tenderness of Racine ... Local life is limited to the simple domestic rounds and to those conditions in which man finds worldly happiness in the satisfaction of first necessities and in the measured employment of his abilities."⁴³ Ukrainians, like their language and culture, were described as being in a state of arrested development. This quickly became a recurrent formula: the people were merely a folk, in the same way as their culture was constructed as merely a folk culture, because, unlike Russians, they had failed to develop a viable political and socioeconomic superstructure. As indicated earlier, travellers seemed oblivious, for example, to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ukrainian baroque, because they attributed any evidence of regional sophistication to Polish culture and tended to ignore evidence of Ukraine's earlier autonomous political and socioeconomic development.

The inhabitants of Russia's "Italy" could quickly become transformed from a noble into a backward peasantry – Ukrainophilia into Ukrainophobia. The description of quaint customs was sometimes glossed as "the survival of ancient prejudices," the legacy of a life lived not so much in the bosom of nature as in the depths of ignorance. One author explained of the Little Russians: "They are in vain called complete ignoramuses – almost barbarians. True, they are simple in extraordinary measure, do not like to speak much, even view personal insults calmly for a long period of time."⁴⁴ He considered the people to be characters from "delightful eclogues" who belonged to the stage in human development when people were "more occupied with nature and themselves."⁴⁵ The construct, in short, is of a people who have not progressed, who, in contrast to Russians, have preserved unchanged a patriarchal style of life. Just as admiration of Asia in the early part of the century (represented by *chinoiserie*, the fashion of Chinese letters and arts) quickly gave way to a disgust with the East's perceived stagnation or immobility, the attitude to Ukraine quickly shifted from delighting in exoticism to condescension and contempt for lack of development.

The Discourse of Idleness

The quiet, simple, rough Ukrainian folk who had lived close to the soil for many generations were almost invariably criticized by the

metropolitan traveller for idleness. It was the most tirelessly invoked trait invented to account for their inferiority to Russians, and it was implicitly offered as the reason for their inability to maintain statehood.⁴⁶ The earliest of the travelogues were written shortly after the introduction of serfdom into the newly acquired Right Bank and its extension in the Left Bank. Many cossack families had been forced into it, and resistance was widespread. McClintock, in describing the English situation, has written that the discourse on idleness is, more properly speaking, a discourse on work, one that is “used to distinguish between desirable and undesirable labor. Pressure to work was, more accurately, pressure to alter traditional habits of work. During the land revolution and the war on the cottages of the eighteenth century, Official Board of Agriculture reports of the time praised the land enclosures for robbing the lower orders of economic independence, thereby forcing laborers to work every day of the year.”⁴⁷ The Russian gentry, in much the same way, appeared to be concerned with the presence of a relatively prosperous rural population that had escaped serfdom. Certainly, the Ukrainian village was never reported as a place of poverty or squalor. On the contrary, its appearance was invariably described as superior to that of the Russian village, and it was held up as a model of cleanliness, prosperity, and order.⁴⁸ Since, however, for ideological reasons these attributes could not be found in any inherent qualities of the native population, it was most frequently explained as a lucky accident of geography: Ukrainians were blessed with a remarkably fertile land that required little effort to yield a crop, and under exploitation by a more industrious people would produce even higher yields.⁴⁹ Sbitnev, author of the “Trip to Kharkiv” (1830), also makes the point that the advantages of climate and geographical location would have been inadequately exploited by Ukraine’s native rulers had the country maintained its autonomy.⁵⁰ This particular inflection of the argument could also be traced to the Enlightenment, which had spoken in such terms of Eastern Europe as a whole. Gibbon, too, had written, “The fertility of the soil, rather than the labour of the natives, supplied the rustic plenty of the Slavonians.”⁵¹

Bestial imagery frequently accompanied explanations of an idleness perceived as endemic. Pavel Sumarokov wrote that “The slowness characteristic of this people, which displays itself in their walk and all their actions, comes, as I suppose, from their being around oxen from their earliest days, those lazy creatures, which accustom them to such conduct.”⁵² And Dolgoruky commented that “The ox is the living representation of the *khokhol*, who is just as bestial [*skoten*] and lazy. If an ox is not pushed, it will spend days and nights on the same spot.”⁵³ Osyp Bodiatsky, the Ukrainian editor of Dolgoruky’s travelogue, commented

acidly in a footnote to this text: “No less [bestial], however, than the Great Russian, who lives frequently in too close a contact with his animals.”⁵⁴ Other accounts attributed the indolence to the southern climate.⁵⁵ Lazy, long-suffering, but capable of hard work when driven, the character of Ukrainians was seen as good potential, as long as empire builders provided the essential leadership.

Land of Darkness

There are parallels between the Russian view of Ukraine and of Asia. In fact the connection between Ukraine and Asia was explicitly made in some texts. In the years 1826–30 the journal *Notes of the Fatherland* ran a series of stories and travelogues on “exotic” lands entitled or subtitled “The Kirghizian Captive,” “A Bashkirian Tale,” “A Kalmykian Tale,” “A Tatar Tale.” In 1830 the publisher, Pavel Svinin, included one of Nikolai Gogol’s Ukrainian tales and provided the following exoticizing description of Ukrainians: “Little Russians are closer in appearance [than Great Russians] to the splendid inhabitants of Asia,” resembling Asians in their “facial appearance, frame, shapeliness of figure, laziness and carefree nature,” but “Little Russians ... do not have those stormy, untameable passions characteristic of believers in Islam: a phlegmatic unconcern appears to serve them as a defence and barrier from uneasy disturbances; and often from under their thick eyebrows a fire flashes; a bold European intelligence penetrates; a passionate love of the motherland and ardent feelings, clothed in pristine simplicity, fill their breasts.”⁵⁶ This appropriation of the Enlightenment discourse on orientalism aligned Ukraine with the Caucasus as Russia’s “orient,” a borderland to be tamed, civilized, and exploited. Within the limits of this discourse metropolitan observers could construct the appropriate anthropology of malleable peoples who would make good labourers.

An example of a clearly racial construct, one that might in fact have sprung from the pages of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, is contained in Dolgoruky’s travelogue. The prince writes:

The *khokhol* appears to be created by nature to till the land, sweat, burn in the sun and spend his whole life with a bronzed face. The rays of the sun burnish him to the extent that he shines as though covered in varnish, and his entire skull turns from yellow to a green hue; however, he does not grieve over such an enslaved condition: he knows nothing better. I have spoken with him. He knows his plough, ox, stack, whisky, and that constitutes his entire lexicon. If the *khokhol* complains about his condition, then the reason for his indignation has to be sought in the cruelty of the landlord, because he

willingly bears any fate and any labour. However, he needs constant prodding, because he is very lazy: he and his ox will fall asleep and wake up five times in one minute. This, at least, is what I have observed, and, I dare think, if this entire people did not owe a debt to well-mannered landowners for their benevolence and respect for their humanity, the *khokhol* would be difficult to separate from the negro in any way: one sweats over sugar, the other over grain. May the Lord give them both good health!”⁵⁷

Nature is enlisted here as an advocate of subordination, becoming in Condorcet’s words “an accomplice in the crime of political inequality.”⁵⁸ Omitted from Dolgoruky’s field of observation, of course, is any discussion of the population’s resistance to serfdom. A century later the Soviet historian Mikhail Pokrovsky looked back on Ukrainian history during this period and described the country as being turned into a “factory for the production of grain” and the landlords’ estates “into a likeness of the American plantation” with the part of black slaves played by the recently enserfed peasants.⁵⁹

These texts reveal a dichotomous attitude to nature and the peasantry. The traveller is, on the one hand, moved by the sight of natural beauty to envy the peasants’ closeness to the soil and, on the other, to support the need to harness both nature and peasant labour power. Izmailov’s account, for example, incorporates ecstatic descriptions of natural beauty in which the author dreams of escaping the artificial pleasures of the city and devoting himself to the simple country life. Such sentiments, however, find their counterpoint in equally ecstatic apostrophes to Peter the Great, the “artist tsar” who is portrayed as having mastered the “science” of ruling and is repeatedly praised for taming nature. Izmailov writes, “where wilderness hid the beauty of nature, where rivers roared, where impenetrable forests rustled, there now flourish cities, temples and orchards.”⁶⁰ Dolgoruky admires unspoiled beauty but reserves his loudest applause for the harnessing of natural resources and his greatest laments for the contemplation of unexploited natural riches. To his mind, it was the foresight of Catherine and the intelligence of Potemkin that had brought the lands of Ukraine under cultivation: “When Catherine was filling the marshes and creating ditches in Petersburg, Potemkin at the other end of the world found virgin land and planted gardens in the steppe! Plant a stake in the ground and in a year’s time, like Aaron’s staff, it will be covered in green and will bear fruit. Extravagance in the enterprises of a wealthy master is as marvellous as Nature is in the hands of its wise Maker.”⁶¹ This formulation captures the potentially fabulous wealth of a fertile land, while insisting on the necessity of its exploitation under autocratic rule. It also demonstrates the widely observed tendency to feminize colonized territory as virgin land and

employ sexual imagery to suggest that the country was a passive, accepting young woman.

History's Purpose

The Russians were consistently described in the Russian travel literature as superior to Ukrainians in “perseverance, cheerfulness and liveliness,”⁶² a fact that made them capable of evolution and change. The clearest example of this superiority had been provided by history, notably by victory at the battle of Poltava in 1709. Poltava itself became a site of pilgrimage for almost all Russian travellers. Outside Kyiv itself, it was the most often mentioned tourist attraction in the land, offering visitors an indispensable moment for personal communion with history and an opportunity for genuflection to Peter and the empire.⁶³ Poltava was at the same time offered as a metaphor for the integration of Ukraine’s pre-Petrine history into Russian. For the sentimental traveller the pilgrimage to Poltava was therefore described as providing an experience of the sublime analogous to that derived by the Romantics from contemplating the Caucasian mountains. Dolgoruky, for example, depicted himself as falling to the ground during a ceremony commemorating the victory, in rapturous contemplation of the battle’s fallen soldiers.⁶⁴ Kulzhynsky suggested that when approaching Poltava the happy pilgrim would be transported: “even the air smells of Russian glory. The traveller greedily seeks traces of the great Peter.”⁶⁵ The symbolic importance of 1709 in these accounts, therefore, carries a heavy load of meaning: it demonstrates the superiority of Russian civilization, marks the moment at which Russia drives out foreign influences, and confirms Russia’s right to appropriate Ukraine’s history both as its own “ancient Rome” and as colourful “Italy.”

Ukrainians also contributed to this symbolic historiography and created their own discourse of promotionalism. The above-mentioned Kulzhynsky, who was Gogol’s schoolmaster, wrote gushing descriptions of Ukraine, the nineteenth-century equivalent of travel brochures, for consumption in the imperial capitals. In one of them he insisted that “It is unforgivable for a Russian not to visit Kyiv, not to glance at Poltava.”⁶⁶ Another account by Ie. Kovalevsky, purportedly a Ukrainian travelling within the country in 1819, described the stereotypical good-natured, musical – but lazy – peasantry living in a bucolic paradise. The author, however, testily insisted that the laziness characterized only the “common people and not at all the other estates.”⁶⁷ He also described the penchant of Ukrainians for literature and the arts:

Every thirty or forty versts you will come across a small town, in which you will find hospitable people, an elegant school, and not infrequently a town poet,

whose muse alternately serves a wedding epithalamium and celebratory odes on the occasion of births, name-days, and so on. He writes elegies for lovers, and praises the deceased, depending on the fee, with a long or short epitaphian. In a word, this poet fulfills all the duties which are in larger towns divided among many versifiers. Lacking competitors, he calmly rules his little Parnassus, and, although his glory may not travel beyond the town walls, he need not fear reviews or journalists, lives without feeling a writer's jealousy and dies leaving the gift of his verse to his beloved son.⁶⁸

This passage promotes the land as a quaint, idyllic, trouble-free vacation spot or immigration destination. The author mimics metropolitan attitudes by commenting that the continued influx of hard-working "Northern" settlers from Russia, coupled with the influence of "the mother of labour – necessity," will rid the local peasants of their lazy habits.⁶⁹ It is, once more, a portrait of an amenable labour force, political stability, and economic promise.

Most travel-narrative accounts, therefore, present a dualistic portrayal. Just as Ukraine's civilization is viewed as simultaneously unfamiliar and yet recognizably Russian, its population is presented as frequently hostile but fundamentally loyal, even docile. This dichotomous portrayal also has deep roots in Polish literature, which from the mid-seventeenth century described Ukraine as a dangerous but fabulously rich "borderland." From Guillaume de Beauplan's description of 1651 of the land as "de merveilleuse fertilité" and "un Boulevard inexpugnable contre la puissance des Turcs, et la violence des Tatares" to Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Ogniem i mieczem* (With Fire and Sword) of 1885, this is a dominant image of the country in Polish writing.⁷⁰ The Russian travelogues generated an analogous imagery, reflecting an underlying political discourse. The empire's political strategy toward integrating Ukrainians had, in fact, been clearly articulated by Catherine the Great early in her reign. In numerous confidential documents she had outlined a policy of "treating them [Ukrainians] in the gentlest manner with the aim of Russifying them and putting an end to their gazing like wolves to the woods."⁷¹ While seeing Ukraine as a component of Russia, strengthening absolutism and expanding the empire, the empress sought to avoid a potentially violent reaction. Her propaganda applied the rhetoric of rationalism and enlightenment to centralizing intentions. The documents are eloquent testimony to a concerted plan to exploit Ukrainian land, labour, finances, and military resources to the fullest, while gradually and deliberately removing all traces of autonomy. Indeed, the fullest exploitation of resources is advanced as the justification for abolishing all vestiges of home rule.⁷² The widest range of tactics, from the extremes of cajolement to brutal force, it is made

explicit, could be utilized in order to win over or intimidate local opposition in the name of administrative uniformity and political security.

However, Ukraine's distinct sociopolitical life and legal code stood in the way of imperial exploitation. Imperial strategists had from the 1760s blamed the free mobility of the Ukrainian labour force (which had not known serfdom until Catherine introduced it) for what they termed "drunkenness, laziness and vagrancy."⁷³ They complained that the Ukrainian legal code allowed "the criticism of whomsoever one wished."⁷⁴ Grigorii Teplov found "completely republican" the law that prevented the tsar from giving Ukrainian lands to foreigners and insisted that "not a single hetman" from 1657 up to the time of Ivan Skoropadsky had "failed to practice treachery or at least tried to do so."⁷⁵ Catherine and her advisers listed various forms of resistance to imperial rule. The empress herself spoke of the "hidden hatred" of Ukrainians for Russians, who "in their turn have become accustomed to displaying a distinct contempt for Little Russians."⁷⁶ She first moved to destroy the power of the Cossack *starshyna*, the ruling officer class in Ukraine, and then turned her attention to the independence of the Zaporozhian Sich, which had conducted a broad colonization of the lands within its jurisdiction, often accomplished by settling escapees from Polish and Russian serfdom. Catherine was aware of the political challenge to imperial authority harboured by this economic independence. She wrote, "In establishing their own agricultural production, they have lessened their dependence on our throne."⁷⁷ The Russo-Turkish war of 1768–74 weakened the Zaporozhian Sich by removing eleven thousand men for the war effort, forcing the population to support tsarist armies, and conscripting the population for *corvée*. There were widespread complaints of theft, destruction of farmlands, and exploitation and enserfment of the population. It was charged that Russian officers behaved "almost as though it was a conquered land."⁷⁸ Eventually, when Catherine felt strong enough, she razed the Sich in 1775.

In the 1880s Mykhailo Drahomanov would claim that the policy of undermining the legitimacy of Ukraine's autonomy, of obliterating its traces and intensifying Russification, was a conscious and deliberate one that originated in Catherine's reign and was continued throughout the nineteenth century. In commenting on the empress's secret instructions of 1764 on how to Russify Ukraine, he wrote: "We have been witnesses to how these words became the slogans of various Katkovs, Samarins, Aksakovs and the basis of a whole range of government undertakings of a centralizing and Russificatory character."⁷⁹ In its concluding pages the oppositionist, anonymous *Istoriia Rusov* (History of the Rus People), which circulated widely in the early decades of the nineteenth century,

described Catherine's policy as governed by the motto "Complete what has been left unfinished!" (*nedokonchannaia sovershaem*), suggesting that her policy toward Ukraine was a conscious endorsement of the subordination to imperial rule initiated by the first emperor. It is against the background of this long-standing imperial policy that the literary attitudes of the first part of the nineteenth century should be viewed.

The travel writings of this period provide texts of encyclopedic scope that aim to justify the absorption of the land and people and that envisage their culture and history as an organic part of the empire. They share tropes with contemporary fictional accounts and deploy images that were to become stereotypes in literature, journalism, and scholarship. It has been asserted that the Russian journals of this period were "philo-Ukrainian"⁸⁰ and that the significance of Ukraine could, as David Saunders has indicated, be interpreted in different ways:

According to taste, Ukraine could stand for either medievalism or the pristine simplicity of the state of nature; either age-old tradition or freedom from the straitjacket of modern society. It therefore provided both conservatives and liberals with food for thought. Given this wide appeal, and given the presence of Ukrainians in Russia who could respond to Russian interest and advance the discussion, it was not at all surprising that Ukrainian subject-matter figured prominently in early nineteenth-century Russian literary activity. On the contrary, it was a natural consequence of earlier political developments and current cultural concerns.⁸¹

This statement is true only up to a point. It fails to mention what was elided in literary descriptions of Ukraine and ignores the existence of an underlying homogenizing discourse that worked to construct the land and people as tractable and therefore desirable material for assimilation. Russian dynastic nationalists (like Faddei Bulgarin, Nikolai Grech, and Osip Senkovsky), Romantic nationalists (like Mikhail Pogodin and Stepan Shevyrev), Slavophiles, and Westernizers all interpreted Ukraine differently, yet all agreed on the necessity and inevitability of imperial growth and cultural assimilation. Moreover, philo-Ukrainianness, like the phenomenon of philo-orientalism in its various manifestations, welcomed the incorporation of "foreign" cultural traits as long as they revitalized and invigorated the conquering civilization. Invariably, therefore, accounts of Ukraine coupled any description of distinctiveness with integrationist sermons on imperial historiography. Like the "orientals," Ukrainians were granted the innocence and freshness of a "developing" people, but their coming to maturity, the reader was assured, would make them indistinguishable from Russians. The inhabitants of Kyiv, for instance, were described

by Izmailov as living through the “the human race’s time of youth.” He expressed regret that “enlightenment” would bring “dissoluteness.”⁸² This latter development was seen in Enlightenment terms as the inevitable cost of spreading rationality, progress, and universal civilization. Izmailov concluded his comments on Ukrainians by denouncing the aggressive behaviour of the Zaporozhians, the emblem for him of all that was atavistic in the Ukrainian character. It was, however, an undesirable quality only up to the moment when it was integrated into the imperial military. After this had been accomplished and the Zaporozhians had entered imperial military service, their proclivity to violence became a positive attribute: “the conquering arms of Russia found them in the depths of the Sich, and barbarism submitted to heroism.”⁸³

The empire, it was asserted, had brought enlightenment and progress to a primitive, inchoate civilization that had no hope of independent existence. Contemplating Baturyn, the capital of Hetmanate Ukraine, Sbitnev comments on the changes Russian rule had wrought: “The insignificant advantages that Little Russians formerly enjoyed have today been replaced by the welfare of the entire country, extend to all social layers. This country was ruled according to the whims of people who were not always enlightened and benevolent, and would have remained to this day a wilderness, a den of ignorance.”⁸⁴ It is an assumption of this Enlightenment rhetoric that the far-sighted despot has the right to bring the light of civilization and the benefits of progress to backward nations, while in the process assimilating them for their own good. It is interesting to note that this passage nonetheless contains a grudging admission of Ukraine’s earlier civilizational superiority and greater wealth and that their appropriation is described as an involuntary sharing of “advantages” with all estates within the imperial realm.

Imperial regimes, as postcolonial theory has pointed out, seek legitimation in all available ways. Ashis Nandy, in describing of the British colonial encounter with Indian culture, indicates variance and indeterminacy as a specifically designated tactic.⁸⁵ Homi Bhabha has similarly described the practice of authority as displaying an “ambivalence that is one of the most significant discursive and psychical strategies of discriminatory power.”⁸⁶ The Russian colonial archive – both the administrative pronouncements and supporting literary texts – displays inconsistencies. Moreover, much of the commentary contained within this archive was challenged. Ukrainian writers often reacted to what they perceived as misinformation and bias. Ivan Kotliarevsky, for example, included in his play *Natalka-Poltavka* (1819) a response to A. Shakhovskoi’s presentation of Ukrainian folklore, history, and speech

in popular vaudevilles such as *The Cossack Poet* (Kozak stikhotvorets), which was first performed in St Petersburg on 15 May 1812. A character in Kotliarevsky's play complains that "a Russian assumed the task of writing in our language and about us, without ever seeing the country or knowing our customs and beliefs." Ukrainians argued that representations such as Shakhovskoi's caricatured them. Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko, Levko Borovykovsky, and others began writing in Ukrainian in the 1830s with the explicit aim of refuting charges that their language was fit only for depicting the comic and crude and incapable of expressing finer feelings. A large number of works on Ukrainian themes began to appear in Russian at this time. Some adopted the dominant tropes of the travel accounts described here, but others rejected them and contributed to the literary counterdepictions that together constituted a counterdiscourse.

INCORPORATING UKRAINIAN HISTORY:
EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY
RUSSIAN WRITING

We have no need to resort to fables and inventions as the Greeks and Romans did to elevate our origin. Glory was the cradle of the Russian nation, and victory the herald of its existence.

Nikolai Karamzin,

On Love for the Fatherland and National Pride (1802)

Russian historical literature of the early nineteenth century is marked by the need to incorporate Ukraine within its imperial narrative. In an article from 1802 Karamzin listed the historical themes that he considered significant and worthy of treatment by Russian artists. The first is the taking of Kazan, and the last is the founding of Moscow. The rest are all selected from the history of Kyivan Rus and events on Ruthenian (Ukrainian and Belarusian) territory. The mythic structures that he proposed for these narratives are as revealing as the geographical predominance of Ukraine in Karamzin's desiderata. He was particularly taken with the story of Rogneda:

Who can imagine without a feeling of pity the beautiful and unhappy Rogneda, who because of her great misfortune has been given the touching name of *Goreslava*? Vladimir has destroyed her fatherland, killed her brothers and parents, and married this desperate captive. With faithful love he might still conquer the tender heart of the woman; his lust satisfied, however, he wants to get rid of his spouse. Then her humiliated love recalls all the evil deeds of the cruel and ungrateful Vladimir, and Gorislava, strengthened by the teachings of her

pagan religion, which counts vengeance among the virtues, decides to kill Vladimir. For the last time he visits her and falls asleep in her chamber: Rogneda takes the knife – but delays – and the prince, awaking, tears the deadly weapon from her trembling hands. At that point Goreslava, in a moment of passionate despair, lists all his insults and cruelties ... I believe I can see before me Vladimir, astonished and finally moved; I see the unfortunate Goreslava incited by her heart, her night clothing in disarray, and hair dishevelled ... Vladimir ... listens to Rogneda with an attention that speaks for the fact that her words have deeply touched his heart. I think that this subject is affecting and colourful.⁸⁷

Rogneda's role as the recalcitrant colonized woman was reworked many times throughout the first decades of the century.⁸⁸ A female counterpart to the Mazepa myth, she plays upon imperial fears of an undomesticated, imperfectly assimilated conquest and an ever-present threat of treason. In various versions of the story, she was depicted as wishing to kill her husband in revenge for the destruction of her homeland, Polotsk. The focus is usually on the astonishing depth of deception. Izmailov, in commenting on the episode, expressed amazement that "the hand which tenderly caressed" the Prince, could hold a knife over him, that "wild ferocity" blazed in "eyes which at one time sparkled with love and tenderness!" In his retelling of the legend, the ruler first condemns her to death, then, heeding the pleas of their child who is now "the hostage of their earlier love," pardons her.⁸⁹ In another version Vladimir kills her father and lover, but the latter dies with a final exhortation on his lips: that Rogneda accept Vladimir's embrace.⁹⁰ The message is clear: the conquered Slavic principality can be romanced into a willing loyalty.

The contemporary import of such empire-building allegories is made explicit in fictional accounts of events from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ukrainian history, which began to appear in 1816 and became popular in the 1830s. Their favourite themes are Bohdan Khmelnytsky's revolution, the *haidamak* rebellions, and Ivan Mazepa. The first two are celebrated as popular uprisings against a cruel and oppressive Polish regime. They carry an anti-Polish, pro-Russian assimilationist message that recounts Polish atrocities and offers justifications for Khmelnytsky's treason.⁹¹ The Mazepa theme, on the contrary, carries an antirevolutionary message, emphasizing the civilizational superiority of Russia and the benefits of tsarist government.⁹² The *topoi* of Mazepa's characterization in the numerous accounts of the events of 1708–9 form a counterpart to the depictions of Polish perfidy in the Dimitrii Samozvanets theme from this time. Ukrainian cossacks and the population at large are reassuringly depicted as imperial loyalists. Mazepa's motivation for revolt (like Khmelnytsky's in hostile

Polish accounts) is described as a personal vendetta to avenge insults. Foreign intrigues play an important role in explaining the treason: the Polish court, Jesuit influence, a desire to Catholicize the country, or to place it under Polish rule configure his intentions as those of a seditious alien. Described as a “Ukrainian Machiavelli,” he is both devilishly clever and a ruthless and oppressive ruler despised by his people.

This Mazepa narrative can also be read as allegory: Russia’s “past,” her own former innocent self, is represented by the common people who justly fear contamination by an occidentalizing, latinizing Polish culture that has been “unnaturally” grafted onto them from above. Consequently, they welcome the elimination of this threat and a return to the “all-Russian” fold. The only account to depart substantially from such a portrayal is Bulgarin’s *Mazepa* (1833–34). Bulgarin, a Pole who fought against Russia in 1812 before deserting and fashioning a literary career for himself in Russia, conceived his book as a response to Pushkin’s “Poltava,” which, he felt, had not done justice to the hetman. In his preface the author asserts that he wishes to examine the “political character” of Mazepa, whom he describes as “one of the most intelligent magnates of his age.”⁹³ The book portrays the hetman’s court not only as occidental but as splendid and in close contact with Poland and other Western countries. The Cossack *starshyna*, according to him, was unanimously opposed to amalgamation with imperial Russia and passionately opposed to tsarist intrusions into local affairs. Even Mazepa’s enemies, Polubotok and Palei (Palii) are fanatical defenders of the country’s rights. Moreover, Mazepa and his *starshyna* exhibit great political sophistication, making them a formidable political entity. What has also gone unremarked in Bulgarin’s account is his recognition of Mazepa’s politics as a coherent and consistently maintained drive for independence. Bulgarin’s hetman recognizes clearly that Peter’s new unitary state has no place for Ukrainian autonomy and therefore attempts to develop a system of alliances that would create the diplomatic room to manoeuvre that he needs.

The hetman’s strategy and diplomacy become so absorbing for the reader that they threaten to derail the pro-tsarist narrative. Recognizing this, the narrator offers explanations for the mistaken independentist politics. First, Little Russia had good reasons at the time for avoiding close union with Russia, because the empire was “not then what it is today”: boiars and viceroys sent by the tsar plundered the country “after the example of the Tatars”; there was no rule of law and “no reason to envy the Russians.”⁹⁴ The benefits and compensations of empire, its “vastness, power, might and enlightenment,” became apparent only in recent times. Second, and more fundamentally, Ukraine’s independence was not viable: the country would inevitably

have been drawn into close union with either Poland or Russia and would have become a pawn in the hands of other powers. Ukraine's only choice was who would be its master. In the novel the "far-sighted and perceptive" Mazepa recognizes this and aims for a Ukraine allied with Poland as a European buttress against the "Russians and Tatars."⁹⁵ Ironically Bulgarin, the renegade Pole, acts as a spokesman for a strong hereditary autocracy in opposition to the elected Polish monarchy and for ties of "blood and faith" binding Ukraine to Russia.⁹⁶

Moreover, he identifies a supposedly anarchic impulse in Ukrainians that prevents them, as it does Poles, from developing a stable form of government. Bulgarin was one of the first authors to examine the anarchistic "philosophy" of the Zaporozhians, which is presented in the novel as indulgence in uninhibited violence and unrestrained drunkenness and sexuality, alternating with the enforcement of a strict code of discipline during military campaigns. Ukrainian society, represented primarily by the cossacks, is, like the Polish society of independent nobles, constituted of insubordinates – intransigent social groupings who have obstinately refused to fit into the imperial structure. Mazepa's strategy aims at taming the warlord Palei (Palii), who has been created by the destabilized international situation and whose concept of cossack "freedom" (*volnosti*) is nothing but lawlessness. Palei's anti-Polish and anti-Jewish pogroms make Mazepa's desire for a stable national government an attractive alternative. Bulgarin's point is that ultimately only Peter's despotic, ruthless rule could achieve the required control and stability.

In the end, however, the reader is left well aware of the patriotic motivation of Mazepa and the *starshyna* and with a sense of Ukraine as a serious player in international affairs. For the hetman's central ideological statement, Bulgarin chooses Mazepa's famous poem "Oi bida, bida chaitsi nebozi" (Oh, Woe to the Unfortunate Seagull), which outlines the difficulty of protecting the internally divided and geographically exposed *patria* against neighbouring powers; it is a sentiment that other Cossack leaders fully endorse.⁹⁷

The Rogneda and Mazepa themes suggest a fear of the enemy concealed within. Even a Ukraine that appeared loyal, subdued, and domesticated might instantly turn hostile. For the imperial imagination, therefore, familiarity had its nightmares. One of the most frightening was revolution, which was often associated with a resurgent Zaporozhian Sich. Indeed, the great Pugachev rebellion of 1773 had connections with the Zaporozhians' military encampment on the lower Dnieper. Many rebels were former Zaporozhians who had been exiled to Siberia after staging a revolt in 1769, and Pugachev himself had attempted to find sanctuary in the Sich at the end of the rebellion. The Sich continually attracted soldiers and escaped peasants who bolstered its resistance

to the empire. A second rebellion took place there in 1774. Rumours circulated that this would be a second *Koliivshchyna* (the rebellion of 1768 against Polish rule), this time directed against the Russian empire. The manner in which the Sich was destroyed and its leaders arrested and exiled, although never mentioned in Russian literature, was widely known and resented in Ukraine. The last Zaporozhian leader, Petro Kalnyshevsky, who had ably defended the Sich from imperial encroachment, was exiled in 1776 to a monastery in the Solovets Islands, where he was kept in chains for twenty-six years in a dungeon two metres wide and three metres long. Finally amnestied by Alexander I in 1801, he died a monk in the monastery in 1803, aged 110. In the early decades of the nineteenth century memories of the Sich were still fresh, and the creation of the Black Sea Cossacks, which served as part of Suvorov's army in the 1790s, had rekindled the idea of a national fighting force.

Continual insurrections fuelled demands for political autonomy. As serfdom was extended into Ukraine, peasant revolts took place and legendary figures like Semen Harkusha, a Ukrainian Robin Hood, were able to operate for as long as a decade (1772–84) with popular support. When Aleksei Arakcheev began forming military communes in Ukraine in 1816, driving over 350,000 state peasants into them, he sparked a further string of revolts that lasted from 1818 to 1820. In short, the recent history of the Sich and peasant discontent created a receptive mass base for an autonomist ideology, which was reflected, at first mutedly, and later explicitly, in the writings of Ivan Kotliarevsky, Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko, Panteleimon Kulish, Taras Shevchenko, and other writers, who frequently took the historical popular rebellions as their themes.

The fantasy literature that was generated by Romanticism and that often fused with historical literature turned to the country's rich and ancient folklore for a seemingly inexhaustible source of myths and legends. Ukraine was seen as a land of witches and charms, magic and treasures, ancient rites and forbidden knowledge. The attraction of folklore was shown to be either dangerous and occult or harmless and reassuringly familiar – another duality that caused the bifurcation of this fantasy literature into two streams: gothic horror and comedy. The first produced tales of latent evil, supernatural powers, and cruel revenges, like Gogol's "Terrible Vengeance" (*Strashnaia mest*), with their suggestions of unresolved social tensions. As Romanticism waned and threats of insurrection and political separatism receded, the second stream came to predominate in the Russian literature devoted to Ukraine. It is associated with some of the fiction of Ivan Kulzhinsky, Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko, Ievhen Hrebinka, and Nikolai Gogol – all Ukrainians who wrote in Russian and described a country of

charming and anachronistic ways, far removed from the urban and enlightened modern society. In these depictions Ukraine is associated not simply with the past and the rural but with the superstitious, outdated, and backward.

Eccentric provincial gentry-folk, who can be seen as embodiments of the assumptions present in travel and historical writings, populate this literary landscape.⁹⁸ These landowners are sometimes hidebound reactionaries, simple-minded traditionalists, or ridiculous *raisonneurs* – all portrayals that were greatly appreciated by the metropolitan reader and critic, who took these comic images as reassurances of a homogenizing cultural vision and centralizing political ideology. However fascinating its past history, however charming its folkways, contemporary Ukraine was a backward province.

Two writers who introduced Ukrainian history to Russian literature deserve special attention. Orest Somov, who wrote between 1826 and 1833, and Ievhen Hrebinka (Evgenii Grebenka), whose works appeared between 1835 and 1846. Their stories attempt to find a role for the Ukrainian historical identity within the Russian imperial imagination. Somov, under the influence of Romanticism, produced tales of Gothic mystery and horror that drew on Ukrainian folklore, like “Kyiv Witches” (Kievskie vedmy, 1833), or were set in a Ukrainian historical context, like “The Captive Turk” (Plennyi Turok, 1831) and “The Haidamak” (Gaidamak, 1825). These stories deal with the presence in Ukraine of the assimilable and unassimilable “Other.” This literary Ukraine is populated by a number of races – Poles, Jews, and Turks among them. The captured Turk at the end of the eponymous story refuses to return to Turkey when given a chance to do so, becomes an Orthodox Christian, and enlists in the tsarist army. Other identities, however, are more difficult to assimilate, most notably that of the Jews. “The Haidamak” portrays a colourful brigand, aligning him not with the rude manners of criminals but with the noble conduct of a courtier. It portrays Jews as an alien group who have in the past served the Polish oppressor and presently harbour resentment toward the cossacks; their pro-Polish orientation and commercial interests are in competition with those of the cossacks, making them potentially treacherous. Most importantly, however, Somov’s antisemitism serves to create, by way of contrast, a favourable picture of Ukrainian loyalty to and cultural affinity for Russians.

The same theme of treachery was developed further by Ievhen Hrebinka in “The Nezhin Captain Zolotarenko: A Historical Tale” (Nezhinskii polkovnik Zolotarenko: Istoricheskaia byl, 1842) and *Chaikovsky* (1843). The first deals primarily with the perfidy of Poles, the second with that of Jews. Both are set in the legendary past during

the seventeenth-century cossack-Polish wars. *Chaikovsky* is particularly interesting for its description of cossack life. Hrebinka's narrative draws on family legends (his mother was a descendant of the historical lieutenant Chaikovsky) and sources recently made available, in order to paint a heroic picture of Ukrainian society in struggle with the Poles to the west and the Tatars and Turks to the south. The work enjoyed great popularity. Ivan Franko described it as the favourite reading of Galician Ukrainian youth in the 1860s and 1870s.⁹⁹

It draws a clear line of cultural demarcation between Ukrainians and Russians, on the one hand, and the remaining peoples, on the other. The two camps can be distinguished by their customs, rituals, and faith. The hatred of the Jewish Rokhlia for Ukrainians is well-motivated. Her family has been the victim of a pogrom perpetrated by cossacks who carried off her two children, Teklia (Tetiana) and Gertsik. The past cruelty of the cossacks, the reader is made aware, has produced a fifth column within their own society. In order to survive Gertsik has to deny his identity and pretend to be a German and a loyal friend of Chaikovsky. He eventually tries to kill and ruin the lieutenant's son. Rokhlia, dressed as a gypsy, wanders the cossack land in search of her lost children. She pretends to care for the sick but in fact takes every opportunity to administer poison to unsuspecting victims. Jews are portrayed as subversives like Rokhlia and Gertsik, spies like Gershko, or foreign elements that cannot be successfully integrated into the society, like the hapless Teklia, who commits suicide. The final carnival, like the witches' sabbath in Somov's "Kyiv Witches," which brings together Germans, Jews, Poles, gypsies, and devils, suggests that these groups are eternal outsiders who continue to hide their true identities and intentions.

The Ukrainian world is portrayed as a rugged frontier society that has become accustomed to rooting out and destroying treachery and is attuned to the divisive power of religious and cultural difference. The role of Ukrainians in dealing with disloyalty has been of vital importance to the state: they have learned how to unmask traitors (Gertsyk, the "gypsy," Gershko) and fight off Tatars, Turks, and Poles. In this way the Orthodox Slavic warrior-society has proven its value to the empire-builders. The narrative plays up the "arguments" of consanguinity, shared faith, and common cultural features. But the most important "argument" is historical: Ukrainians have already made a vital contribution to maintaining the boundary between the Orthodox Slavs and other, hostile civilizations. Ukraine's violent history is shown to have served an essential function in protecting the empire's border from foreign incursions. The cossacks have assimilated violence, in

other words, as a defensive military posture, a by-product of aggression directed against them.

The novel, however, contains an important critique of this military society that is linked to the generalized use of violence. Permissible and necessary use of violence in a boundary-guarding warrior-society is applauded, but the text suggests that no absolute distinction, and in fact a troubling interconnectedness, exists between different kinds of violence. We are made aware of violence as a sport among some Zaporozhian, who encourage young men to prove their mettle by raiding neighbouring Polish lands; of violence used in revenge, as in the case of the pogrom against the former oppressors, Poles and Jews; and of violence against women. The story demonstrates that the cycle of violence is, in the end, crippling to all parties. The cruel pogrom and the capture of the two children, who are later sold, comes back to haunt the Ukrainian society: Gertsik deceives and almost destroys Chaikovsky's family. The misogynistic warrior-cossack ethos causes misery to Chaikovsky's wife, who dies complaining of her husband's insensitivity. It comes close to destroying Maryna, whom the Zaporozhians, upon discovering the presence of a woman in their midst, are prepared to kill. The young men of the Sich push Maryna out of their camp, in this way preventing the more fanatical Zaporozhians from hurting her. It is clear that misogyny damages men too: Chaikovsky is more sensitive than his macho identity allows him to admit.

The key problem is one of containing the violence and choosing its lesser form when appropriate. The use of violence against women and children is clearly unacceptable, and its depiction is meant to shock readers. It is punished by having its consequences rebound on the perpetrators. Rokhlia is the clearest example of this. The unmasking of her gypsy identity is preceded by an important discussion of human evil and the pernicious spirit of revenge. The author discusses the importance of overcoming violent animal instincts and hatreds, which exist "even in civilized society." He warns that if passion overcomes an individual, "especially revenge," that person becomes capable of worse behaviour than "tigers and snakes" and "can surprise imagination itself."¹⁰⁰ It is to be noted that Rokhlia's admission of guilt is not followed by punishment. She is banished with the words: "It is not for us to judge you; the Lord will stand in judgment over you."¹⁰¹

The epilogue describes the death of Chaikovsky's last remaining descendant long after the narrated events, in the 1820s, on the Persian frontier where he has served the imperial army loyally. The old family estate, which came to life briefly during the "last Turkish campaign," is now overrun. The old town church has been hit by lightning and

has burned down. The contemporary carriage driver, whom the author meets, suggests by his appearance a blend of the old Zaporozhian world and the new Russia, a manifestation of the hybrid identity that the new imperial state has produced: he has long Zaporozhian whiskers, wide cossack trousers, a Russian *armiak*, and a red Muscovite shirt.

Taken together, these facts suggest the severing of links with the past, the denial of the old warrior ethos, and the attempt to move beyond the “spirit of evil” associated with the martial order, vengefulness, and violence. What aligns Hrebinka’s *Chaikovsky* with Somov’s *Gaidamak* is not their acquiescence to Russian hegemony so much as the subtextual argument for inclusion. Xenophobia and anti-Semitism are linked to a pro-Russian stance and are rewarded with the promise of Ukraine becoming a partner in state- and nation-building. The epilogue to *Chaikovsky* suggests that Ukrainians have been successfully integrated in a way that Poles and Jews will never be.

In his verse play *Bohdan* (Bogdan, 1843), which was written at the same time as *Chaikovsky*, Hrebinka describes the violence of Khmelnytsky’s revolt as a spontaneous phenomenon of nature, an event called forth by the injustices done to Ukrainian society over the centuries of Polish rule and sanctioned by natural law. Jews are seen as the executive hand of oppressive Polish rule. It is significant that the second half of the play moves to integrate Ukraine ideologically with Russia. The familiar arguments of consanguinity, common faith, and history are made, and an acquiescence to Russian hegemony is encoded in the biblical image of Joseph, to whom, it is said, eleven brothers were eventually forced to submit. The clichés of Russia as a “realm without boundaries,” one that spans all points of the compass and unites all Slavic tongues are repeated. However, the motivation for the final act, the signing of the Pereiaslav treaty on 8 January 1654, has its complications. The motive given for signing the treaty is war-weariness among the people. Preparations for convincing the population of the legitimacy of the treaty are manipulatory and mechanical: bandura-players and blind minstrels are sent out by the hetman to prime the population. As the group moves toward the gathered crowd to make the proclamation, the first comment is, “Oh, what a freezing cold! A Muscovite cold, they call it.” The common people have hardly even seen a Muscovite, and only one of those in attendance claims to have heard their language. On the strength of his assurances, they are prepared to accept that the language, appearance, and faith of Russians are similar to theirs. But most significant is the final metaphor of two eagles. The elder brother-eagle, we are told, stayed at home and grew strong. The younger eagle took off for foreign lands too early in life. When the elder brother caught up with him, he found

him exhausted, surrounded by hostile crows, and in mortal danger. The final words of the play (“The blood brothers embraced / And were strong again. / How great is Russia / And Ukraine – the mother!”) summons up the image of two intertwined eagles or the double-headed eagle of the imperial banner. It suggests a claim of partnership – albeit an unequal one – between brothers. Even though requiring rescue through the intervention of a stronger, older brother, Ukraine, nonetheless, has fought more difficult battles on the frontier, earlier and longer, and can now provide both the political and military skills that the expanding state requires. Having policed the boundaries of the East Slavic realm, Ukraine has acquired specialized knowledge of foreign worlds. The final comments also remind the reader that Ukraine, not Russia, was the cradle of East Slavic civilization. Incongruously, Hrebinka combines the claims of Ukraine’s seniority (“the mother”) with a younger, “weaker brother” status.

The verse drama *Bohdan* and the novel *Chaikovskiy* construct Ukraine as an inalienable part of the empire whose union with Russia has been the product not of violence but of natural affinities and whose identity demands recognition within the empire. Both Somov and Hrebinka continued the discourse of promotionalism: they furnished persuasive guarantees of the permanence of the union, calmed fears of native violence and intractability, and presented a request for visibility within the imperial self-image.

MAZEPA: KONDRATII RYLEEV’S
“VOINAROVSKY” (1825) AND
ALEKSANDR PUSHKIN’S “POLTAVA” (1828)

By the time of the Decembrist revolt of 1825 a Russian literature that celebrated imperial expansion already had a long tradition, with its own codex of themes, metaphors, and tropes. It merged with a pro-autocratic discourse that denied legitimacy to local autonomies and republican aspirations. An example of the latter is Catherine the Great’s *Historical Play from the Life of Riurik* (*Istoricheskoe predstavlenie iz zhizni Riurika*, 1786), which condemns Vadim of Novgorod as an ambitious pretender to the lawful rule of Riurik, in whom the empress saw her ideal of an enlightened monarch. In the end Vadim comes on bended knee to Riurik and swears eternal loyalty. Mikhail Kheraskov’s “The Tsar, or Novgorod Saved” (*Tsar, ili spasenie Novgoroda*, 1800) also portrays Vadim as a terrorist and Novgorod as saved from the “horrors of anarchic rule.” His *Rossiada* (*Rossiada*, 1778), an attempt at a national epic, describes the taking of Kazan from the Tatars by Ivan the Terrible in 1552. Written at the time of the Russo-

Turkish wars, when Catherine was attempting to capture the Crimea, it depicts the Tatars as cruel oppressors of Russia.¹⁰² Karamzin's *Martha the Governor, or the Subjugation of Novgorod* (Marfa-Posadnitsa ili pokorenienie Novgoroda: Istoricheskaja povest, 1802), a foundation work of modern Russian historical fiction, develops the same theme. A literature critical of tsarist policies emerged to challenge such representations. It included Aleksandr Radishchev's ode "Freedom" (Volnost, written in 1783 and partly published in 1790), Iakov Kniazhnin's tragedy *Vadim Novgorodsky* (refused staging in 1789 because of the outbreak of the French Revolution but published in 1793), which portrays the hero as a republican and defender of civic rights, and Pushkin's "Ode to Freedom" (Volnost, 1817). A patriotic Ukrainian literature that defended local democratic rights appeared, at least on the surface, to be a natural ally of this liberal trend. Vasili Kapnist's "Ode on Slavery" (Oda na rabstvo, 1783), which is generally interpreted as a protest against the extension of serfdom to Ukrainian territories by Catherine the Great's edict of 3 May 1783, can be seen as such a defence of local rights.¹⁰³ In the 1820s readers attuned to the Decembrists' elevation of personal freedoms and political liberties viewed Novgorod's *veche* and Ukraine's elected hetman as examples of a recoverable democratic tradition. Moreover, Ukraine possessed a rich literature and folklore that celebrated the heroic struggle against foreign domination. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, chronicles and epic songs, known as *dumy*, from the seventeenth and eighteenth century, as well as tracts like the *History of the Rus People* (which was published in 1846 and had earlier circulated in manuscript copies) became available. These writings helped to strengthen Ukraine's image as a freedom-loving land continually in revolt against foreign tyrants and an oppressive social order.¹⁰⁴

Ryleev became acquainted with much of this literature through his contacts with Ukrainian scholars. He employed a generalized, unified image of Ukraine's struggle for social and national freedom to create a civic-minded poetry in the service of the Decembrist cause.¹⁰⁵ Its most arresting expression came in the poetic production of his last two years, which deals predominantly with Ukraine and includes his most famous poetic statements, "Voinarovsky" (1825) and "Nalyvaiko" (1825).

Using Ukrainian history as the source for a liberation mythology brought with it several difficulties. In the first place Ryleev's break with imperial notions embedded in the idea of state patriotism was gradual and only partial. His profound respect for Derzhavin and admiration for Karamzin's *History of the Russian State*, the ninth volume of which inspired him to write his *Dumy* (1822–23), reveal a hesitation between what Nestor Kotliarevsky called "the permitted codex of civic morals"

and “the most genuine freedom-thinking poetry.”¹⁰⁶ However, Ryleev’s originality lies in the explicit connection he made between democratic and national rights with reference to Ukraine. In “Voinarovsky” Ukraine’s aspirations for autonomy are viewed sympathetically, and legitimacy is given to an anti-imperial, anti-Russian point of view. It was not a position the poet held unambiguously, but it nonetheless resounds so strongly in this poem that the author, who was the chief conspirator in the Decembrist revolt, can be seen as belonging to an anti-imperialist current within Russian literature.

The poetry of Ryleev’s last two years celebrates the spirit of freedom and various movements to overthrow tyrants in both Russia and Ukraine. Were the freedom movements in these two countries compatible? Could they be reconciled with the idea of a unified empire? Tsarist censorship thought not. The original publication of 1825 included several editorial explanations and cuts to the text. Even so, readers were astonished by its appearance. A reprinting was not permitted in the nineteenth century, and forty years after Ryleev’s death the Petersburg censorship committee still refused to publish an anthology of the poet’s work on the grounds that “Voinarovsky” was “too vivid a reminder of the former independent status” of Ukraine.¹⁰⁷

A century later, following the revolution of 1917, Volodymyr Vynnychenko complained that Russian liberalism ended at the Ukrainian question. Ryleev’s application of democratic, republican principles, however, indicates a Russia prepared to transgress this political and psychological taboo. This opinion finds support in his political views: in his rejection of Pestel’s ideas of centralization, which he considered a dangerous Bonapartism, and in his gradual turn away from the glorification of empire-builders like Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great to sympathetic portrayals of empire dismemberers like Mazepa and Voinarovsky. In the final months of his life he worked on philosophical poems devoted to the eternal revolt of freedom against despotism. The scheme of one, entitled “The Spirit of the Time or the Fate of the Human Race,” outlines humanity’s fall from a state of “wild freedom” to enslavement by despotism, followed by a gradual liberation in the Reformation and French Revolution. The concluding section was to describe a struggle of “nations against tsars” leading to a union of religion, morality, and politics.¹⁰⁸ This recognition of national rights as an irreducible aspect of political morality, coupled with his strong interest in the figure of Mazepa, constituted a radical challenge to received notions.

Ryleev’s interest in Ukraine was stimulated by his stay in the country from 1816 to 1820, during which time he married the daughter of a Ukrainian gentry family from Ostrogozhsk, an area that had been

settled by Ukrainian cossacks. Even as late as 1897, census figures revealed that the area was over 90 percent Ukrainian.¹⁰⁹ Many settlers had been enserfed by Catherine the Great only after 1783. In the years he spent there, Ryleev travelled to Kharkiv and Kyiv, establishing contacts with intellectuals at a time when interest in Ukraine was growing rapidly among writers, ethnographers, and historians. Kharkiv University, which had been founded in 1805, published studies on Ukraine in the *Ukrainian Herald* (Ukrainskii vestnik) and the *Ukrainian Journal* (Ukrainskii zhurnal). N. Tsertelev's *Collection of Ancient Little Russian Songs* (Opyt sobraniie starinnykh malorossiiskikh pesen) appeared in 1819 and Bantysh-Kamensky's *History of Little Russia* (Istoriia Maloi Rossii) in 1822.¹¹⁰ Through his contacts with intellectuals, Ryleev also had access to the unpublished *History of the Rus People*.¹¹¹

Peter the Great's meeting with Mazepa in Ostrogozhsk would have been known to local people and described to the poet. In his early poem devoted to this incident, "Peter the Great's First Meeting with Mazepa," the hetman is presented as a mysterious and romantically attractive, if not entirely positive, character. Ryleev's picture of Mazepa in "Voinarovsky," however, breaks with the long imperial tradition of demonization.¹¹² The poem describes the revolt against Peter the Great through the eyes of the hetman's nephew, Voinarovsky, who has been exiled to Siberia. Both Mazepa and Voinarovsky are Ukrainian patriots who aspire to restore their country's ancient liberties. Their alliance with Charles XII of Sweden is seen to be motivated by a legitimate desire to protect Ukraine's autonomy in the face of increasing infringements of its rights by Russia.¹¹³

It has become commonplace among commentators to assert that Ryleev took numerous liberties with his sources in order to construct Mazepa's patriotic motivation.¹¹⁴ The sources were, however, open to differing interpretations. Ryleev's account certainly departs from Karamzin's historiography and Bantysh-Kamensky's conclusions. The latter's *History*, however, made available so many documents from Mazepa's time, including the hetman's letters and poetry, that these materials provided evidence for a positive assessment: readers were able to form their own opinion of the man and his intentions.¹¹⁵ Historical sources, such as the *History of the Rus People*, and Mazepa's poetry argued for the hetman's patriotic concerns. Maslov points out that the Polish writers with whom Ryleev maintained contact also had a positive view of Mazepa.¹¹⁶ Most importantly, however, contemporary attitudes among the Ukrainian gentry and intelligentsia reveal widespread support for Mazepa as a defender of autonomy.¹¹⁷

In Ryleev's version, the hetman, like the later Decembrists themselves, is uncertain of success, misunderstood by his own people,

doomed by circumstances, and yet convinced that the long-awaited opportunity for rebellion has to be grasped whatever the consequences. Mazepa and Voinarovsky express their fervent love of their “native” land, which is referred to as Ukraine throughout. The term “Ukraine” is employed because differentiation from Russia is precisely the issue. The battle of Poltava is described by Voinarovsky as the loss of the fatherland (*otchizna*) and motherland (*rodina*). “Ukraine” occurs thirteen times; “motherland” and its derivatives, eighteen times; “fatherland,” three times; “countryman” (*zenliak*) and its derivatives, three times; and “citizen,” twice. All these words create a positive semantic grouping. “Russian” is used once to describe the enemy in battle; “Muscovy” and its derivative occur twice, both in close association with the word “enemy” (*vrag*). Ukraine is portrayed as a national entity with rights to an independent existence. Mazepa says:

Both Peter and I are right:
Like he, I live for glory,
For the good of my native land.¹¹⁸

It was not, of course, lack of historical accuracy that disturbed critics. Departures from the actual historical record are, in fact, far more glaring in Pushkin’s “Poltava,” which was devoted to the same theme. The central episode in Pushkin’s poem, the love affair of Mazepa and Kochubei’s daughter was in fact over by 1704, whereas Pushkin places this love in 1708, in quite different circumstances. John P. Pauls, in his *Pushkin’s “Poltava,”* has pointed out, among other things, that the central charge of incest in Pushkin’s poem was false: “The historical Matryona was never Mazeppa’s mistress, because, according to objective history and his own letter to her, he sent her back to her parents’ home with the Tsar’s representative, Colonel Annenkov, the very same evening she arrived in his castle.” These are facts that Pushkin chose to disregard.¹¹⁹ It was not such historical details, however, but the interpretation of history, the message of Ukraine’s legitimacy as a historico-political entity, that made “Voinarovsky” so controversial. Ryleev’s historiography is, in fact, close to that of the *History of the Rus People*. His acceptance of the legitimacy of the revolt, his description of Mazepa’s political dilemma in playing off foreign “despotisms” against one another, and his portrayal of the motivation for revolt follow its lead.

Ryleev focuses on the issue of Ukraine’s loss of sovereignty and freedom, on the fact that the country has the right, as a conquered nation, to be resentful and to rebel. Mazepa’s use of violence is a calculated and politically justified move by a ruling class acting on

behalf of the nation. This makes it an aristocratic revolt, not a call to mass violence – an interpretation that accords with Decembrist fears that their revolt might release the kind of popular violence that had led to the terror in the French Revolution, and, in fact, an interpretation that also agrees with contemporary scholarly analyses of the hetman's intentions.¹²⁰

The image of the leader owes a debt to Byron, as has frequently been indicated; it is evident in the physical description of the brooding hero, in his charismatic, misunderstood nature, and in the nostalgic picture of lost freedom (reminiscent of "Giaour"). Ryleev also follows Byron's "Mazeppa" in portraying a meeting with a young Cossack girl. The Russian poet, however, makes the girl more than beautiful and passionate: she is a high-minded patriot who endures the privations of exile stoically, hiding her grief from the Muscovite, so that the "enemy of her native land" might have no occasion to rejoice. Like the other revolutionaries, she is politically conscious, a citizen (*grazhdanka*) – Ryleev's highest mark of distinction.

The noble portrayal of Mazepa, Voinarovsky, and the revolt was such a dramatic break with the iconographic portrayal of Peter and the events of 1709 that one critic wrote admiringly: "In Russian poetry during that era very few would, of course, be able to demote Peter and elevate the "revolutionary" and "traitor" Mazepa."¹²¹ The portrayal could not go unchallenged. In the original publication, the poem was introduced by two biographies, one of Mazepa by A. Kornilovich and one of Voinarovsky by Bestuzhev-Marlinsky. Both Decembrists took issue with the heroic portrayal and, above all, with the heretical suggestion that the revolt represented a national liberation struggle: "A low, trivial ambition led him to treason," wrote Kornilovich.¹²² The poem appeared with cuts by the censor but also with a revealing ideological commentary. For example, "banished to the distant snows in the cause of honour and fatherland" was glossed as "This is how Voinarovsky justifies a crime justly and mercifully punished." The line "You, when summoned, will not spare yourself for Ukraine" elicited the comment, "Vain concern! The great transformer of Russia [meaning Peter] was solicitous of Ukraine's welfare." Mazepa's words, "Success is not assured; does glory or defamation await me?" are countered with, "What glory would have lighted Mazepa had he been Peter's ally in the immortal battle of Poltava! What infamy darkens him for treasonously quitting Peter's victorious ranks!" Mazepa's words, "Peter and I were both right: Like he, I live for glory, for the good of my country," were answered with, "This is the voice of Mazepa's irrational despair following his defeat at Poltava. What amazing brazenness to compare himself to Peter." The "enemy of his native land" was glossed as "the Tatars and Poles."¹²³

A host of commentators have since taken the same approach. Nestor Kotliarevsky, in his study of 1908, felt that Ryleev's selection of native freedom fighters was in this instance "not entirely successful."¹²⁴ Kotliarevsky, like others, preferred to define the Ukrainian struggle as fought "for faith and freedom," a terminology that ellides any national dimension.¹²⁵ Tsar Nicholas himself, according to one witness, had an opinion on Ryleev's portrayal of Mazepa. He reportedly commented that Pushkin understood Mazepa and Charles XII better than Ryleev, that Voinarovsky was "merely an adventurer," but he thought the poem had wonderful verses. It is revealing of the solidarity among Russian anti-separatists that the editors of the Soviet edition of Ryleev's work from 1934, which is relatively sympathetic to the writer, expressed their complete agreement with Nicholas' views.¹²⁶

The imperial scheme of thinking, according to which Ukrainians shared the same language and the same racial and cultural origins as Russians and were undergoing rapid, irreversible assimilation, left no room for separatism. It is therefore hardly surprising that Ryleev's poem elicited a strong counterreaction that focused precisely on the issue of the legitimacy of separatism. The most famous example of this response became Pushkin's "Poltava." Pushkin's reconfirmation of imperial teleology was greeted with a sense of relief that implied an unresolved tension around the question of Ukraine's place within the empire and its contested relationship to the Russian identity.

The poet's interpretation of Mazepa's revolt follows the imperial tradition: he sets the national struggle in the distant past, seeing it as a superseded, now irrelevant historical stage; stresses the hetman's personal ambition; and downplays his patriotism and liberationist rhetoric. While Ryleev's work focuses on Ukraine's loss of sovereignty and ancient freedoms, the structure of Pushkin's *Poltava* turns on the victimization of Kochubei and his daughter. The poem opens and closes with the fate of these two, who pay the highest penalty for Mazepa's infatuation with a goddaughter almost fifty years his junior. Described as shameful, both because it is unnatural and against the Orthodox religion (which prohibits marriage with a godchild), the love plot is analogous to, and provides a commentary on, the national question.

The beautiful Ukrainian girl has refused suitors from both Ukraine and Russia. She is seduced and ruined by the uncontrollable, selfish passion of the septuagenarian hetman. In Pushkin's arrangement of the semantic fields, Mazepa embodies the old and outdated, while Peter's reforming genius personifies the vigorous and forward-looking. This arrangement repeats the traditional opposition between ancient and modern that was coined by Peter's first panegyricist, Feofan Prokopovich, shortly after the battle of Poltava and then grew into an

enduring image of the first emperor as a hero of the Enlightenment.¹²⁷ The past, in any case, Pushkin tells the reader, was a “bloody” time of “captivity.”

Mazepa is described as vengeful, cunning, and treacherous. He cleverly manipulates the passions of his lover and the young patriotic hotheads, who have “forgotten” Bohdan Khmelnytsky’s agreement with Russia, which, the narrator suggests, ended their country’s subjection to foreign rule. Mazepa rides before his troops in a rather pathetic display of rejuvenation. However, the contest with “the autocratic giant” is an unequal one: the tsar celebrates a great victory, one of the most decisive in European history. Pushkin creates an erotically charged narrative structure that pits the politically impotent Mazepa and his rash young patriots against the potent and mature Peter, who alone knows how to discipline and direct Ukraine (“Little Russia” is Pushkin’s preferred designation) along its destined path.

Pushkin’s epilogue, like his conclusion to the “Caucasian Captive,” surveys the history of strife in an elegiac tone. The “imperial poet par excellence,” as Hokanson has referred to him,¹²⁸ delivers a judgment: in the century that has elapsed since the battle of Poltava, out of the bloody conflicts, the compulsion and deprivation, only Peter, “the hero of Poltava, has erected an enormous monument to himself.” The righteous Kochubei and Iskra, who attempted to denounce Mazepa to Peter and were executed, lie peacefully in a church ground; the ancient oaks still speak of their fame. The hetman’s grave, in contrast, has been lost and forgotten long ago. He is recalled only in the Russian Orthodox Church’s anathema that is still read annually to the faithful. The “sinful” daughter’s fate is occasionally described by wandering minstrels. As in much colonial literature, a woman is emblematic of the land. Here the heroine is chastised for being attracted to the hetman, whose power both was illusory (because dependant upon the tsar) and was put to infamous use, and for overlooking a devoted young suitor in Mazepa’s court who dies in the battle fighting on Peter’s side. This suggests that the correct choice ought to have been a modest position, subordinate and loyal to tsarism.

In this way Pushkin rejects the separatist infatuation as retrograde and unenlightened, a hopelessly misguided attempt to revive an extinct polity and an anomalous event that has left no mark on contemporary political existence. The symbol of the hetman’s rule, the *bunchuk*, and the *kuntush* he wears, construct him as an operatic, semi-Asiatic figure,¹²⁹ in contrast to the Europeanized, “rational” Peter. By suggesting that the enormous cost of Peter’s policies was justified, the poem provides an apology for imperialism based on the argument that Ukraine has done well under Russian domination. Like Polonsky’s

later work "The Imeretian" (Imeretin, 1850), it urges the non-Russians to be grateful for the political freedoms and economic benefits they enjoy from their association with Russia.¹³⁰

Pushkin was particularly pleased to note a Ukrainian folk-song condemning the hetman, but the writer was mistaken in claiming to have read it in Maksymovych's *Little Russian Folk-Songs* of 1827. Not only was it missing from the collection, but two works by Mazepa, "Oi bida, bida chaitsi-nebozi" and the "Duma of Hetman Mazepa," appeared there. The second, in fact, demonstrates that defence of the *patrie* was the hetman's dominant motivation and was used by Bulgarin and others to counter Pushkin's interpretation, which they saw as trivializing Mazepa's motives.¹³¹ Maksymovych dropped Mazepa's song from the new, 1834 edition of his anthology and substituted in its place the song condemning Mazepa.¹³²

Pushkin's account of events is interesting for a number of reasons. Like all subsequent literary representations it fails to mention the massacre in 1708 of all the residents of Baturyn, Mazepa's seat of residence. The palace, archives, churches, arsenal, mills, and all property were razed to the ground and some eight thousand men, women, and children were killed in order to terrorize the population into submission.¹³³ Also eliminated is the fact that the historical Voitsekhovskiy (Voinarovskiy's prototype) collaborated with Pylyp Orlyk on the writing of a constitution for Ukraine that limited the ruler's powers – a fact that had attracted the interest of Ryleev and other Decembrists.

Pushkin's ending also implies that the ritual demonization of Mazepa through anathemization was justified. The poem was in all likelihood also an answer to Mickiewicz's *Konrad Wallenrod*, which was then popular in Russia. The fact that Pushkin felt such strong negative feelings toward Mazepa and yet considered it necessary to respond to Ryleev's and Mickiewicz's depiction of the heroic traitor suggest the need to exorcise the ghost of separatism and to brand the "Wallenrod complex" as despicable.¹³⁴ His strong feelings of revulsion during the writing of this poem are perhaps symptomatic of an underlying discomfort with his own refusal to countenance Ukrainian claims to autonomy. With respect to Ukraine, Russian intellectuals granted the empire the role of a Western "civilizing" power with license to repress national resistance in the name of modernization and social reform. European liberals held similar views concerning conquest: Alexis de Tocqueville, as Said has indicated, found nothing incompatible about supporting American democracy, on the one hand, and France's right to conquer Algeria, on the other.¹³⁵ Part of Pushkin's discomfort in writing "Poltava," one suspects, was due to the fact that he could not make the hetman into a *Naturmensch*, a savage with easily dismissible

political claims. The staple image of the hetman in which Russian literature traded was that of a supremely sophisticated, devilishly clever politician and seducer, who for decades had been able to hoodwink the tsar. As a symbol of concealed aristocratic opposition to autocracy he represented values to which the Decembrists and Pushkin would, in other circumstances, have been attracted. Imperial solidarity, however, overrode sympathy for a non-Russian elite.

Antiseparatist propaganda was, of course, not simply absorbed into literature but also figured prominently in cultural and religious ritual. After Mazepa's defection Peter arranged the election of a new hetman, Ivan Skoropadsky. The tsar executed Mazepa in absentia in an elaborate ceremony and launched a propaganda war that, in turn, was countered by Mazepa's supporters, who disseminated anti-Russian and pro-Swedish counterpropaganda while "masquerading as merchants, musicians, or beggars."¹³⁶ Peter initiated the ceremony on 10 November 1708, after learning of Mazepa's attempt to withdraw Ukraine from Russia, and he ordered that the hetman be annually denounced in all Orthodox services. The supreme sin of separatism has therefore been reenacted ever since as a permanent religious, as well as a literary spectacle. The anathema was formally removed and prayers offered for Mazepa's soul on 12 July 1918 in a ceremony held in Kyiv's St Sophia Cathedral by hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, the head of a new Ukrainian state that had emerged from the collapse of the empire. In the 1930s the Russian Orthodox Church reinstated the annual anathematization of Mazepa, along with other heretics and apostates of Orthodoxy, on the first Sunday of Lent.¹³⁷

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries writers were invited to participate in the literary equivalent of Mazepa's anathematization and Peter's canonization. Russian patriots were expected to pay homage to this central fact of imperial history, and Pushkin's poem was invoked as encouragement. Attitudes toward Poltava, Peter, and Catherine became structuring principles in the code of imperialist attitudes, touchstones of an author's loyalty. Like ritualistically repeated gestures, they reaffirmed the divide between the "sacred" and the "profane" in Russian culture, the legitimate and the illegitimate in Russian thought. The violence with which the distinction between the "sacred" and "profane" was enforced suggests a clash between two deeply antagonistic cultural models. Pushkin's sanctioning of this cleavage, his borrowing from the repertoire of obligatory political attitudes and symbolic forms, places him squarely within the imperial codex.

On the other hand, Mazepa's revolt has also always carried an enormous significance for Ukrainian nationalists. Alongside the creation of a medieval Kyivan state, Khmelnytsky's revolt of 1648, and the

national renaissance of the early nineteenth century inspired by Romanticism, it ranks as one of the most important historical reminders of Ukraine's continuous aspiration for independent cultural and political existence.

NIKOLAI GOGOL'S UKRAINE

For many readers Gogol's stories of the 1830s and 1840s have provided the definitive codification of the literary Ukraine, summarizing and concluding the evolution of this literary topic in the Russian discourse of empire. The writer has frequently been portrayed as then parting from his attachment to Ukraine, discovering wider horizons and richer stimulation in Russia, and declaring an all-Russian, imperial identity in his final years. Gogol's identity, however, has been the subject of several analyses that challenge this interpretation and suggest that the metamorphosis into an imperial Russian was never fully achieved and that the attempt at self-transformation was traumatic.¹³⁸

Gogol's message (his name in Ukrainian is Mykola Hohol) appears to echo that of the Pole Bulgarin, who described Polish society as a doomed order with insoluble internal contradictions, one that required the construction of a new identity on its ruins, however painful this might be for countrymen to accept. Bulgarin had urged the drawing together of Polish and Russian identities in his "Liberation of Trembovlia" (*Osvobozhdenie Trembovli*): "Charming women of Russia! Your history is full of the valorous feats of your countrywomen. I shall not repeat them: now become acquainted with the heroic deeds of a related Slavic womanhood, who inhabit a land watered by the great Vistula. Today you compose one family, have one father; your children and brothers have forever been united by the bonds of mutual happiness. You ought to know and respect one another."¹³⁹

Nikolai Gogol's *Taras Bulba* (1834 and 1843) has been interpreted in similar terms – as the elevation of a local identity on the path toward full integration. The construction of Ukraine's cossack past in the book has, accordingly, been seen as the refusal of alterity. In this view, the narrative contrasts patriarchal and republican traditions among the cossacks favourably with foreign and monarchical elements that had entered Ukrainian life with Polish culture. The cossack republic, in defending its freedoms, faith, and patriarchal customs, overcomes the class-ridden system of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which rests upon class privilege and inequality. Those, like Andrei, who side with the Poles, are killed. Set in the early seventeenth century and describing an organic community rather than a political system, this anti-Polish account of Ukrainian history was eminently suitable

for incorporation into imperial ideology. Belinsky made a characteristically reductionist and enthusiastic claim that Gogol had “exhausted ... the whole historical life of Little Russia and in a strange artistic creation had forever sealed its spiritual image: this is how a sculptor captures in marble a person’s features and gives them immortal life.”¹⁴⁰ Because of its status as long-superseded history, as well as its anti-Polish and anti-Jewish animus, the theme of Zaporozhian wildness was not seen as a threat; on the contrary, since its violence was directed at “others,” it was seen as a virtue. The Zaporozhians, with their “wild” energies, much like the Muslims with their “savage” virtues, could eagerly be embraced by Russians as “surrogate selves.”¹⁴¹

This interpretation, however, avoids taking issue with some disturbing messages in the narrative. Many of the Zaporozhians, after all, wish to make peace with the Poles. The Sich successfully imprints its identity on Bulba’s older son but not on his younger son, who goes over to the enemy. Moreover, the Sich is a military order, not a whole society. Eventually warriors need to be reintegrated into social life. Gogol’s Zaporozhians, like Lermontov’s soldiers, have difficulty returning to the world of marriage and agricultural or urban life. At a deeper level *Taras Bulba* describes an unresolved conflict between a glorious Zaporozhian warrior identity and the stable social system around it. This makes the book a much more complex exploration of identity than has frequently been acknowledged.

The conclusion of the book suggests, at least on the surface, that these conflicts were resolved by the appearance of the Russian tsar. In the final chapter of the later, 1843 edition the cossacks are described as fighting for the “Orthodox Russian faith,” “Russian power,” and the “Russian land.” Their Orthodoxy is in this way coopted into an imperial ideology. It is seldom noted, however, that these words and the paragraphs referring to the tsar are missing from the first, 1834 edition, which describes the purpose of the war against Poland as Ukraine’s liberation. The latter reference to Ukraine was dropped from the 1843 edition, which became definitive.¹⁴² The connection between loyalty to Orthodoxy and loyalty to the tsar is, of course, an anachronism for the pre-Khmelnitsky period described. It is, however, an essential part of the imperial mythology to which the writer had to accommodate himself. Integration with Russia is proffered as a solution both to Ukraine’s conflict with Poland and to its social strife. It is also Gogol’s loyalist answer to accusations of Ukrainian perfidy. Zviniatskovsky has suggested that the writer was unsure what to do with Bulba’s insubordination and his fanatical faith in a crusading Orthodoxy. In the end he “made a present of him [Bulba] to the empire” because he believed in the required disciplining and regulating power

of imperial rule: “He combined two previously separate themes: the theme of a ‘natural,’ ‘wild’ Little Russia – that freedom-loving land (dear to the heart of the Russian *intelligent*) that recalled the Caucasus – and the theme of imperial patriotism.”¹⁴³ The loyalist picture of Ukrainian cossackdom also served as an answer to Bulgarin’s portrayal in *Dimitrii Samozvanets* (1830) of seventeenth-century cossacks as largely anti-Russian and pro-Polish and as driven into an alliance with Moscow by religious persecution.

In the first, 1834 edition of *Taras Bulba* the action had been set in the late sixteenth century, when, we are told, the idea of the Union of Brest was “just being born,” although at one point the action is referred to as occurring in the “hard fifteenth century.” The same confusion occurs in the second edition, where the writer again presents a double time-frame: the period of “struggles in Ukraine over the Union” and the “hard fifteenth century.”¹⁴⁴ The first edition makes it clear that Taras’s military service had begun in the reign of Stefan Batory, creator of the registered cossacks: “When Batory created the regiments in Little Russia, and invested it with that military armature which was at first only characteristic of the inhabitants of the rapids, he [Taras] became one of the first lieutenants.”¹⁴⁵ In the later edition this reference to Zaporozhians being allies of the Polish army was dropped. Instead, the cossacks, completely incongruously, became conscientious defenders of the Russian state. The corresponding passage in the later edition reads, “when in ancient times the peaceful Slavic spirit was seized by martial fire and cossackdom, that broad, revelrous streak of Russian nature began.”¹⁴⁶ Although the term “Ukraine” is still used in the second edition, Gogol introduces the term “Southern primordial Russia” (*iuzhnaia pervobytnaia Rossiia*) to describe the territory. In this way Bulba, who in the earlier version began his career serving the Polish king who defeated tsar Ivan the Terrible and laid siege to Pskov, emerges in the 1843 account as a “Russian” knight. The result of this operation is a downplaying of Ukraine as a political agent and player in international relations. The country becomes an unstructured, unstable area of conflict awaiting firm rule. The second edition ends with a final proclamation by the dying Bulba (which recalls the endings to both Khomiakov’s and Polevoi’s conclusions to their plays about Ermak, published in 1832 and 1845 respectively): “Even now people near and far hear: from the Russian earth her own tsar is arising, and there will be no force in the world which can refuse subjection to him!”¹⁴⁷ The suggestion is that Ukraine’s salvation depended on the coming to power of the Romanov dynasty in 1613, following the “time of troubles.” Bulba dies crucified on high for all to see. His public martyrdom is old Ukraine’s heroic death and the

prophecy of a new imperial identity. By ignoring all instances of conflict and idealizing cooperation between Ukraine and Russia, Gogol's account harmonizes with tsarism's self-image as the guardian of Orthodoxy and accords with imperial literary etiquette. The second version of the book represents an adjustment of Gogol's own earlier national self-definition. The later Gogol serves the Russian readership's new horizon of expectation, one that finds Russia "unthinkable without Ukraine," that sees the empire as powerful and triumphant precisely because it now includes Ukraine.¹⁴⁸

The idea of a frontier Slavic nation forged in a permanent struggle for survival allows the writer to align Ukrainians with what the contemporary Russian public found attractive in the image of Caucasian tribesmen. In his article "A Glance at the Creation of Little Russia" (*Vzgliad na sostavlenie Malorossii*, 1832) Gogol describes "all its [Ukraine's] life as a struggle." Like the "mountain people" who are its neighbours, this warlike people has been shaped by the natural environment, "the beautiful, free steppes" that "stretch out along the full length of the Dnieper." "Only a people with vitality and strength of character," he muses, would have searched out such majestic locations, or perhaps it is "only bold and remarkable locations" that can form "a bold, passionate and strong-willed [*kharakternyi*] people." By appropriating the positive features of the "Asiatic" for Ukraine, Gogol was answering earlier stereotypes of the people as indolent, inert, and passive, creating a more attractive image of their character and history. This was implicitly a response to and a complicating of the received image of Ukraine as a natural paradise, by now a hackneyed and insipid myth. Gogol's schoolmaster, Kulzhinsky, contributed to it in his *Little Russian Village* (*Malorossiiskaia derevnia*, 1827), which begins, "Under the gentle sky of Little Russia, every village is a small Eden." The exoticizing portrayal of Ukrainians in Pavel Svinin's *Notes of the Fatherland* is another target. Gogol's Ukrainian stories in *Evenings on a Khutir Near Dikanka* (*Vechera na khutore bliz Dikanki*, 1831–32) and *Mirgorod* (1835) both play up to and challenge this view.¹⁴⁹ On the one hand, they provide a comic picture of "the provinces" – one that was much appreciated by Russian readers: Pushkin wrote, "everyone was overjoyed at the lively description of the singing and dancing tribe [*plemeni poiushchego i pliashushchego*], those fresh pictures of the Little Russian character, that simple and at the same time sly cheerfulness."¹⁵⁰ On the other hand, they reveal the presence of a "Ukrainian soul" that resists assimilation into a "Russian" identity, making Gogol's work paradigmatic of the resistant Ukrainian identity and a symbolic depiction of imperial indigestion. At the same time as Shevchenko was indicating the irreconcilability of Ukrainian and Russian interests,

Gogol was attempting to resolve the conflict between his “two souls.” His inability to accomplish this is encoded in the ambiguous and disconcerting manner in which he presents the message of an inchoate Ukrainian society. This can be illustrated by examining the crisis of authority in two of his stories, “Night before Christmas” (Nochpered Rozhdestvom, 1832) and “The Terrible Vengeance,” which attempts to define the historical curse of Ukraine.¹⁵¹

In “Night before Christmas” the devil who visits the village community is a uniformed district scrivener. His appearance is disturbingly alien: a pig-snouted foreigner’s (literally, a “German’s”) face, a Russian’s beard, and a tail. A symbol of intrusive, externally appointed bureaucratic rule, he confounds the normal Christmas rituals and attempts to undermine time-honoured religious conventions. The story begins with his stealing the moon to prevent the traditional social gatherings and carol singing by village youth (both expressions of national-cultural solidarity and identity) from taking place. He is not, however, the only, or even the primary, source of authority. The village leaders (the deacon, the village head, the rich local cossack, the merchant, and others who are to celebrate Christmas eve together) represent a second source. The devil attempts to prevent their gathering by kicking up a snow storm to make the night impassable. The local authority figures, however, also exercise only limited power. The rich cossack, Chub, for instance, who in the old order would have been the community’s defender and governor, is portrayed as a weakling and a coward. A third source of potential authority resides in the reclusive old Zaporozhian, who had served in the community’s autonomous military order. He, however, has gone to seed: a fat, gluttonous, and idle man, he now uses the traditional Zaporozhian knowledge of magic for trivial purposes: to command dumplings to jump into a bowl of sour cream and then into his open mouth. A fourth source of power and authority is represented by the weaver’s wife, Solokha, a witch who consorts with the devil and whose powers of sexual attraction give her complete control over the deacon, the rich cossack, and the village head. Then there is Solokha’s son, the blacksmith Vakula, who possesses physical strength and great painterly talent. Finally, there is the beautiful but vain Oksana, with whom Vakula is in love. She mockingly offers to marry him if he obtains the empress’s shoes. The distinction between real and illusory power is difficult to determine: “It is a strange world!” comments the narrator. “Everything living in it tries to mimic and copy everything else.” Whether it is a question of fashion, behaviour, or rank, “everyone wants to be a somebody!”¹⁵²

Authority is located somewhere between the traditional village leadership, imperial bureaucrats, and the society of women and agri-

culturalists. Chub refuses to take advice or orders (an echo of his proud cossack ancestry) but is easily controlled by the devil and Solokha. In this way the traditional cossack source of authority is shown to be weak. The manhood of this former governing warrior class, represented by Chub, Sverbyhub, and the Zaporozhian (known as Puzaty Patsiuk, "fat castrated pig" in Ukrainian), is called into question. Neither physically imposing nor sexually attractive, they represent the unsexed Ukrainian male shorn of his traditional social role, lacking machismo and dominated by women's society. These figures indicate a crisis in the Ukrainian polity. The imperial-bureaucratic devil is, however, also made to look foolish. Attempting to avenge himself on Vakula, whose religious church paintings he detests, he is outwitted and made to carry Vakula on his back to another source of power, St Petersburg.

Here, in the imposing city of light, where the nights are brighter than the days in Dikanka, the same confusion recurs over the appearances and realities of power. To Vakula everyone seems to be a bureaucrat, town governor, or commissar. Intimidated, he demands that the devil take him to a group of Zaporozhians who, he knows, are in the city seeking an audience with the empress. These "countrymen," whose opinion he trusts and from whose advice he hopes to benefit, are clearly aware of their lowly status within the imperial context. Their inferiority complex is revealed in comical attempts to speak Russian and to act the metropolitan habitué in front of the newcomer. They dress Vakula as a fellow cossack and take him along with them. Since light and elevation are associated with power, the brilliantly lit staircase they ascend to meet Catherine the Great in the climactic scene demonstrates their proximity to the highest political authority. The illustrious Potemkin has called the Zaporozhians to plead for the creation of a military unit from the remnants of the Sich. They prostrate themselves before the empress, outline their loyal service in wars against the Tatars and Turks and during the conquest of the Crimea in 1783. As they are about to pose their request for the creation of the military formation, Vakula falls to the ground and makes an incongruous demand for a pair of the empress's slippers. Catherine, amused by such forthright naivety, grants the request and the delighted Vakula returns to his village.

Meanwhile, the Christmas celebrations have continued in the village. Everyone is relieved at the return of Vakula; his beloved Oksana, who is the rich cossack's daughter, agrees to marry him. As Vakula kneels before Chub, both in request for permission to marry his daughter and in penance for beating him, Chub's timid nature is flattered and appeased. Although lacking any real power, his traditional status in the

community must be respected, just as it is in traditional ethnographic symbolism: Vakula decorates the newlywed couple's house with painted cossacks on horses, smoking pipes.

The story suggests that the old sources of authority have been emasculated: the language and symbols of Ukrainian rule are treated in St Petersburg as nothing but an operatic farce.¹⁵³ Catherine remarks upon the "simple-heartedness" (*prostodushie*) of the people. The visiting Zaporozhians, taking their cue from this characterization, act out the staple role of loyal provincials with practised skill. For their audience with Catherine they dress in the requisite colourful national costumes, display rough-hewn manners, and speak only Ukrainian (although they have a rudimentary, albeit imperfect, knowledge of Russian). Their insistence on using the "*muzhyk* dialect" in front of Catherine astonishes Vakula, who nonetheless immediately grasps that this is part of an auto-ethnographic performance, the playing out of a role invented in the capital and expected of them. "Crafty people!" thinks Vakula. "They obviously know what they are doing." In this situation the mimic role is a mask, both imposed and exploited, to use Luce Irigaray's words, in order to "convert a form of subordination into an affirmation."¹⁵⁴ In the real incident that this episode recalls, the cossacks did get their regiment, a fact of considerable symbolic importance for Ukrainian society. The struggle to retain even a semblance of the former military formation was applauded at this time by several figures.¹⁵⁵ Gogol treats the episode as a farcical reenactment of a past Ukrainian identity in the context of contemporary power relations.

The new centre of the community and ultimate source of authority shifts in the end to the happily married family of Vakula, Oksana, and their newborn child. The clash of male and female roles, of cossack and agrarian identities, is here resolved in a fruitful union. The painted cossacks that decorate their homes integrate the legendary historical past into the domestic present. Vakula's family in this way represents settled society. The blacksmith's positive image responds to two Russian stereotypes: that of the "lazy khokhol" (*lenivyi khokhol*) and of the "lucky cossack" (*udalyi kazak*). Vakula is neither lazy nor socially irresponsible. Dikanka (which means "wild land") is neither a frontier haunt of bloodthirsty, half-savage cossack warriors nor an Eden. The devils and witches that appear to have overrun it are relatively benign and under social control.

There are important subtexts in the narrative. It has been pointed out that when Pushkin described Ukrainians as "the singing and dancing tribe," he was, in fact, quoting Catherine.¹⁵⁶ This image is played up to by the Zaporozhians and Vakula, who do not disappoint expectations but consummately act the role of exotic naifs. This performance

is also a feature of Taras Bulba's behaviour: he knows Latin and has studied classical authors but deliberately understates this education. There is a veiled reminder here not only of the fact that Ukraine was the better educated society until the second half of the eighteenth century and Russia's source of classical learning and European influence but also of the inadmissibility of this fact.¹⁵⁷ The joke is, therefore, partly at the empress's expense and made by those who are obliged to perform the role of simpletons. Another destabilizing element that might be pointed out is Vakula's victory over the German-Russian devil-scrivener. It is the blacksmith, after all, who outwits the devil and gets to ride him and to dictate his will. The demonic foreigner-bureaucrat does not control Ukrainian society, which retains a large degree of autonomy and exhibits great vitality and an ability to triumph over evil and adversity.

"The Terrible Vengeance" (1832) describes the evil deeds of a seventeenth-century sorcerer (*koldun*). He is also described as a foreigner. Having learned to dislike cossack food in his twenty-one years abroad, he refuses the local drink (preferring "some sort of black water," which is to say, coffee) and, according to his son-in-law Danilo Burulbash, "does not have a cossack heart." It soon becomes clear that this sorcerer is conspiring with the Poles who wish to cut off access to the Zaporozhian Sich and reestablish their rule in Ukraine. Having long ago killed his wife, he is attempting through evil spells to control the spirit of his daughter, Katerina, and the family. Exposed as a sorcerer and traitor, he is defeated in battle when he descends upon Danilo's domain with Polish troops. This occurs, however, only after he has caused the death of his son-in-law, daughter, and grandchild.

This story and the unfinished novel *Getman* (Hetman, 1830–32), which is a similar tale of tragedy filled with Gothic horrors, attempt to define a national curse. The golden age of cossack rule is gone, complains Danilo: "There is no order in Ukraine: the lieutenants and *esauls* fight among themselves like dogs. There is no superior authority. Our nobility has gone over to Polish customs, taken up trickery ... sold its soul, accepted the Uniate religion."¹⁵⁸ The song of a bandura player recapitulates this history of strife in the epilogue. It presents a myth that serves as a key not only to this particular story but to the theme of a historical curse in Gogol's work. According to this myth, in the time when Stephen of Transylvania ruled over both Ukraine and Poland there were two cossacks, Ivan and Petro, who "lived as brothers" and divided all their possessions equally. While on military service during a campaign against the Turks, Ivan succeeded in capturing the *pasha*, thus covering himself in glory. The king granted him the land beyond the Carpathians, half of which Ivan immediately

shared with his brother. Petro, however, envious of Ivan's fame, pushed him and his young son into a ravine, took the entire land, and lived in luxury until his death. God judged Petro guilty of a great sin and asked Ivan to devise a punishment. In revenge for the "Judas-like" betrayal that deprived Ivan of "an honourable race and descendants on earth" (*chestnogo moego roda i potomstva na zemle*), Ivan asks that Petro's own descendants find no happiness, that they be disgraced by a great criminal who will be thrown into a chasm together with all Petro's descendants, where he will be endlessly tortured by them. Ivan requests that he be mounted on a horse and raised to the top of the highest peak, from where he might enjoy Petro's torment. God grants this wish but also denies Ivan entry into heaven: he is doomed to remain in the Carpathians as a permanent, silent witness to his brother's prostration.

The most likely historical subtext here is Stefan Batory's creation of the registered cossacks, which Bantysh-Kamensky had described in his *History* as occurring in 1576.¹⁵⁹ Together with the Poles, the registered cossacks had successfully fought the Turks and other enemies of the Commonwealth. In Gogol's work the strange rider of monstrous proportions destroys the *koldun*, the incarnation of the sinful predator, on one miraculous day when suddenly people in the capital, Kyiv, can see all Ukraine from the Crimea and the Black Sea to the Carpathians. This horseman, who is an answer to the Polish Wernyhora myth of a reborn Poland, symbolizes a united Ukrainian identity taking vengeance on former Polish oppressors.

Having driven out the Polish brother, who is now permanently weakened and can no longer retake the country, the remaining society still cannot constitute itself as a viable political entity. This represents its curse. Petro's punishment is "most horrible." He wishes, as did nineteenth-century Polish society in Ukraine, to regain his former position, yet cannot. But Ivan's satisfaction in witnessing this impotence is also a curse. He is, after all, nothing but a statue, an impotent image of his former self, a terrifying horseman with closed eyes. This vision of the apocalypse raised on high for all to see, like that of the crucified Bulba, can be read as a symbol of Ukraine's political tragedy: it is an incomplete, conflicted, not fully functioning body politic.

In another interpretation, the clash between Peter and Ivan might be seen as a reference to Peter the Great and Ivan Mazepa, who (perhaps according to the terms of the Pereiaslav Treaty of 1654) were expected to "divide everything equally." Whereas the Ukrainian side fulfilled this obligation, the Russian demanded everything for itself. In either case, the myth describes a fundamentally divided society cursed by history, tragically torn between its Left and Right Banks,

between Russian and Polish rule, and unable to form an independent entity. The suggestion is that Ukraine's ceaseless civil strife has permanently disabled it.

After delivering this tale, the blind bandura player goes on to sing comic songs, but both young and old remain transfixed by visions of "the terrible event that took place long ago."¹⁶⁰ As a myth of origins, an attempt to capture and explain a national history, it proved resonant and challenged later writers to respond.¹⁶¹

The depiction of families in Gogol offers further metaphorical treatment of Ukraine's history and evolution. Edward Said has written of the importance of the transition from "filiation" (familial relations) to "affiliation" (non-familial relations) in nineteenth-century Victorian culture.¹⁶² Where filiation was blocked or failed, it could be compensated for in an affiliation with a larger institution and its credo; frequently this was the imperial bureaucracy and its ethos. All Gogol's stories (with the exception of the Vakula-Oksana romance) conclude with a failed filiation. The solution becomes affiliation with imperial power, which is most clearly expressed in the ending to *Taras Bulba*. There are obstacles, however, to the success of this process of affiliation, one of the most powerful being the society of women, who play a central role in preserving and transmitting traditions, thus ensuring the continuity of the familial order ("filiation"). They demonstrate the powerful pull of the traditional ethos and national culture, both of which work against imperial affiliation. Gogol's narratives, therefore, also encode a juxtaposition of Ukrainian and imperial attitudes in the female/male, agriculturalist/warrior dichotomy. The warrior can more easily be incorporated into the imperial structure, while female society remains most intractable and gives notice of a deeper, less malleable alterity. The female/male, agriculturalist/warrior juxtapositions were familiar to Gogol from Maksymovych's introduction to his 1827 collection of Ukrainian folk songs, where the cossack warrior ethos is described as a partly Asiatic superimposition on the root culture: "Bravery in raids, wild forgetfulness in joy and secure laziness in peace: these are traits of wild Asiatics – the population of the Caucasus, of which one inevitably thinks even today when looking at the clothing and habits of the Little Russian." The spiritual qualities of the "root" Slavic nation, in Maksymovych's view, had been best preserved by women, who were frequently separated from their happy-go-lucky cossack husbands and spent their time in the "peaceful occupations of domestic, rural life."¹⁶³ This concept of a dichotomous identity was developed by Gogol as a key to understanding the Ukrainian character.

It has also been suggested that the baroque heritage in which Gogol was rooted pointed him in the direction of an aesthetic that sought

to combine such dichotomies through the deployment of tropes and *topoi* that expressed the discovery of similarities in extremes: *discordia concors*.¹⁶⁴ His writings can, according to this view, be viewed as a containment of conflicts through the construction of a baroque-like imaginative symmetry, a balancing of antagonisms and antitheses. In his works Ukraine's culture and identity is accommodated as an honourable and autonomous element within the overarching imperial structure. In the end, bowing to the inevitable, it becomes reconciled to its subordinate status.

I. Mandelshtam was one of the first to suggest that the conflict between the Little Russian and the Russian in Gogol was never resolved. There remains in all his work, he suggested, a deep brooding sense of evil, of a destructive and corrupting imperial sickness, which expresses itself in the contempt for subordinates, the portrayal of pompous, arrogant rulers and foreign interlopers, and the pervasive sense of a dysfunctional society. The critic saw Gogol's famous admission in which he claimed not to know what kind of a soul he had, Little Russian or Russian (*Khokhlatskaia ili Russkaia*) as connected to a second confession in which he admits that his unattractive characters are a part of his soul: "I have been discussed a great deal, analyzed from all sides, but my essence has not been defined. Pushkin alone detected it. He always told me, that no other writer has ever had the gift of showing life's ugliness (*poshlost*) as clearly ... This is my main quality; but it would not, I repeat, have developed in me with the same force, if it had not been united with my own spiritual circumstance and my own spiritual history."¹⁶⁵ Gogol brought a Ukrainian consciousness to St Petersburg, structures of thought and feeling that were deeply critical of Russian society and upon which he drew throughout his creative life.¹⁶⁶ Even though over the years he developed wider contacts with Russian intellectuals, there was, wrote Mandelshtam, a "corner of Gogol's soul which he allowed no one to observe, where he lived exclusively the life of a Little Russian, where he sensed himself free, spontaneous and truthful – and creative."¹⁶⁷ Some of this antipathy to Russians is expressed in his correspondence with Maksymovych and others. More importantly, however, it is obliquely suggested in his works. "Sometimes," according to Mandelshtam, "Gogol tried, if not to hide his national particularity, then to show that he was Russian in the broad sense. From the letter quoted above it is clear that he does not wish to be a 'Little Russian' more than a Russian; but there are facts that support the view that his tribal particularity (*plemennaia osobennost*) was not only the chief driving force in his work, but that he cherished it – and demonstrated it to a considerable degree."¹⁶⁸ The writer never stopped delving into the Ukrainian theme, sketching

notes for new stories to the end of his life. The tension between the two identities appeared to provide him with the creative excitement he required. Accordingly, he was both incapable of quitting and unwilling to quit his Little Russian soul, whether he found himself in St Petersburg or Italy. On the cusp of the colonial and anticolonial discourses, his genius manoeuvred between both.

VISSARION BELINSKY'S LITTLE RUSSIA

Biographers have regarded Vissarion Belinsky (1811–48) as the “father of Russian liberalism” and have focused on his role as a Westernizing critic of Russian backwardness. His Russian nationalism and his views on Russian hegemony have rarely been acknowledged. When admitted, his unsettling disparagement of Ukrainian writing and attacks on the incipient Ukrainian national movement have been noted as glaring exceptions in a career devoted to challenging the institutions of the monarchy, serfdom, and Orthodoxy in the name of radical reform. An explanation for the hostility toward Ukrainian writing has been offered in his theory of history – one that foresaw the creation of a modern, international cultural community and one that had no patience for local particularities. According to this argument, Belinsky held “a progressive view of world history and culture” and adhered “to a universalist interpretation of Hegelianism that left little room for the cultivation of purely national traditions, whether Russian or Ukrainian.”¹⁶⁹ The rejection of much of Ukrainian culture was based not on “simple Russian nationalism” but on a principled suspicion of “national cultures,” Russian and Ukrainian. This interpretation of Belinsky’s theory of nationality has been challenged by critics who see in his work not a consistent opposition to all nationalisms but very different treatments of the Russian and Ukrainian nations.¹⁷⁰

The important issue is the establishment of an evolutionary, “Darwinian” hierarchy of nations. Belinsky looked forward fervently to an age of rationalism, when different nations could bring their own individual features to the universal culture of humanity. However, he firmly held that only some nations had an “individual” character and were slated for this honour. The rest were doomed to oblivion. His dogmatic ranking of peoples led him to conclude that Ukrainians could not achieve the higher historical purpose and should therefore give up the national endeavour and assimilate.¹⁷¹ But why should they be so fated? What were his criteria for nation status?

Belinsky perceived world history as passing through the *narod* (people) stage, to the nation (*natsiia*) stage and finally to the level of “organic unity,” in which reason would rule. In the *narod* stage of

sociopolitical organization people act unreflectively; they are driven by custom and habit, and their culture is static. The national stage begins when an upper class is created that provides the motor force for change and rapid progress. These views provided the framework through which he saw the evolution of the Russian nation. However, when the criteria for nationhood are reviewed, particularly within a theoretical reorientation afforded by postcolonialism, the formation of a world historical subject appears as a rationalization of “great nation,” or imperial, status and a denial of subject status to “lesser” nations. The explanation for the puzzling vehemence with which Belinsky dismissed both the Ukrainian movement and Shevchenko’s anticolonial poetry lies in this faith in national hierarchies and Russia’s imperial mission. As Apollon Grigorev pointed out in an insightful article of 1861, Shevchenko’s appearance discredited Belinsky’s historiography; it also exposed the latter’s imperialist views. Grigorev’s article drew attention to Belinsky’s focus on the growth of the state, his faith in centralization, his rejection of the spontaneous and innate (which he associated with the past), and his glorification of figures like Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great (whom he admired as history’s necessarily violent midwives).¹⁷²

Belinsky’s orientation is to those nations who have proven themselves by developing sophisticated modern cultures, state structures, and armies. These prerequisites for membership in the survivors’ elite are closely connected. The absence of any one of them can be used to “prove” that a nation has forfeited the right to exist. The nations most commonly mentioned in admiring tones by Belinsky are the British, the French, and the Germans. Occasionally the Dutch, the Swedes, and others are given credit for particular achievements. But frequently all these countries are collapsed into the term “European” – a marker of cultural distinctiveness, political strength, and assimilatory power. Their success in subduing, moulding, and disciplining populations gives them the right to qualify as “nations.”

His views of nation-building among all other peoples are for the most part contemptuous. The Czechs, he feels, might be an exception, but Bulgarian attempts to build a culture and a nation he finds ridiculous. As for peoples who find themselves under the Russian sceptre, he has no doubt that the interests of “world history” make their assimilation, however violent and regrettable, absolutely necessary. But these attitudes come out best in his frequent comments on “Asiatic” peoples, among whom the Chinese and the Persians furnish the most examples. In his opinion they will never develop into nations in his sense of the word; they will be, and ought to be, colonized and civilized. By contrast, the Russian nation, he asserts time and again,

has become a powerful empire and has joined the club of “nations.” In order to maintain this position and to compete with other “nations,” Russian society must be modern: culturally and politically independent and militarily strong. Any backtracking by members of the society from this mission of national greatness, whether in the form of a yearning for a past peasant idyll or nostalgia for aristocratic cosmopolitanism, has to be eliminated. The peasantry have to be disciplined and modernized in the way Peter did with the upper classes. All sectors of the population have to be mobilized. The cultural and political mission he foresees for the country requires the cultivation of a national ego. Modernizing Westernism, therefore, is a call for Russia to leave behind the vestiges of feudalism and fulfill her destiny as a great power.

In this discussion, Asia becomes a metaphor not simply for all that is peripheral and backward but for all that will be assimilated into the unitary imperial scheme. This applies to intellectual trends: “Only in some Dagestan,” he writes, “can one still speak of the old struggle of Classicism and Romanticism ... No wonder: Dagestan is in Asia!”¹⁷³ It also applies to politics. “Asia” is Russia’s other and Russia has a right to treat it in the same way as the great “nations” of Europe treat their colonized:

The natives of Africa are lazy, animal-like, slow-witted creatures, condemned to eternal slavery and working under the rod and murderous torture ... The poor sons of America even today remain the same as the Europeans found them. Having lost their fear of firearms, the voice of angry gods, even themselves having mastered their use, they have not become any more human from that time, and we must seek the further development of human substance in Asia. It was here that creation ended, nature completed its circle and gave way to a new, purely spiritual development – history. Here humanity was once again divided into races, and the Caucasian tribe is its flowering.¹⁷⁴

The argument here is that Russia’s colonial domain, the Asian native, has greater potential than the African, North American, and Australian natives that Western Europeans were colonizing. It still, however, represents the inchoate and static and is marked by the absence of consciousness that typifies a *narod* stage of development. The “Asiatic” lives in a monotonous culture: “Immobility and fossilization are fused with Asia, like a spirit with a body.”¹⁷⁵ It has always been so: “Even in pagan times, in the ancient world, Europe’s character was the opposite of Asia’s.”¹⁷⁶ Enlightenment will be wasted on these peoples because “the faults of the Chinese or Persian have fused with

their spirit; enlightenment would only make them more refined, cunning and depraved.”¹⁷⁷

The criteria, therefore, for assessing membership in the imperial club are fundamentally racial. In order to quash the suggestion that Russia itself was “Asiatic” or strongly shaped by Eastern influences, Belinsky makes an important and rigid distinction between innate characteristics, which he defines as national substance (dependent primarily on blood, race, geography, and climate), and historically acquired characteristics. Conveniently, this allows for the substance of the Russian people to be described as sound. It is offered as an explanation of why Russians have succeeded in becoming a great power, assimilating other nations, and are now on the threshold of creating a great culture. The accretions of backwardness are simply “Tatarism,” an imposition from without that is gradually being shed. Other peoples who lack this “great substance,” however, will be incapable of making the transition from *narodnost* to nationhood: “True, if there are people with great substances, there are also peoples with insignificant ones, and if the former are immutable and escape the will of one man, no matter how powerful he is, the latter can be destroyed easily, even accidentally, even by their own hands and not only by the will of a genius; and therefore from the latter no genius can fashion anything: the best you can do with a sugar-beet is turn it into a lump of sugar (*luchshee, chto mozhna sdelat iz sveklovitsy, eto golovu sakhara*); only from granite, marble, or bronze can an immortal monument be made.”¹⁷⁸

By invoking the idea of a superior national substance, Belinsky is able to blame Russia’s backwardness on the “Asiatic,” while denying that this is part of Russia’s essential cultural makeup. Neither the Russian peasantry nor the upper classes are, in his view, “Asiatic.” Otherwise the great Russian nation could not have appeared. Contemporary political and military strength, therefore, serves as a justification for past and present aggression. As Belinsky applies this organicist theory of historical development to Russia, he sees one age passing the mantle of future national greatness onto the next. The dialectic he traces is the expungement of foreign influences, the conquest of non-Russian territory, and the subduing of local resistances – all leading to the imperial synthesis. In this scheme all non-European races are relegated to inferior status. The European “nations” made the decisive move to maturity and revealed their innately superior essence in the early modern period: “The discovery of America, the invention of gunpowder and printing were the exterior impulses for humanity’s move from its youthful age to its age of maturity, in which we live today.”¹⁷⁹

The Russian counterpart to this breakthrough is Peter the Great. Westernism, Eurocentrism, and imperialism are explicitly linked in Belinsky's defence of Russian tsars and the legitimacy of their conquests. It is not only Peter's Westernizing cultural policies that he defends (the new dress, the shaved beards, the educational policies) but also the violence of all the tsars since Ivan the Terrible, the brutality of their conquests and the sacrifice of lives in building St Petersburg. In his article on Peter the Great he lists these as instrumental in the construction of a powerful military state that really announced its appearance only 132 years previously, when Peter defeated Sweden.¹⁸⁰ The violence was completely justified, because the alternative was dependency: relating to Europe, in his words, "the way India relates to England."¹⁸¹ The notions of a metaphysical national essence and the idea of a unique Russian mission align him with Russian nationalism and with some tenets of Official Nationality and Slavophilism, even though he rejects any idealization of peasant virtues and communal or religious traditions. What, perhaps, requires underlining is not the "reactionary" nature of these views (although it might be recalled that his writings from 1837 to 1840 have been described by Victor Terras as "unctiously loyal, patriotic, and monarchist effusions")¹⁸² but their logical place in a teleology: the drive for great-nation status. Although Belinsky abandoned his political conservatism, he retained the teleology. In Terras' words, "philosophically" he "remained a Hegelian all his life."¹⁸³

The theorizing of empire and the construction of race were paralleled by a classic trope of colonial discourse: the gendered representation of conquest. A telling example occurs in Belinsky's review of Lermontov's *Hero of Our Time*, when he describes Pechorin's attempt to force his sexual attention on the captive Bela. Belinsky praised the verisimilitude and "tenderness" of this scene. He considered the subordination of the woman to male aggression as justified and sanctioned both by nature and by colonial relations.¹⁸⁴

Where did Ukraine fit within this scheme? It was not "Asiatic," according to Belinsky, but neither did it have the "great essence." In the earlier quotation the telling phrase concerning a sugar beet (Ukraine was the centre of the sugar-beet industry) captures his attitude.¹⁸⁵ Ukraine, the critic insists time and again, is a peasantry. It has the peasant virtues, the communal and religious traditions of pre-Petrine society, but it has failed the decisive test by never creating a viable state or throwing up a Peter. It is merely good potential for Russian state- and nation-building.

However, was not the first Rus state in Kyiv? In order to avoid a discussion of this historical complication, Belinsky plays down the

significance of the Kyivan Rus heritage and the influence of Byzantium. The latter could teach only the “fashion of blackening teeth, whitening faces and putting out the eyes of enemies and criminals.”¹⁸⁶ He goes so far as to devise a theory of northern and southern races, categorically assigning Russian history to the former: “All southern peoples differ markedly from northern ... In the last while the north has left the south far behind in artistic, scientific and civilizational achievements ... Let us glance at Russia in this light. Its cradle was not Kyiv but Novgorod, from which, through Vladimir, it moved to Moscow.”¹⁸⁷ In a similar way he plays down the significance of the hetman state, the cultural superiority of Ukraine over Russia in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, and its influence on the latter. Belinsky negotiates between two ideas, the imperial state and the Russian ethnos, homogenizing the history of both in order to account for the organicist idea of a great Russian essence steadily gaining hegemony.

In his major essay on Ukrainian history, couched as a review of Nikolai Markevich's (Mykola Markevych's) *History of Little Russia*,¹⁸⁸ he insists that Ukraine has always lacked the factors required for nationhood: a strong essence, a conscious elite, a great leader, and a drive to forge a modern civilization. Bohdan Khmelnytsky, as a truly great statesman, realized the impossibility of Ukraine's independent existence. History's verdict, as Belinsky sees it, has been complete absorption by Russia. Ignoring Ukraine's high literacy and cultural sophistication in the decades preceding imperial domination, he is able to construct an apologia that recalls Western empire-builders in their least reflective moments: “Merging forever with consanguineous Russia, Little Russia opened the door of civilization, enlightenment, art, science, from which it had previously been separated by the insurmountable barrier of its semi-barbaric way of life. Together with Russia, she now stands before a great future.”¹⁸⁹

Russian culture in the first half of the nineteenth century was “philo-Ukrainian” insofar as it appreciated the exotic themes, characters, and plots that delighted not only Russians but also Poles and Western Europeans.¹⁹⁰ The country, as we have seen, was constructed as a borderland with a colourful, dramatic, and heroic history. But the fact that this was grasped as a history of the distant past made Ukrainophilia as unthreatening as Egyptomania was to the West in the wake of the Napoleonic wars. Russian culture could afford to be “philo-Ukrainian” in the same sense as Western culture was “philo-oriental” at the time. As long as the Ukrainian question appeared politically resolved, the “love affair” could continue. Cultural Ukrainophilia, as long as it served to celebrate and augment Russian state- or nation-building, was entirely compatible with both a dynastic and a Romantic nationalist imperialism.

The idea that the Russian and Ukrainian identities might be incompatible became gradually apparent after the arrest of the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood in 1847 and the revolutions of 1848. Belinsky's organicist views on culture and nation alerted him to this possibility earlier than most other observers. He no doubt foresaw that concessions in the cultural realm would lead to growing demands for political autonomy. True, Belinsky argued that his was the voice of reason. Andrea Rutherford has written that "it would be incorrect to associate Belinsky with the tsarist policy of forcible Russification of Ukraine. Instead, his theory predicts that the Ukrainians will voluntarily choose to become culturally Russian, recognizing, like Khmelnytskii, that they can enter civilization only by riding Russian coattails. This prediction is a direct implication of the view that nationhood is instrumental to becoming civilized. Given this assumption, it is quite natural to expect that people will adopt the nationality best equipped to achieve civilization."¹⁹¹ However, this assumption was made in every age by "enlighteners" who acted as spokesmen of imperial "civilizing" missions. The problem for liberal or radical critics of empire, as Albert Memmi has pointed out in his *Colonizer and the Colonized*, is what to do when the colonized fail to cooperate in the project of enlightenment as defined by the dominant nation. With the appearance of Shevchenko, Ukraine not only demonstrated that it had one of the greatest poets of Slavdom but presented a refutation of Belinsky's entire theoretical structure. Belinsky's bad-tempered and boorish response is not that of a man committed to rational debate. It appears to be the voice of denial and frustration, of the politically irrational: "a tribe [*plemia*]," he wrote of Ukrainians, "can only have folk songs, but it cannot have poets, and even less, great poets."¹⁹² The powerful and moving anti-imperialist poetry of "The Caucasus" (Kavkaz), "The Dream" (Son), and "The Great Vault" (Velykyi liokh) circulated at this time in manuscript copies. After Shevchenko's arrest and exile, Belinsky wrote to Annenkov in a letter of 1–10 December 1847: "I have not read these lampoons, and no one of my acquaintance has (which fact, by the way, proves that they are by no means malicious but merely flat and stupid), but I am convinced that the lampoon against the empress must have been outrageously disgusting ... Shevchenko has been banished to the Caucasus as a private. I am not sorry for him; if I had been his judge, I would not have done less."¹⁹³

There is, as has been pointed out, a logic to Belinsky's theory of nationality. It is seldom pointed out, however, that this logic is also connected to the imperial myth-making in which he was implicated. Belinsky was disingenuous when he suggested in the same letter that his antagonism to Shevchenko was based on the fact that such poetic

demonstrations, by infuriating the government, jeopardized the progressive movement. The conservative Khomiakov said something very similar in his response to the same event. The same structure of thought operated in both cases; both saw any expression of Ukrainian national feeling as regressive. It was an attitude rooted in the imperial teleology that most Russian writers shared.

“Philo-Ukrainianism” was acceptable to Belinsky, as it was to the wider public, as long as it reinforced the underlying historical scheme. He had already indicated what an acceptable theory of Ukrainian history should be and partly owing to his enormous influence, did a great deal to define the parameters within which many literary stereotypes of Ukraine and the Ukrainians were to operate. The most important of his desiderata was that Ukrainian history must always be treated within Russian history. Of the twenty pages he devoted to the review of Markevich’s *History of Little Russia*, sixteen are part of a lengthy dissertation on the historian’s purpose and methodology. In contrast to the essay on Peter, where the focus is on differentiation and antithesis in the emergence of a Russian identity, here the emphasis is all on synthesis. The message is that Ukraine should not be allowed to function as an independent subject. The end of Ukraine’s history – its unification with Russia – must constantly be uppermost in the mind of any historian who tackles the subject. Russian history is the great river, growing ever wider and deeper; Little Russia is a tributary. Such a domestication of Ukrainian history, as has been observed, was a broad trend. Pushkin, after writing a review of the anti-Russian *History of the Rus People*, produced his “Poltava.” Gogol delighted the Russian public with his *Taras Bulba*. Distinctiveness was permissible as long as the overall teleological imperatives were observed.

In the review of Markevich’s book, Belinsky denied that the hetman and Zaporozhian administrations ever constituted a state or republic: it was “some kind of strange community of an Asiatic type.”¹⁹⁴ Since Ukrainian history lacked both leaders and the drive for nationhood, its bloody revolutions could only be described as pogroms. This interpretation of Ukraine’s “revolutionary” history became a stereotype in Belinsky; it is analogous to the depiction of a violent, blood-feuding Muslim banditry in literature devoted to the Caucasus. In his review of Shevchenko’s *Haidamaks* (Haidamaky, 1841) he focused on the attacks against Jews and the rape of their daughters. He wrote, “the Cossack had only two pleasures in life: slaughter and drink,” and repeatedly used the phrase “full of wild poetry” to describe the country’s history.¹⁹⁵

There were representations of Ukraine and Ukrainians that Belinsky praised effusively. Nothing pleased him more than Kvitka-Osnovianenko’s image of a patriarchal Ukrainian gentry loyal to the

empire. His *Pan Khaliavsky* received the warmest praise because, in the critic's view, it ridiculed the quaint but hopelessly outmoded traditions of old Ukraine and suggested that the new imperial structures held the only hope for progress. He grasped Kvitka's description of the hetmanate period as a picture of "ignorance, laziness, greed and prejudice," ignoring the possibility that the work could be read as a moral satire.¹⁹⁶ The critic sought confirmation of his view that Ukraine was a peasant *narod*, that the hetman and Zaporozhian administrations were only a "muzhik democracy," and that the *maloros* was naive, simple-minded, and easily manipulated: "the character of Little Russians is patriarchally simple-hearted [*prostodushnoe*] and incapable of moral movement and development."¹⁹⁷ Its literature, therefore, must necessarily be lowbrow, narrow in thematic range, poor in ideas and artistic quality, holding little interest for the educated. The most talented and ambitious Ukrainian intellectuals would, in his view, voluntarily choose to assimilate. The anthology *Lastivka* (Swallow), put out by Ievhen Hrebinka in 1841, stirred him to the caustic comment, "A fine literature, which breathes the simple-mindedness [*prostovatost*] of the peasant language and the stupidity of the peasant mind."

Belinsky's "liberal" nationalism is, therefore, deeply complicit in the defence and exercise of imperial power. He manifests the self-serving illusions and authoritarian traits embedded in the metropolitan cult of reason and enlightenment, which Habermas has described as "the depersonalized exercise of power."¹⁹⁸ The portrait of Belinsky as a consistent opponent of nationalism, accordingly, requires revision. His espousal of an instrumentalist theory of nationhood, his deference to the "iron laws" of social development and the march of reason, turned repeatedly into a justification of *raison d'état* and Russian national interests. He employed the "dialectic of enlightenment," as did other members of progressive movements in Europe, to brand small nations as "reactionary." It was this kind of liberal nationalism wedded to imperialism that he transmitted in writings that were avidly read by progressive youth. His legacy included not only the celebrated letter to Gogol of 1847, which became the gospel of Russian revolutionaries but also a conceptualization of Ukraine and Ukrainians that was to play an important role in Russian liberal and radical thought. The Ukrainian liberal Mykhailo Drahomanov later commented that Russian revolutionaries began their career as radicals and frequently ended as despots, rescuing the "unity of the state" – something they considered absolutely necessary for the defence of "freedom and progress" – from "separatist" threats, which they viewed as the symptoms of reaction.¹⁹⁹

It has been suggested that there were psychological reasons shaping Belinsky's views. Isaiah Berlin has noted that the ardent Westernizer

was “emotionally more deeply and unhappily Russian than any of his contemporaries, spoke no foreign languages, could not breathe freely in any environment save that of Russia, and felt miserable and persecution-ridden abroad.”²⁰⁰ An emotional nationalism appears to lie at the root of Belinsky’s moral fervour and faith in progress, a nationalism that owed much to a belief in the consolidating and redeeming power of empire.

4 Counternarratives in Ukrainian Literature

NASCENT COUNTERCULTURE: HRYHORII KVIKA-OSNOVIANENKO

Criticism has long been divided over Kvitka. On the one hand, he has been placed squarely within the camp of empire loyalism, his ideology and poetics treated as retrograde. On the other hand, his prose has been hailed as the foundation stone of a national counterdiscourse, as momentous in significance as the work of Ivan Kotliarevsky. Echoing an earlier judgment by Ivan Franko, both Mykola Zerov and Dmytro Chyzhevsky emphasized Kvitka's reactionary conservatism. For them the writer's poetics were an outdated echo of Western European sentimentalism, and his pastoral image of Ukraine served imperial "pan-Russian" designs by denying the realities of national and social oppression.¹ Zerov wrote, "the political order, according to him, fitted into the formulas of patriarchal, domineering relations ... Unlike Kotliarevsky, Kvitka simply could not see social evil."² These critics interpreted Kvitka's attitude toward local Ukrainian reality as supercilious – the construction in literature of a backward, buffoonish provincialism: "Pan Khaliavsky," wrote Zerov, "is a collection of anecdotes, not always in good taste, about a Little Russian provincial."³ Zerov was prepared to admit Kvitka's Ukrainian consciousness but saw it as "primitive," overlaid by ethnographic and folkloric forms.⁴ The second, more positive attitude toward Kvitka is best exemplified by Ahapii Shamrai, Mykola Plevako, Pavlo Petrenko, and, more recently, Hryhorii Syvokin,

who have all situated Kvitka within a different dynamic – the national cultural revival.⁵

Shamrai finds an explanation for the contradictory conjunction of imperial loyalty and national assertiveness in the laws of art, which, he feels, worked against the author's own will. The critic sees Kvitka much as Marx saw Balzac – as a reactionary monarchist who, nonetheless, wrote better than he knew. According to this thesis, Kvitka and similar loyalist figures worked for the Ukrainian movement without being fully aware of the direction it was taking: “despite their wishes,” Shamrai writes, the conservative writers of the 1820s and 1830s “became a revolutionary national fact, an announcement of the national renaissance ... Ideologically, these “faithful sons” of Russian absolutism, our first writers, had no idea that their innocent anecdotes and idylls would become a weapon in the struggle against tsarism.”⁶

Kvitka's conservative ideology is well documented in pronouncements concerning his literary ambitions and in his *Letters to My Dear Countrymen* (*Lysty do liubeznykh zemliakiv*, 1839). In the latter he attempted to convince his countrymen that all was fundamentally well with the world and that the main cause of peasant poverty was alcoholism.⁷ He emerges from these pages as a firm believer in monarchy, serfdom, and the patriarchal order, a deeply religious man who accepts social inequality and personal misfortune as God's will and who apparently senses no contradiction between his defence of the local idiom and state patriotism.

Faith in a political and moral order preordained by God is one key to Kvitka's philosophical position. He sees the just, hidden hand of God in everything: those who live according to the wise rules of nature (God's creation) are morally sound; those who contradict these rules are foolish and evil. The pattern of compassion for the poor and ridicule for the unworthy can be used to group his works, which divide into sentimental tales that teach the necessity of living righteously and accepting God's will and moral satires directed against those who transgress the laws of God and nature. His faith in a universe governed by a rational plan ordained by God also aligns him with ancient Stoicism. When the Stoics spoke of nature, they were referring to this rational plan, which provided for the welfare of humanity and the world. It was the Stoic's goal to bring personal life into accordance with the rational plan of the universe by refusing ephemeral values like fame, beauty, and wealth and concentrating on “living according to nature,” which meant adopting a disposition that allowed one to bear with equanimity whatever nature or fortune provided. This was an attitude that Kvitka also found in the teachings of Skovoroda.

The consequences that flowed from the adoption of such a disposition were the denigration of the body and a critique of excessive concern with physical pleasure; the withdrawal from external distractions and the retreat into oneself; the preference for the unadorned life over opulence; the recognition of the supreme ideal as home-grown and self-developed and as the result of a self-sufficient disposition. Kvitka incorporated these ideas into his literary position. He rejected, for instance, slavish imitation of French literary fashion. For this he was hailed as one of the best contemporary Russian writers by Stepan Anisimovich Burachok, the editor of the conservative *Beacon* (Maiak), who viewed Ukrainian writers as allies in his campaign to strengthen native (Russian and “Little Russian”) influences in literature.⁸ Vladimir Dal also praised Kvitka’s works for familiarizing readers with the Ukrainian vernacular.

While his views on nativizing literature endeared him to conservatives, Kvitka’s social satires drew praise from liberals and radicals. Belinsky admired his scathing critiques of the old gentry, ranking him alongside Fonvizin, Griboedov, and Pushkin as an exposé of its vices. His work was, in fact, sometimes censored for these exposés: the plays *Gentry Elections* (Dvorianskyye vybory, 1829, and Dvorianskyye vybory, chast dva, 1829–30) and *Clairvoyant* (Iasnovidyashchaia, 1830) were denied staging permission, and his novel *Life and Adventures of Petr Stepanovich Son of Stolbikov* (Zhizn i pokhozhdeniia Petra Stepanovicha syna Stolbikova, 1841) went through three rewritings over eight years before being allowed into print. The early satirical novel *Pan Khalivsky*, written in Russian, was, as we have seen, praised by Belinsky as a rejection of the superstitions and antiquated patriarchal values of the eighteenth century. *The Hero of Ochakov* (Geroi ochakovskikh vremen, 1841; originally entitled *The Ukrainian Don Quixote*) featured a simpleton of the gentry from the time of the 1787–91 Russo-Turkish war. *The Life and Adventures of Petr Stepanovich, Son of Stolbikov* took as its target the abuse of authority in eighteenth-century Russia. These were critiques, in the spirit of the Enlightenment, of ignorance, superstition, corruption, and tyranny.

Kvitka was not suspected of any political disloyalty. His social credentials were impeccable. He came from the milieu of the gentry that produced Ivan Kotliarevsky, Petro Hulak-Artemovsky, and Orest Somov. Unlike them, however, he avoided any jingoism or the military theme.⁹ When he did describe military life in the story “God’s Children” (Bozhdity, 1840), he focused on a peasant’s career as a courageous, self-effacing soldier who loses a hand in combat while rescuing his commander and is rewarded at the end of the war. It is not fame or money that motivates the hero but a simple sense of family obligation and civic

duty. Moreover, Kvitka's public life was that of a model citizen. He was a founder and director of the Kharkiv Professional Theatre, a founder of the Charitable Society, which funded the Institute for the Education of the Poorest Gentry Girls (Kvitka became its director), and an editor and publisher of the first Ukrainian journal, *Ukrainskii vestnik* (Ukrainian Herald), which appeared from 1816 until it was banned by the censor in 1820. He held various administrative positions, including that of the head of Kharkiv's criminal court, where his principled defence of wronged parties, often serfs, caused him many difficulties with the gentry – experiences that served as the sources for his fictional plots.

When he began writing in Ukrainian, he portrayed positive characters, whatever their social status, who had adopted a Stoic disposition and Christian ideals. In these works, serfs and peasants exhibit an inner freedom that comes with overcoming passions, adhering to community traditions, and accepting fate. His admirable characters achieve an inner awareness and live according to reason and nature. The virtuous serf is, paradoxically, shown to be freer than the foolish, pompous, and cruel gentry figure who is a slave to societal demands and personal passions. All his works, observed one critic, oppose urban affectation to simple village life.¹⁰ This opposition is achieved by depicting positive society as decidedly a local one in which outsiders, interlopers, and *moskali* (Muscovites, or soldiers – the word means both) are insensitive and potentially destructive forces. Nature and Providence are invariably on the side of the traditional way of life as it has evolved organically in the community. Second, by privileging the inner sphere, the world of individual feelings, over public dramas, the writer displaces civic fame and political devotion as a primary motivation for human conduct, substituting the desire to live according to moral laws established by God and recognized by the community. Love and the pull of family life become the most powerful emotions. Third, by selecting peasants and common people as his noble and tragic protagonists, he uses literary sentimentalism as a democratising force. In response to the charge that he was portraying peasants as gentlefolk, Kvitka insisted that his characters from the lower orders were true to life.¹¹ Kostomarov, one of Kvitka's first critics, argued similarly.¹² They were adamant on this point in part because of a principled moral and political position. They set out to endow peasant figures with a rich humanity and a wise disposition in order to counteract their denigration among the upper classes. Such a stance had broad implications. If moral right was on the side of the peasant, resistance to authority could be justifiable.

The choice of theme and character entailed a new voice. Although in his didactic tracts the narrator speaks *to* the peasants, *to* women,

and *to* his countrymen from a socially privileged vantage point, in his stories the common people speak for themselves. Written when Kvitka was fifty, *Marusia* (1834), a story that unites the subaltern identities of class, nation, and gender in the figure of the tragic heroine, was his first and most celebrated sentimental story in Ukrainian. He displayed an acute awareness of how the change in linguistic medium affected characterization and literary devices. In letters to his publisher Pletnev, he attempted to explain the requirements placed upon him by the new voice, insisting to his uncomprehending correspondent in the imperial capital that his Ukrainian writings were superior to what he had hitherto produced in Russian and reflected a different sensibility. Even his translations of the Ukrainian idiom into Russian, he wrote, fell flat, because another “nationality” was at issue. When he tried to write in Russian, he would always “drift into [his] own Little Russian tone.” For this reason, he assured Pletnev, he would no longer write in Russian. “Besides, dear Petr Aleksandrovich,” he added, “try to understand the obvious difference between our languages, the Russian and Little Russian. What is powerful, resonant and smooth in one, makes no impression, is cold and dry, in the other.”¹³

Inexorably the writer was led to a defence of nationality. His comments about his own dilettantism, particularly his well-known admission that he initially wrote in Ukrainian only to entertain neighbours, have to be taken with a grain of salt, especially when we consider how assiduously he managed his literary affairs, his sensitivity to the critical reception of his works, and the range and importance of his literary achievement. His evolution into a Ukrainian writer involved more than a change in linguistic media; it also entailed the assumption of a civic role and a public identity. Zerov, in an article from 1929 revising his earlier harsh judgment of Kvitka, urged caution in reading the “naive, simple words” of the writer’s letters to Pletnev: “Behind them lay a whole set of tactics, more than one well-thought-out idea about his writing, its strengths and weaknesses.”¹⁴ Kvitka’s deliberate purpose, according to Zerov, was to create a public for Ukrainian works and a literary interest in Ukrainian reality. The critic now interpreted the writer as manoeuvring deftly to publish Ukrainian materials by exploiting interest among Russian editors. With sympathetic correspondents like Maksymovych, Shevchenko, and Andrii Kraievsky, Kvitka adopted a more candid tone, making his “tactics” explicit. In one letter to Maksymovych he lays down the common position among Ukrainian activists: “to shame and compel to fall silent those individuals who loudly put forth the strange idea that one ought not to write in the language used by 10 million people, which has its own power and beauty, untranslatable into another, its own form of humour and irony, like any language.”¹⁵

Kvitka attempts to convince Kraievsky that there is a large reading public for and great interest in Ukrainian works. That interest will continue to grow as the prejudice of Russian journals against the Ukrainian language is overcome: “Give *our* youth time to mature, to *find support*, etc., to become familiar with the craft – they will demonstrate that the Russian language is only the dialect of a few *gubernii*s, the child – and not the oldest child – of *our* language, which is the senior son of the root Slavic [language]. And when our lads begin to pluck and pull out of it all our roots, taken from us, then even the most fanatical supporter of the Russian language will fall silent and confess his former error.”¹⁶

Kvitka was a principled conservative who, as Franko put it, “stimulated sympathy for the oppressive situation” of the common people.¹⁷ Within the fracturing imperial discourse of the early nineteenth century he played a prominent role in defining the national literary difference, insisting on the existence of a separate readership, context, and interpretative matrix. Along with other intellectuals, he undertook a defence of the Ukrainian language, literature, and identity in the thirties and early forties in response to claims made by Senkovsky, Polevoi, and others in the *Northern Bee* (*Severnaia pchela*) and *Library for Reading* (*Biblioteka dlia chteniia*) that the Ukrainian language did not exist or was incapable of producing a literature.¹⁸

The emerging counterposition, as it shaped Kvitka’s ideas, can be shown by examining two of his works, the Russian-language “Holovaty: Materials for a History of Little Russia” (*Golovaty, Material dlia istorii Malorossii*, 1839) and the Ukrainian “Witch of Konotop” (*Konotopska vidma*, 1836).¹⁹ The first story, which won widespread admiration and inspired Shevchenko to write a poem in the author’s honour, describes the character and fate of Holovaty, a leader of the Zaporozhian Sich. The real Holovaty actually visited the Kvitka household on his way to and from St Petersburg, where he succeeded in winning the Zaporozhians’ reinstatement as a military force on the island of Taman. Kvitka’s story is an autobiographical piece that portrays the effects of these visits on the local gentry and provides a report of Holovaty’s activities in St Petersburg. The gentry are at first fearful of the terrible Zaporozhians, but they gradually learn to understand and admire their guests, who introduce them to a manner of speech, a history, and a mentality that are irresistibly attractive. The story thus serves as the record of a personal communion with the mythical Zaporozhian identity.

Holovaty and his cossacks are fascinating personalities. They confuse not only the local gentry but the court of St Petersburg and Catherine herself by their ability to switch from an idiomatic Ukrainian to the formulas of Russian salon society. While in the capital Holovaty mounts

a clever media campaign: he successfully manipulates St Petersburg public opinion in order to win the concessions the cossacks require. Speaking from a position of weakness, he uses all his wiles to further his case, exploiting the exoticism that the Zaporozhians represent, the “fashionability” that they have manufactured for themselves, and the argument of their military usefulness to the empire. Without sacrificing their own identity – in fact by playing up its uniqueness – the emissaries succeed in charming those around them and winning their case. They successfully “perform” a Ukrainian identity in the capital.

Holovaty’s loyalty remains ambiguous throughout. His laments on behalf of the troops, like his well-scripted professions of respect and admiration for the empress, are publicly staged productions, but it is clear that his deeper commitment is to the historical Sich. The performance of an autonomous identity involves breaking the conventions of polite society: the speech and manners of the Zaporozhians are at points shockingly rude, bordering on disrespect for imperial authority, conservative values, and hierarchies.

The young Kvitka discovers in the visitors an identity with which he is intimately connected. It has been stated that a bantering, jocular military tone and bearing was typical of the cossack class and was consciously adopted as a literary style by some of the intelligentsia, serving, in fact, as an identity marker.²⁰ Just as the writer Kvitka claimed in his letter to Pletnev to have been seduced by the local language, the narrator in the story of Holovaty describes his captivation with the style and identity of these visitors.

Finally, it should be said that in writing the story, Kvitka was indirectly supporting the idea of restoring the autonomy of the cossack army. This argument is also implicit in his “On the Sloboda Regiments” (*O slobodskikh polkakh*, 1838) and “1812 in the Provinces,” (*1812 god v provintsii*, 1843). His “Tales of Harkusha” (*Predaniia o Garkushe*, 1842), produced at the same time, is another sympathetic account of a Zaporozhian, who, after the liquidation of the Sich, commanded a band of outlaws from 1772 to 1784. In Kvitka’s story he is a Robin Hood figure. The author suppresses the fact that the historical Harkusha became an outlaw because he refused to serve the tsar.

“The Witch of Konotop” describes the drowning, or near drowning, of witches. The plot revolves around the witch Iavdokha’s revenge on the local authorities for the public flogging she has received. She is a mysterious power that can assume different shapes and voices, upset the local order, and dominate the town. The story provides a great deal of information, lovingly described, concerning the lore and rituals of witches and their relations with people. Although it begins and ends on a moralizing note (the witch, in the end, dies a painful death

and witchcraft is denounced), it displays a powerful attraction to occult folklore. The story is also notable, in spite of the satirical tone, for the richness and accuracy with which cossack life under the Hetmanate is depicted.

Like Kvitka's other Ukrainian tales, it communicates the vitality of a local identity. One can easily read into it a return of the repressed. The evil powers of "The Witch of Konotop," like those of the mysterious Zaporozhians, can be seen as representations of suppressed forces with their own cultural codes and structures of allegiance. The writer does not deny or downplay these powers; in fact, he revels in describing them. Iavdokha prefigured a long series of literary witches and wizards who draw on the secret powers of Ukrainian folklore. Holovaty, in turn, became the prototype for a long string of literary Zaporozhians with an ambivalent attitude to settled urban society and the power to win over the gentry, such as Kyrylo Tur in Panteleimon Kulish's *Black Council: A Chronicle of 1663* (*Chorna rada: Khronika 1663 roku*, 1845–46) and Harkusha in Oleksa Storozhenko's *Twin Brothers: A Sketch of Little Russia in the Last Century* (*Bratia-bliznetsy: Ocherki Malorossii proshlogo stoletia*, 1857).

"Holovaty," "The Witch of Konotop," and Kvitka's other Ukrainian stories allowed an implicit social critique to arise from within Ukrainian society. In a letter to his Russian editor Kvitka explains how, living in Ukraine, he not only learned the language but also gained an understanding of "their [the people's] thoughts" and in his works "made them talk to the public *in their own words*."²¹ It is the successful presentation of this new voice that constitutes Kvitka's major achievement. Hryhorii Syvokin has described him as the first Ukrainian writer to consciously address the common reader, to create a prose for the "dear countrymen" he addressed in his *Letters*,²² and to develop a reading public. This ambitious project was more than a literary experiment. As Panteleimon Kulish was later to point out, the Kharkiv gentry in Kvitka's day lived entirely in the old cossack gentry traditions. Their language and customs did not differ significantly from those of surrounding commoners. Russian was not Kvitka's native language, and he never studied in Russian schools.²³ He never travelled beyond the Kharkiv region, and he resisted any suggestions that he should move to St Petersburg. He belonged completely to the generation that was absorbed in the study of its "own" identity. With the creation of Kharkiv University in 1805 and the founding of new journals and newspapers, a literary life had developed that fed the desire for Ukraine's representation in literature. Kvitka, who was a regular attendant and performer at literary evenings and in gentry clubs, emerged from this milieu. It stimulated his Ukrainian writings and produced

his first public.²⁴ He represented a new sensibility guided by what Syvokin has called an “orientation toward the democratic reader.”²⁵ The turn to the Ukrainian reader, the switch to the people’s “voice” and their language, was motivated partly by a refusal of what was perceived to be artificial, removed from real life, and not in accord with nature. It was partly also generated by the new gentry-commoner ethos of national solidarity. Even though his stance toward the regime exhibited the typical “Ukrainian dualism” of his day, at times deferential and at others assertive, Kvitka’s cultural program and literary example were to inspire others. The repercussions were far-reaching.²⁶

COLONIAL WAR OPPOSED:
TARAS SHEVCHENKO’S “CAUCASUS”
(1845)

Taras Shevchenko’s stature as a national poet is closely allied to his rejection of the imperial paradigm of conquest and assimilation and the substitution of a counternarrative that legitimized local, native, and national struggles. The break with imperial ideology in his poetry of 1845 was complete. The works he produced in that year reverberate strongly with anticolonial sentiments. Dziuba described Shevchenko as going much further than any of his contemporaries in denouncing the sociopolitical order. He

rose to a total negation of tyranny, to an identification with the sorrow of another small nation that was not famous, unlike the Greek or Spanish (about whose subjection much had been written at various times), but had been forgotten by God and humanity; to the kind of understanding of the equality of peoples before God and the human conscience ... of their sovereignty and irreplaceability in the world order that has only in the late twentieth century become part of humanity’s code [of conduct] – and even then only a theoretical, “professed” code that is daily ruthlessly and cynically contravened in various corners of the earth.²⁷

In the last months of 1845 Shevchenko produced a series of poetic masterpieces indicting tsarism.²⁸ It is seldom pointed out, however, that they challenge not only the officially sanctioned nationality policy but also the complicity of Russian Slavophiles and Westernizers in this policy. One of the greatest of these poems is “The Caucasus.” Published only in 1859, it remained an embarrassment to both the tsarist and the Soviet authorities for thirteen decades. Dziuba recalls that throughout the Soviet period the poem was not recited at public celebrations of the poet’s name and that it was avoided by commentators.²⁹

“The Caucasus” was a direct response to an immediate event, the death of Iakiv de Balmen in 1844, while he was attached to an expeditionary force. He was Shevchenko’s close friend and the illustrator of the poet’s manuscript.³⁰ However, the genesis of the poem is more properly located within the crystallizing anti-imperialism among Ukrainian patriots with whom he associated at the time and who would soon form the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood. The poem has to be seen in the context of the numerous odes to empire and tsar that were published in journals like the *Muscovite* (*Moskvitianin*) in the 1840s. Its content, tone, and language parody imperial forms of address: official proclamations of the tsar, hymns of praise to autocracy and Empire, and rationalizations of Russia’s “civilizing” mission. In demystifying these formulas, the poem takes aim at the entire colonial mentality, constituting what one critic has called “a satire on each and every colonialism.”³¹

As he meditates on conquest and war, the poet constantly changes his addressee: from the reader to God, to the peoples of the Caucasus, the ruling class, Christ, and, finally, to de Balmen. At three different points the narrative shifts into a mocking mimicry of the autocrat’s voice. Each time the narrator’s angry, protestant voice punctures this august tone, challenging the apotheosis of violence, vastness, and power that was common in contemporary hymns, odes, and elegies. The narrator presents instead a picture of the suffering victim. The eagle, central to poetry glorifying the Empire, becomes a bird of prey that daily tears out Prometheus’ heart and drinks his blood. The tsar is described as “the insatiable one” (*nesytyi*), who will never succeed in his grandiose and perverted fantasy of “ploughing the sea bed.” The mountains have been “sown with grief” from which “bloody rivers” flow. The received image of the Russian flood, or sea, is here associated with suffering and killing. Its waters consist of the blood and tears of countless widows, girls, mothers, and fathers.

In this way Shevchenko targets “official” poetic statement and its collusion with tsarist ideology: he ridicules its support of autocracy and its guilty apologies for serfdom. The traditional formula in Russian poetry describing the tsar’s possessions as stretching “from sea to sea” was a way of flattering autocracy’s power. It occurs in Derzhavin’s “On the Capture of Warsaw” (1794) (“from the Lena to the Neva”), in Zhukovsky’s “Longevity” (*Mnogoletie*, 1834) (“From the Caucasus to Altai, from the Amur to the Dnieper”), and in countless other poems. Shevchenko reworks this construction into one of his most memorable aphorisms:

From the Moldavian to the Finn
In all languages everyone is silent,
Because everyone is blessed!³²

The last word was itself a topoi of poetry in praise of the tsar. Zhukovsky, for example, wrote "Ode, Blessedness of Russia ..." (*Oda, blagodenstvie Rossii ...* 1797), in which he compared the Emperor Paul to God; and another poem was titled "Power, Glory and Blessedness of Russia" (*Mogushchestvo, slava i blagodenstvie Rossii*, 1799). Both used what became a canonized formula characteristic of the most sycophantic verse.

Throughout, Shevchenko draws on and parodies the diction of official tsarist announcements. He employs the first person plural, the royal "We," and borrows from the phraseology of imperial addresses. "We mercifully" (*mylostyvii my*) draws on the similar formula used in the tsar's manifestoes and proclamations of favours granted, which frequently employed phrases like "We have most mercifully deigned" (*vsemitos-tovaishe pozhalovali my*). The adjective "meek" (*krotkii*) is used ironically. It parodies another set phrase by which the tsar referred to himself in official proclamations. Hymns to the tsar frequently contained the repetition of the phrase "glory to" (*slava*). This formula is first ridiculed by offering glory to the tsar's hunting dogs and their keepers and then turned against the Empire: the narrator suddenly shifts to a reverent tone and pays respect to the mountain peoples' struggle for freedom, giving them the praise he has denied the monarch.

The poet reserves a particularly biting sarcasm for the hypocritical use of Orthodoxy to justify both the expansionist, "civilizing" mission in Russian foreign policy and *smirenie* in internal affairs. Shevchenko later commented in his journal that this religious ideology was a "key link in Moscow's internal politics."³³ In "The Caucasus" he describes this cynical exploitation of religious feeling. The Russians who say "we are Christians" and "God is with us" (words from the Russian "Te Deum" sung as thanks for military successes) are the ones who impose their ways on others and are prepared to justify serfdom.³⁴ In fact, Shevchenko reverses these desiderata: a truly Christian policy would call for respect and peaceful coexistence in foreign affairs and fundamental internal reform. He ridicules the sophistry of Christians who use the example of the biblical David (who, having killed his friend and taken his wife, rose to be king) in order to justify their own base conduct. Theft and exploitation are rewarded, according to the official Orthodox church with a place in heaven: "We are told: squeeze and squeeze and give [to the Church] and you'll go straight to heaven."

This deconstruction of official tsarist manifestoes and of attitudes propounded by Russian Slavophiles like Khomiakov was paralleled by a challenge to Russian enlighteners, who envisioned the march of reason and progress in a modern, Russified state. The refusal of enlightenment's dialectic makes his political critique much more disconcerting than has often been acknowledged. In a voice that mimics

that of Lermontov's imperial Demon-tempter, he describes the stake small tribes can have in the vast realm. However, Russia's vastness and might, the topic of panegyrics to tsardom, are sarcastically deflated by associating them with Siberia and its endless prisons. He comments on the Empire's claim to be spreading education, civilization, culture. In truth, it teaches only economic exploitation ("the price of bread and salt"). Shevchenko writes:

As for us, what aren't we capable of!
 We can count the stars and sow buckwheat,
 Curse the French. Sell
 Or lose at cards ...
 Not negroes ... Well,
 Yes, they are Christians, but *simple people*.³⁵

This passage mimics the imperial voice and refutes its arguments in an ironic counterpoint. The benefits of autocracy's enlightenment are described as astronomy (an observatory had been opened in 1839 in St Petersburg), anti-French propaganda (a reference to the criticism of republican influences, particularly in the wake of the revolutions of 1789 and 1830), and serfdom. Here the enlightener stutters while searching for a way to rationalize the trade in human beings and their being gambled away in card games. He argues that although they are, in fact, Christians, serfs are "simple" and therefore unworthy of sympathy. The Russian landowners would never trade negroes, as do Western colonialists ("We are not Spaniards; God forbid, / That we should trade in stolen goods, / Like the Jews. We do things legally!"). More than anything else it is this apology for serfdom that discredits the claim of the governing class to enlightenment. Christianity is being invoked by it in support of a fundamentally immoral order. As the narrator shifts back into the voice of the implacable critic, he contradicts its claim to "love its brother according to the apostle's law": "Idle-tongues, hypocrites, / Cursed by God!"³⁶ These are people, he says, who offer prayers to Christ in thanks for "theft, war and blood." The empire has "enlightened" citizens only on how to construct prisons, how to carry chains and braid the knout. It offers all this "enlightenment" to the native tribesmen if they agree to surrender the last refuge of freedom, their "blue mountains."

The silence in political affairs of the non-Russian nationalities and peasant peoples was assumed in the metropolitan centres to be a demonstration of their lack of a political consciousness and national destiny.³⁷ Shevchenko parodies and ridicules this monologic imperial voice and its assimilationist narrative, juxtaposing the national counter-

narrative. The entire poem can therefore be read as a subversion of imperial historiography.

In the final section, which is a meditation on de Balmen's death in the service of a foreign army, the focus becomes the tragedy of nations and individuals who must serve military causes that they find repulsive. There is a suggestion of sympathy for soldier-poets like Bestuzhev-Marlinsky and Lermontov, who explored the issue of divided loyalty in their work. Unlike these Russian authors, Shevchenko shows no equivocation. Like them he expresses sympathy for the mountaineers, but he does this in a manner that quite explicitly and unambiguously legitimizes their political aspirations and rejects the aggressor's views. Marlinsky, in chapter 4 of "Ammalat-Bek," and Lermontov, in "Gifts of the Terek," viewed the story of the Terek river as that of a vigorous mountain stream tamed by the lowland sea. Shevchenko does not look with equanimity on what he interprets as endless bloodshed. The spirit (*dusha*) and liberty (*volia*) of the people will not be crushed, and blood will continue to flow. The killing on both sides in the colonial war is not only tragic but futile, since its goal and justification is not only an immoral but also an ultimately unrealizable imperial dream. The final comments return us to the epigraph, which is taken from Jeremiah. It reminds us that the poem is a lament over the eternal struggle of justice with tyranny.

"The Caucasus" creates a powerful synthesis of the social and national struggles, a unified ideal of freedom that serves as a rallying cry for dispossessed, voiceless nations within the empire, who were viewed by leading Russian intellectuals as obstacles to the march of reason. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Ukrainian nationalist movement would look back upon Shevchenko as its prophet.

It has, nonetheless, been argued that this appraisal of him as a revolutionary and independentist is mistaken. W.E.D. Allen claimed that he was a "revolutionary in feelings rather than thoughts."³⁸ His Ukraine, according to George Grabowicz, is a poetic myth in which the mythologemes of punishment and active and passive stances toward coming change are primary and irreducible to a conscious political content.³⁹ The attempt to entirely cordon off the mythic-poetic from the political is, however, unconvincing. One does not have to go as far as to argue for the presence of a suppressed, unspoken tendency toward separatism in Shevchenko's work, as some have done,⁴⁰ in order to grasp his message of self-determination. It is, in any case, in the nature of liberation myths to incorporate several meanings, to suggest possibilities rather than to define concrete, specific courses of action. Shevchenko's defence of liberation struggles could and did find itself translated into a number of pragmatic purposes.

The poet's own narrative voice itself moves in a way that demonstrates the modelling of a number of options: he meditates on various possible strategies for liberation within the context of wider moral problems. Nonetheless his thought always begins with a categorical rejection of imperialism and then turns to a consideration of burning political and moral issues in a lyrical self-interrogation. In connection with "The Caucasus" Dziuba has written, "His exposed heart beats among heavy wrongs, his thought jumps from despair to faith and again to despair, his words flare with a sacred anger, bitter laughter, prostrate sympathy, painful tears and condemnatory cries."⁴¹ Ultimately, the poem is a conversation with God, as are the lament of Jeremiah and the psalms of David, which Shevchenko translated at the time of composing "The Caucasus." The poem represents simultaneously an acceptance of a higher will and a prayer for divine intervention into an unjust world order.

Several critics have shown how these anguished meditations did, in fact, participate in the contemporary discourse on imperialism and anti-imperialism in very concrete ways, responding to overt political statements and to the political mythology submerged in official pronouncements and poetic clichés.⁴² Shevchenko contradicted, for example, a fundamental topos of Russian writing on the Caucasus – the assertion of final victory. Pushkin wrote of the tribesmen, "your blood did not save you," and he predicted, in words that would be echoed in the ending to his "Poltava," that future generations would recount their struggle "without pain," not as living history but as folklore:

Just like Batu's tribe did,
The Caucasus will betray its ancestors,
Will forget the sound of avid strife,
Leave behind the arrows of war,
To the ravines where you nested,
And your execution will be proclaimed
[Only] in dark legends of fame.⁴³

Such wish-fulfilling conclusions became a staple. Zhukovsky mentioned the "splendid captivity" of the Caucasian mountains as an achieved fact in "An Old Song on a New Note." Lermontov's "Dispute" also announced closure when Mount Kazbek, unable to count the enormous number of Russian troops, pulled its hat over its eyes and turned silent "forever." Shevchenko could not deny the crushing military superiority of the Empire, but his conscience protested against the triumph of evil, and he raised his voice in denunciation of this triumphalist rhetoric.

The issue of service in the imperial military was enormously significant for stateless nations. It was a theme that Giacomo Leopardi made his own during Italy's *Risorgimento*. For Ukraine, which by Shevchenko's time had a long history of military collaboration in imperial expansion, it was a deeply painful and divisive problem. Dziuba has indicated that Shevchenko's attitude to the exploitation of Ukrainians in forced military service was negative but that he was sympathetic toward attempts to reconstitute military units disbanded after the loss of autonomy. Such units represented a partial recovery of political rights, a historical reminder and stimulus to national pride. As has been seen, the Black Sea Cossacks were reconstituted by Catherine as a fighting force in 1790, almost two decades after she had destroyed the Zaporozhian Sich. They fought in the Kuban and Caucasus against the Circassians and other mountain peoples. Ukrainian fighters were particularly useful as scouts: they were effective and inexpensive auxiliaries that were exploited for special assignments. Shevchenko's Cossackophilia allowed him to wax enthusiastic about the continuation, in however attenuated and illusory a form, of Zaporozhian traditions. But the knowledge that these troops were being exploited in an imperial war of conquest meant that the protest against such service was motivated by much more than a personal tragedy: the protest was a lament over the death of a close friend, de Balmen, but it was also a response to a national shame.

Shevchenko's conviction that a nation was made up of all classes, including the peasantry, that, however deformed its social structure, each nation had a political integrity, and that a stateless people had not only a past but a present and a future that its poets were called upon to articulate – all refuted essential political assumptions in imperialist thought. The Cyrillo-Methodians' program was a detailed exposition of these positions. It dwelt on the right to self-determination of small nations. Western scholars have played down its political character and significance, concentrating instead on characterizing its representatives as constituting an "intellectual national movement."⁴⁴ This assessment has, however, been challenged by commentators who have examined the program, the number of its members, and the breadth of its support.⁴⁵ The production of a literature that articulated a new ideology was in fact one of the most influential aspects of the group's activity. In any case, the appearance of Shevchenko's poetry became the single most effective tool for conveying the brotherhood's ideas.

"The Caucasus" became a symbol of resistance to the imperial juggernaut and of solidarity among its victim peoples. It gave the colonized a voice and portrayed the national-imperial conflict from their point of view. The crucial importance of this factor can be sensed

in the reviews of Shevchenko's early work in Russian journals. They question both his decision to write in Ukrainian and his construction of Ukraine as non-Russia. Belinsky's comments are the best known. He was adamant that "it was silly to even think that something could today develop out of their, by the way beautiful, folk poetry." Writing in Ukrainian he considered a regressive step, comparing it to moving "from a civilized, educated and humane condition (the attainment of which Little Russia owes to its annexation to Russia) once more to its former barbarism and ignorance."⁴⁶ This was the general sentiment. The *Literary Gazette* (*Literaturnaia gazeta*), whose de facto editor was Fedor Alekseevich Koni, expressed enthusiasm for Shevchenko's poetry but nevertheless offered him the following advice: "It seems to us that people with talent writing Romantic poems and stories in Little Russian would do better if they would write them in Russian."⁴⁷ The *Russian Herald* (*Russkii vestnik*) called writing in the "khokhol dialect" simply "literary foolishness (*shalost*)," and decried the fact that some talented writers had participated in this practice, unfortunately drawing with them a host of talentless imitators.⁴⁸

The construction of the native realm as a world and consciousness distinct from Russia was most angrily dismissed, not in connection with the censored and unavailable "Caucasus," but with reference to some of Shevchenko's other poems. Bulgarin's *Northern Bee* (*Severnaia pchela*), which in 1840 had printed an early sympathetic review of the *Kobzar*, took an increasingly uncompromising line, publishing four negative commentaries on Shevchenko's "Trizna" (Funeral Feast) in 1844.⁴⁹ The denial of alterity was made in a jocular and dismissive tone by Stepan Anisimovich Burachok, editor of *Beacon* (*Maiak*), in the same year. In discussing Shevchenko's "Thought" ("It is hard to live on Earth"), which was written in Gatchina, outside St Petersburg, on 24 November 1838, he described the lyrical persona's feelings in these words: "the Cossack leaves sadly for a foreign land and grieves that he must die there! And where is this land so foreign to the Cossack: in Turkey? Algeria? Germany? So who asked him to go there! If he considers himself on foreign land when in Tver or Petersburg gubernia then one can really only smile at such a poetic anachronism."⁵⁰

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF IDENTITY:
TARAS SHEVCHENKO'S "GREAT VAULT"
(1845)

Shevchenko's "Great Vault," like his "Caucasus," is part of the cycle of poems he wrote for the "Three Years" (*Try lita*) collection of 1845. It is a "mystery" divided into three sections and in publications is always

followed by the short poem “There Stands in the Village of Subotiv” (Stoit u seli Subotovi), which some critics have claimed is an epilogue that became detached from the main text due to an oversight by an early copyist and editor.⁵¹ The “epilogue” in fact summarizes and synthesizes the preceding three sections and decodes the “mystery’s” symbolic meaning. It tells us that the vault is Ukraine’s tomb, that both the real and, by implication, the metaphorical church and vault in Subotiv built by Bohdan Khmelnytsky will be destroyed and that from under the rubble will arise a free people. The poem exemplifies the creation by the writer of what Oksana Zabuzhko has described as a myth that “split apart” the “transnational ‘imaginary community’ which the Russian theocracy had consistently forged over almost two hundred years.”⁵²

The first section describes the conversation of three souls who have convened to witness the excavation of the site by tsarist authorities. They will be allowed into heaven, so God has informed Peter, only when Russia has finally taken everything from Ukraine and has uncovered the vault. The first soul used to be a beautiful young girl. Her sin was crossing the path of the hetman and *starshyna* with water from the well as he was on his way to Pereiaslav to sign the treaty with Moscow. The cursed water poisoned her father, mother, brother, herself, and the dogs. Although, as the epilogue informs us, Khmelnytsky meant well, praying in this same church that “the Muscovite might share good and bad / with the cossack,” Russia plundered everything it “set eyes upon,” including the treasures of antiquity in burial mounds and tombs. The second soul is being punished for giving water to Peter the Great’s horse as he made his way to Moscow from Poltava. As a young girl this soul survived the sack of Baturyn, in which her mother and sister were slaughtered. The tsar, who was quartered in the only house still standing in the town, saw her carrying water and ordered her to give it to his horse. She collapsed and died upon returning to her home and was buried by an old woman who had taken her into her roofless house. This old woman, the final survivor of the Baturyn massacre, also died the following day, and with no one left to bury the dead, her body rotted. Unsure of why she is being punished, the innocent young girl’s spirit speculates: “Probably because it was everyone / That I served and aimed to please ... Because it was the Muscovite tsar’s / Horse I gave to drink!” The third female soul was an infant in her mother’s arms when Catherine the Great made her way down the Dnieper in a golden galley. This is a reference to the famous voyage of 1787 staged by Potemkin as a spectacle for the benefit of the court, which captivated all Europe. It was a dramatization of Voltaire’s thesis that Eastern Europe was a backward

land of bears and barbarians, and it aimed to justify Catherine's enlightened despotism. Adorned with oriental effects throughout, the voyage staged savagery by having squadrons of cossacks and Tatar nomads appear before the travellers. At the same time the benefits of the civilization Catherine had brought were also on display in the choreographing of happy villagers singing rustic airs in a *trompe l'œil* spectacle that one observer described as "towns without streets, streets without houses, and houses without roofs, doors, or windows."⁵³ In Shevchenko's poem the infant girl, catching sight of the empress, princes, and viceroys, smiles, thus causing her own and her mother's death. "Could I know," she asks, "that the empress / Was a fierce enemy of Ukraine, / A hungry she-wolf!" The imagery challenges the Enlightenment's construction of Ukraine as a barbaric and undisciplined land lately softened and civilized by imperial rule.

This section recapitulates important historical moments in the gradual imperial subjugation of Ukraine: the treaty of Pereiaslav, which brought the country under the tsar's protection, the defeat of Mazepa at Poltava, and the final liquidation of autonomy and the population's enserfment under Catherine. These three iconic images in imperial historiography are denounced in Shevchenko's anti-imperialist narrative. The first soul is punished for Khmelnytsky's disastrous diplomacy; the next two witness and fail to understand the progressive enslavement of their country under Peter and Catherine. The poet's counterhistoriography has been a continuing embarrassment for Russian and Soviet accounts of the Russian-Ukrainian relationship. Among prominent Russian intellectuals Herzen was almost alone in supporting Shevchenko's interpretation of tsarist intentions and colonial realities when he wrote that autocracy "set about oppressing Little Russia in contravention of all the treaties."⁵⁴

Water is associated with religious rites, purification, and physical restoration. Ukrainians, Shevchenko implies, have an obligation to refuse both sanction and sustenance to the Russian occupation of their country. Water also carries other literary associations: it is the Terek that is tamed and confined on its way to the sea in both Marlinsky and Lermontov, and it is the Russian sea that swallows the Slavic streams in Pushkin. Subconsciously the message is the need to resist the plundering of the country's once flowering culture and rich natural resources. The young girl who has crossed Khmelnytsky's path testifies that the well from which she drew water is now muddied and dry. As a child she was a product of Khmelnytsky's Ukraine, a childhood playmate of the hetman's son, and never lacked for anything. This closeness to the hetman suggests a ruling elite and a government whose interests and culture were identical with the people's. A similar

comparison of past dignity and present misery is implied in the picture of Baturyn's charred ruins and also in the third scene, where the mother with child, who is probably a serf working the fields along the bank of the Dnieper, can contemplate the opulence of Catherine only from an enormous social and political distance.

The second section describes the meeting of three crows on the cross of the Subotiv church. They are in fact evil spirits responsible for the sufferings of Ukraine, Poland, and Russia. In a reversal of the normal political hierarchy, Ukraine's crow is the senior, since she has spread the most misery. She chides the second "Polish" crow for only spilling one river of blood and driving her gentry to Siberia following the 1830–31 uprising, and the third "Russian" crow for proudly claiming responsibility for the death of six thousand workers in the building of the St Petersburg-Moscow railway, then under construction. The evil Ukrainian crow, in an ironic use of counterdiscursive strategy, complains that their reading of Karamzin's *History of the Russian State* (1816–29) has entirely obscured and repressed the real history of her own "achievements." Among these she lists the burning of Poland and her kings, the renting out as mercenaries of the free cossacks, the burning of Baturyn, the massacre of the cossack *starshyna* at Romni, and the murder of Polubotok in prison. As for the rank and file cossacks, they died in the tsar's wars in Finland, the building of fortifications on the Orel River, and the construction of the Ladoga Canal. This reign of terror focuses on the destruction of Ukraine's national polity and on the cossack class and their exploitation as slave labour in imperial construction projects, where they died in thousands. Herzen said the same thing when he commented that Catherine "paid for her Egyptian nights with cossacks."⁵⁵ The first crow continues by congratulating the Russian crow on the wretched social system she has inspired. She is awed by the rapacity of Muscovites in Ukraine, who are now excavating ancient grave-sites, since there is nothing left to steal in homes. The country's ruin, however, is not complete. The first crow complains of the people's regenerative powers. In fact, she has called the others together because two twins are about to be born: one who is destined to fight the hangman and one who will serve him. She suggests that "while the people are still blind," the first son must be buried to prevent their "good work" from being overturned. There is a strong suggestion in this section of hybridity as a curse on the national character, particularly in the description of half the nation (one twin) as ready to serve the oppressor for money and promotions but also in the large influx of Russian gentry and the fading memory of national traditions (symbolized by the ruined vaults around the country and the people's current "blindness").

The weakness of native resistance to imperial expansion is emphasized by the gendering of society in the poem's first section. The fact that it is the women who speak for Ukraine implies a very different point of view from that of officers and soldiers in the imperial army (whose perspective is given, for example, in Marlinsky and Lermontov). The male world of politics and war was distant from the experience of these women until the moment when its consequences were forced upon them. This world of womanhood is the fabric of native society from which the male defender is absent. The failure of its male warriors to mount an adequate defence has left the society exposed and vulnerable. The three spirits were young girls unaware of the significant political actions taking place around them.

The same defencelessness is suggested in the third and final section by having contemporary Ukraine represented as three lyre players: one blind, one crooked, and one hunchbacked. Uninformed, they can only speculate about political events and tsarist intentions, giving credence to the rumour that the tsar wants "to capture the entire world." One critic has described them as "spiritual cripples" with "degenerate intellects": "The poet illustrates this in the absurd discussion of the beacons (*maiaky*). In Ukrainian history these beacons were important safeguards in times of danger. In contemporary Ukraine its spiritual leaders ought to play the same role ... But they babble nonsense, lie unconvincingly, and exhibit a mystical faith in the power of Muscovites, the tsarist empire and the despotism of landlords."⁵⁶ The ancient songs of Khmelnytsky's glory, which they have come to sing, will not be required. After three days of digging, the vault is broken into, revealing a ladle, a rotting manger, and skeletons in chains that "appear to smile at seeing the sun." Infuriated at finding no treasure, the Russian administrators flog the three singers.

The epigraph taken from David's forty-third psalm (which the poet translated at this time) helps the reader to understand the message: the people have been abandoned by God as a laughing-stock and a "parable" for their neighbours, a shameful example to other nations. The thought is recapitulated in the epilogue: "foreign people [*storonni liudy*] ridicule Ukraine!" Conscious political evil has created the country's humiliating contemporary condition. Yet the poem does not end on this note. The last lines contain a surprise:

But it was the small vault in Subotiv
That Moscow unearthed!
The large one, however,
They still have not found.⁵⁷

The economic bonanza anticipated by tsarist colonial rule will not materialize. The country's natural riches, like the well already described, will dry up as a result of rapacious exploitation. But there is a suggestion of a real treasure that will not be unearthed by the tsarist administrators, or, when uncovered, will not provide benefit or comfort to the regime: it is the national identity that tsarism has done everything to deny and eliminate. This identity returns to haunt the administration in the smiling faces of long-buried skeletons and to frustrate its fantasies of enrichment. It is a further reminder that popular resistance, which still infuriates the first crow, has continued. The epilogue, expanding on this idea, reads like a prophesy of resurrection and the final note is an optimistic one: we learn that Ukraine will rise from under the ruins and "blow away the darkness of oppression," and its "children of captivity" will one day "say a prayer in freedom!"

DENATIONALIZATION AS TRAGEDY:
ANATOLII SVYDNYTSKY'S *LIUBORATSKYS*
(1861–62)

Anatolii Svydnytsky's *Liuboratskys: A Family Chronicle* (Liuboratski: Simeina khronika, 1861–62) is the earliest and one of the best social novels in Ukrainian. Ivan Franko, the book's first reviewer, called it the first major attempt at a Ukrainian novel "against the background of contemporary social relations." He considered it "one of the very best" and compared it favourably with Ivan Nechui-Levytsky's *Prychepa* (1869), which also deals with the problem of Polonization.⁵⁸ The novel focuses on the crisis of self-image among the petty gentry and families of the Orthodox clergy, the leading Ukrainian class on the Right Bank in the 1830s and 1840s. Svydnytsky's particular concern is with the education system that produces Russified boys and Polonized girls. By examining the dynamics in one family, that of Father Hervasii Liuboratsky, he suggests a tragic process of coercive denationalization and the collapse of national identity among the clergy. At the same time his critique of the Russian school and seminary and of the Polish *pension* for girls mocks their claims to be serving a mission of enlightenment.

The novel was written in the early sixties for the short-lived but important Ukrainian journal *Osnova* (Foundation). Because *Osnova* ceased to appear, and shortly afterwards the Valuev ukaz of 1863 banned the publishing of Ukrainian belles lettres, the novel remained unpublished for many years.⁵⁹ It was finally printed in truncated form in the Western Ukrainian journal *Star* (Zoria) in 1886. Svydnytsky also wrote a series of stories on Ukrainian themes for the Russian-language *Kyivite* (Kievlianin) in 1869–71. They contain many Ukrainian expressions and

entire dialogues exclusively in Ukrainian, in this manner partially subverting the censorship. Svydnytsky is also famous for a long poem critical of Russian colonialism, “For Over Two Hundred Years Already ...” (*Vzhe bilshe lit dvisti ...*), which circulated illegally among Ukrainian patriots and was never published in its full form under either the tsarist or Soviet regimes.⁶⁰

Liuboratskys was written when the writer was deeply involved in the struggle to create Ukrainian Sunday schools. Two were established in Kyiv in 1859. Ivan Stepanovich Beliustin had written a searing exposé of the village clergy and its education in 1858.⁶¹ The Orthodox seminary was also to be the focus of Nikolai Gerasimovich Pomialovsky’s *Seminary Sketches* (*Ocherki bursy*, 1862–63) and figured prominently in Dmitrii Ivanovich Pisarev’s criticism from these years. *Osnova* also contributed to the debate on education in several articles and stories at this time.⁶²

For Ukrainian writers, however, the issues of obscurantism, outdated pedagogy, and sadistic teachers was bound up with the question of their own national revival. As part of a Polish propaganda effort in the years leading up to the Polish uprising of 1863, several dozen Polish schools had been opened in Right Bank Ukraine. Their textbooks described Poland as including most of Ukraine. This campaign was countered throughout 1861–62 with articles in *Osnova* by Mykola Kostomarov and Volodymyr Antonovych.⁶³ Ukrainians argued for their own schools as a method of resisting Polonization.⁶⁴ Svydnytsky’s novel was written, therefore, at a time when national education was a burning issue. The critique in *Liuboratskys* was, however, directed at much more than the schools. The book reached beyond this question to condemn systematic practices of Russification and Polonization and depicted their disastrous social consequences.

Father Hervasii Liuboratsky and his wife represent the old generation of priests’ families who have remained closely tied to the local community and have retained a sense of their Ukrainian national identity. They sympathize with the national-social liberation struggle. Their manner of life does not differ substantially from that of many peasants: the priest’s family does physical work and shares much of the community’s worldview. Although it enjoys a higher social status, it does not own the land it works or the home it occupies. They must be passed on to the priest who will succeed Father Hervasii. Furthermore, the family is at the mercy of the rich Polish landowners who own most of the land and control the rights to exploit it. The priest’s family therefore occupies an ambiguous and vulnerable class position.

Father Hervasii’s Ukrainian self-image is founded upon old patriarchal traditions. Lacking an education and worldly wisdom, he has no

defence against the seductive overtures of the local Polish landowner, who showers him with gifts (a basket of nuts, a bottle of wine, sacks of flour, a field for exploitation “during his lifetime,” a ticket for three cords of firewood from the forest) and convinces him to send his daughter, Masia, to a Polish *pension*. The tactic is part of a conscious attempt to Polonize the families of the Ukrainian intelligentsia through offering small material concessions and the promise of the accomplishments of civilization and social advancement. Following the disastrous revolt of 1830–31 much of the Polish gentry began to realize the need for broader support in the local population in the event of any future struggle to reestablish a Polish state. Although in the early decades of the century the vast majority of educational institutions were Polish and the tsarist regime acquiesced in the Polonizing policies of the landlords, after 1831 Russian gymnasia and seminaries began opening for boys. Girls, however, were not considered for them; Polish schools still served as their only educational option. This was a loophole that Polish society exploited.

Fruzyna Pecherzhynska provides Masia with a knowledge of the Polish language and instruction in social manners, but her real aim is to instill contempt for the Ukrainian language, the Orthodox faith, and the peasantry. Masia’s external metamorphosis, caused by drinking vinegar to cultivate a pale, thin, “aristocratic” appearance, is paralleled by an internal transformation: she becomes cruel, avaricious, and arrogant. However, the reasons for Polonization’s success lie deeply embedded in a whole system of economic, social, and cultural relations. Not least among the reasons why Hervasii succumbs to the landowner’s agitation is his own desire that his children obtain the education and the veneer of civilization that will distinguish them from the “muzhyks.” It is this psychological weakness, the product of ideological and material insecurities, that the landowners exploit.

The clues to this psychological and ideological problem are deftly scattered throughout the book. The family retains a sense of class distinction. Hervasii forbids his children to attend village parties because he does not want them to find partners in life there. Humiliated by the landlord’s mockery of their upbringing, he is determined that his daughters not be considered peasant women. These feelings of social and national inferiority are communicated to Masia and manipulated by the teacher, Pecherzhynska, whom the cynical landowner has recommended as an educator. Ironically, she is, in fact, the daughter of a serf. Forcibly taken by a landlord for his concubine when a young girl, in her thirties she recognized her insecure station and asked that a marriage be arranged with the handsome Iavtukh Pecherytsia, a young

serf the master kept as a lackey (*kozachok*). On threat of military conscription – another noble privilege frequently used to punish unruly serfs – Iavtukh had married her but had soon escaped. The deprived Fruzynia then changed her surname to the Polish-sounding Pecherzhynska and was set up in business by the Polish landlords as an educator of Orthodox priests' daughters. The *pension's* instruction in Polish language and embroidery are supplemented by a relentless mockery of Orthodoxy, whose priests are referred to as “goat beards” (*kozia broda*) and their church as a “temple of boors” (*khamaska bozhnytsia*). In this atmosphere Masia rapidly becomes anti-Orthodox, anti-peasant and anti-Ukrainian. She assimilates the *szlachta* code of behaviour, refuses all contact with other village girls, and speaks Polish exclusively. External coercion, however, is only part of the explanation. The family's unsophisticated patriarchal views, we are led to understand, have not provided the children with the ideology to resist. The following portrait of Masia occurs early in the book. The lines omitted from the edition of 1886 are set in brackets:

Having grown up among simple girls, maybe not in luxury but also not in need, Masia saw grief enough and nurtured a good heart; her own misfortune and that of others were her teachers. [A higher, more intelligent person will not take anything bad from a lower, but will even draw the latter along.] All Masia learned from the girls was a lot of songs; and whom can this treasure hurt! [She did not even learn hostility toward the landlords from them. Occasionally she cursed the landlords; but one forgets even one's own troubles, never mind the grief of others.] Innocent of any trickery and deviousness, she was simple and sincere; hid nothing in herself, because like a flower in a green meadow she had nothing to hide. [Being a lady attracted the poor thing; she desperately wanted to be lady-like, but at the same time regretted the simplicity and innocence she was preparing to leave behind; she did not know herself what she was seeking and what she was abandoning. And she cried sincerely, without understanding why the tears fell.]⁶⁵

Syvachenko points out that the effect of the cuts is to simplify Masia's psychology and remove the subtleties of Svydnytsky's portrait. Masia's feelings are contradictory: she is torn between class loyalties, which in the context are national loyalties.⁶⁶ The effect of her education is to turn her against both her parents and her nationality, which she begins to make fun of during visits to the local Polish gentry. The latter, of course, delight in this, but in private continue to look down on her. In order to escape her family, whom she has learned to detest, Masia marries the aging Polish landowner Kulynsky. After his death, however,

she is left without the means of subsistence. Considering herself a member of the *szlachta* and, therefore, too proud to accept any employment, she is reduced to destitution and commits suicide.

The education of Hervasii's son, Antosio, in the *bursa* and seminary draws on autobiographical materials. It paints a damning picture of the education and living conditions of the pupils, but unlike Pomialovsky's account, which was written shortly after Svydnytsky's, it includes a national dimension. The author, for example, describes the *nota*, a log that was hung around the neck of any pupil who used a *muzhyk* (Ukrainian) word and that could be removed only when another "transgressor" was caught. This punishment was administered by the pupils themselves. As other accounts make clear, it was a common method of eradicating the use of Ukrainian.⁶⁷ Like Masia's *pension*, the *bursa* aimed to instill masochistic tendencies.

Violence is widespread in the schools. Svydnytsky's point is that it is learned, internalized, and passed on, becoming endemic to the entire society. A poignant illustration occurs during one of Antosio's early vacations in the village. Already transformed from the happy innocent he used to be, he verbally abuses and hits his sister, then knits together switches and beats the threshold with them. While doing this he mimics two Russian voices: that of the punisher ("Are you going to study? Are you? Take that; study!") and a second, tearful one ("I will, teacher, Sir! I swear I will!"). The first voice resumes ("I know you will! Beat him! Harder, harder-harder, harder-harder-harder!"), and the second voice of the victim again pleads for mercy. When the beating has been completed, the punisher announces "Enough! ... Next!" Chased from the threshold by his sister Orysia, Antosio wanders about the yard, or melon-patch, continuing the ventriloquism. The episode depicts the manner in which the young boy's psyche divides itself and violent behaviour is internalized. (Pisarev describes similar destructive acting-out by pupils in his discussion of Pomialovsky's book.⁶⁸) Later, Antosio uses a similar authoritarian, accusatory tone with his mother and his younger sisters, blaming them for the younger sister Orysia's forced marriage.

Svydnytsky's target is the wider society. He generalizes the issue of forced marriages of priests' daughters to seminary graduates (required in order to preserve the family home, the only source of livelihood) by showing the wretched consequences of several such matches. At the same time he produces a portrait gallery of seminarians who make it clear that the worst elements (Robushynsky the informer, Kovynsky the thief and ignoramus, Sobalsky the social incompetent) are rewarded with the best parishes. Antosio, who has made enemies by revealing informers within the seminary and by challenging authority,

is refused entry into the priesthood. Toward the end of the novel, he begins to grasp the social and national injustices of the system. His motivation to struggle for reform is sincere. In a moment of mature reflection he imagines a better life: he sees himself defending the rights of the community against the landlord, the laws against the tsar, and envisages his future wife as an equal, not a slave. However, nothing of this comes to pass. His own forced marriage to the frightful sister of the seminary deacon is a punishment he must accept, since it is the only way he can obtain a parish and rescue his family from the poverty into which it has fallen after the death of his father. He is completely in the power of the cruel and vindictive archpriest, in a system as soul-destroying as serfdom. A broken man, Antosio dies of consumption.

The intellectual and spiritual formation of the young priests produced by the new Russian seminaries is compared unfavourably with that of the older generation. Father Hervasii's generation, for all its faults, was an organic part of the village community in a way that the younger generation is not. The seminaries created under Nicholas I in Right Bank Ukraine aimed to establish a clergy who would receive civil rights and material benefits from the government but who in return would become the regime's "agents in the villages."⁶⁹ Affiliation with the Russian authorities was therefore accompanied by alienation from the populace and a corresponding growth of careerism, self-interest, and cynicism among the clergy. The simple peasant girl, Hanna, accurately encapsulates the effect the new schooling produces: "cursed education! They will make such a devil out of this little angel that you are left powerless. A ruined human being! May whoever devised such an inhuman education never be forgiven!"⁷⁰

Ultimately the cause of tragedy is forcible denationalization. The community does what it can to support the Liuboratskys following the death of Father Hervasii. First an elderly retired priest provides temporary help. Then another priest from a neighbouring village does double duty, serving both parishes for a while. In the meantime all attempts to find a suitor for Masia from among seminary graduates have failed. Significantly, the priest appointed by the Russian church hierarchy is a Russian. Orysia, the second sister, must marry him if the family is to avoid eviction. The new priest introduces a brutal, colonialist manner. Protected by the administrative authority (he is the archpriest's nephew), he insults all things Ukrainian, beats Orysia violently, and in the end kills her. His conflict with the community is equally violent. At first afraid of his uncle the archpriest, the villagers observe the family abuse from a distance, but as soon as it is turned against the wider community, they take matters into their own hands, delivering their own beating to the priest and successfully petitioning

for his removal. The figure of the escaped Iavtukh and this example of group protest by the community show active resistance to oppression. There is a carefully understated glimmer of hope here, as in the fact of Antosio's belated enlightenment. The violence, however, is systemic, and the choices available to its victims are few. The fate of the three daughters is emblematic of these choices: assimilation to Polish landlord society (Masia), victimization at the hands of Russian colonialism (Orysia), or escape into a convent (Teklia). Like the three female souls in Shevchenko's "Great Vault," they feminize Ukraine and illustrate its vulnerability.⁷¹

As for the Podillia clergy, the depiction of the conflict between generations leans in the direction of showing that neither generation can provide the spiritual and moral leadership required by the nation. The fathers retain a sense of Ukrainian tradition through the inertia of their conservative beliefs, but they are doomed to oblivion. The illiterate *panimatka's* ideology is a fusion of two elements: a sense of belonging to a distinguished clerical family and a belief in eschatological peasant theories. The days of the cossack administration have passed, however, and few notables remain among the clergy. There is little in the old ideology to attract the younger generation. The sons, as the novel shows, have turned their back on the people, whom they treat with arrogance and contempt.

There is a firm structure to *Liuboratskys*. The tragic dissolution of the family represents a nation torn between Russia and Poland, its intellectuals compromised by an anti-Ukrainian education, its youth encouraged to become "turncoats." With great psychological insight and artistic tact Sydynytsky provides a memorable and convincing depiction of the decay of a key Ukrainian social strata, the Orthodox clergy. As a piece of realist fiction, *Liuboratskys* finds explanations for human conduct in social causes, particularly in educational backgrounds, and in political factors, the most salient of which is the assimilation of Ukraine's leading national strata by rival national groups. The author's ability to combine this social canvas with vivid and dynamic psychological portrayals makes the novel one of the most successful in nineteenth-century Ukrainian literature.

5 A Clash of Discourses

THE PUBLIC DISCOURSE OF HEGEMONY, 1861–1917

In the second half of the nineteenth century Ukraine commanded a less prominent place in Russian literature than it had in the first. The imagery of an exotic borderland was becoming hackneyed. A Ukrainian theme continued to exist in belles lettres, but it had a more marginal status. This change was partly the result of government censorship, but it owed as much to the international success of Russian literature and to the perception that the “South” was fully assimilated and that as a provincial phenomenon it had little to offer beyond local colour. The fact that Ukrainians gradually wrote less in Russian also played a part. Often their best works were now written in Ukrainian and published abroad. Consequently, Russian intellectuals, who remained unaware of this writing, continued to view Ukraine through earlier literary images and cultural/political stereotypes. To them the country remained “Southern Russia,” an inalienable part of the imperial state and Russian civilization. Both the official press and radical periodicals described Ukrainian literature, language, and culture as provincial in both the geographical and the pejorative sense of the term. Outside Russian imaginative literature, however, there existed a public political discourse that gave Ukrainian issues a great deal of prominence, and this discourse, as we shall see, did have its reflection in literary texts.

Throughout this period the issue of limiting the functions allowed the Ukrainian language polarized intellectuals. The journal *Osnova* (Foundation) was published in St Petersburg (1861–62) by Kulish, Kostomarov, and Mykhailo Bilozersky, former members of the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood, during a brief period of liberalised censorship in the early years of Alexander II's reign. In retrospect this publication appears to be a final attempt to publicly confront the discourse of empire with the emerging counterdiscourse of national opposition. Following the Polish uprising and the ban of 1863 on Ukrainian publications, the counterdiscourse was driven underground by a policy of repression and Russification. In the time of its brief existence, the journal mounted a defence of the national movement and argued that the Ukrainian and Russian nationalities were mutually complementary. In the first issue, Kostomarov wrote that the early princely Rus had been a federation, a political formation that Ukraine (or Southern Rus, as it was necessarily referred to) still recalled in ensuing centuries, long after Muscovy had lost any attachment to federalism. Muscovy, Kostomarov argued, had been formed out of a melting pot of identities, a fact that made it much more prone to aggressive territorial expansion. Ukrainian culture, which represented traditions of personal freedom, the pursuit of spiritual perfection, and federalism, was needed by Russia at the present conjuncture as a counterbalance to the "Great Russian essence," which had consistently aimed at "amalgamation, fusion, a severe state and a social form that swallows the personality." Ukrainians, in their turn, had in the past demonstrated an "incapacity for state life" and therefore required Russians for the common task of creating a state. However, this task having been accomplished, they should now be allowed their autonomous development.¹

This was an argument for self-determination couched in the rhetoric of deference. The journal's stance was defined by the desire to demonstrate Ukraine's unique history and identity and Russia's need to learn from it. This position is evident in Kostomarov's essay "Two Russian Nationalities," in the first issue of *Foundation*,² and in his historical and literary work as a whole. Kulish made a similar argument for the complementary characteristics of the two civilizations in his epilogue to the *Black Council* (Chorna Rada, 1857). The demand for cultural self-determination within a federation of Slavic states had already been formulated in the 1840s by the Cyrillo-Methodians, the Romantic Ukrainian "Slavophiles." They differed from the Russian

Slavophiles in their insistence on the distinction between Ukraine and Russia and on the right of all Slavic peoples to cultural development.

In spite of the deferential rhetoric and the argument that the development of Ukrainian literary and political life would serve to strengthen the empire, the journal was condemned in conservative Russian circles. Writing in journals like the *Russian Herald* (Russkii vestnik), *Day* (Den) and the *Kyiv Telegraph* (Kievskii telegraf), some authors ridiculed the idea of writing in Ukrainian as misguided and considered the attempt to create a significant literature in a “peasant” language as completely absurd. Others called upon the police to keep a close eye on what they considered to be a group of Russophobes with separatist intentions. Liberal journals like *Notes of the Fatherland* and *Contemporary* welcomed in *Foundation* the appearance of another voice critical of the government and reactionary Slavophiles. They too were opposed, however, to the idea of federalism and Ukrainian autonomy. Chernyshevsky openly attacked these positions. He preferred to see the Ukrainian movement simply as a protest against administrative measures and subordinated it to the general movement for political reform, refusing, of course, to see in it any national dimension. In an article of 1861 entitled “National Tactlessness” he even chided Ukrainians for not supporting the Poles in their struggle with the Austro-Hungarian regime. By making this argument, he revealed a lack of understanding of the class-national conflicts in Galician society, where the Polish gentry was in large part motivated by the desire to maintain its privileges over the Ukrainian peasantry.³ Although he admitted the right of Ukrainian literature to exist and decried the fact that Russians had in the past dismissed it and ridiculed its enthusiasts, he was adamant that it should limit itself to providing an elementary education for peasants. Anything beyond this he considered superfluous and doomed to failure. Chernyshevsky’s article on the first issue of *Foundation* contains a long digression on the size, strength, and superiority of Russian literature and suggests that educated Ukrainian society will opt for complete assimilation.⁴

Dobroliubov, like Chernyshevsky, was prepared to grant the existence of a Ukrainian language and a powerful folk-literature. However, in his review of Shevchenko’s *Kobzar*, he confessed his inability to even imagine the possibility that works like Pushkin’s *Eugene Onegin* or Lermontov’s *Hero of Our Time* could ever be written in that language. Shevchenko’s work was for him merely a brilliant expression of “all the elements of the Ukrainian folk song.”⁵ The review argued that the debate on the right of Ukrainian literature to exist was about the future creation of a “bookish, social, civilized” literature. Shevchenko’s

work, according to Dobroliubov, was none of these things but a product of folk culture, of the common people. "Of course," he wrote, "*Onegin* or *Hero of Our Time* would not come out well in Little Russian."⁶ Russian, on the other hand, had created a rich language, which Ukrainians were themselves using for technical and specialized vocabularies. Unable to compete, Ukrainian therefore ought to limit its functions and exist merely as a reflection of the folk idiom.

To be sure, this approach represented a more tolerant and respectful attitude than the outright rejection of the thirties and forties. It was not quite the equivalent of Thomas Babington Macaulay's remark that a single shelf of European literature was worth all the books of India and Arabia, but neither was it entirely unlike such assertions. Like the Orientalists, Russian intellectuals disparaged contemporary intellectual productions of the indigenous society and deemed its cultural heritage unworthy of development along independent lines. Their arguments were refinements of earlier statements. Nikolai Polevoi had described educated Ukrainians in similar terms in 1838. Because they had discovered a rich folklore, he wrote, they mistakenly thought that they could develop a literature of their own:

Even we Russians read Kotliarevsky's *Aeneid* (Eneida) as a witty prank. But the imitators and followers [of Kotliarevsky] then discovered their mistake of [trying to create] the so-called Little Russian literature, which is simply an anachronism in our contemporary life ... Those who followed Kotliarevsky and Gogol showed how ridiculous was the idea of artificially creating an autonomous Little Russian poetry, and of making Little Russia the subject of epics, lyrics, novels, stories that are autonomous, that could form a separate literature. All this constitutes only part of a common Russian poetry and literature.⁷

The issue in 1861, as it had been in 1839, was the folk character of the language and the limits to be set on its literary development.

The liberal position toward Ukrainian writing could be described as respect for cultural diversity within unity. Aleksandr Pypin expressed this position in his *History of Slavic Literatures* (Istoriia slavianskikh literatur) of 1879, in which he urged that the literature be seen as a legitimate expression of identity.⁸ He rejected the notion that it had failed to develop due to internal weakness, arguing that it had expressed itself powerfully both in the early modern period and, after incorporation into empire, on the "neutral ground of the Church Slavic language." Moreover, its "thread" of development was never broken; it continued to be driven by its own internal dynamic and to express its own individuality.⁹ Pypin was a refreshingly reasonable and scholarly voice. He lamented the fact that for most Russians the

Ukrainian nationality was terra incognita, sympathized with the aspirations of the literature to express a unique identity, tempered the passions of its “infuriated opponents,” and argued against proscription. He too, however, spoke of Ukrainians as a branch of a unified Russian “national organism” or “race” (*plemia*) and of Ukrainian literature as part of a broader “national life,”¹⁰ repeating the position earlier expressed by Polevoi and Belinsky that the conditions for an independent Ukrainian literature did not exist. Consequently, like Chernyshevsky and Dobroliubov, he insisted that it should severely restrict its functions, serve exclusively the needs of the peasantry, and not attempt to compete with Russian literature. Nonetheless, like the latter two critics, he acknowledged the right of this literature to function within restricted boundaries and went much further than these critics in acknowledging both the existence of a Ukrainian literature in the early modern period and the contribution of Ukrainians to the development of a literature in Russian.

The idea that contemporary Ukrainian writing might have anything to teach Russian writing was generally dismissed. Nikolai Petrov, another early historian of Ukrainian literature, considered it entirely derivative of Russian. In his opinion all the writers who belonged to the nineteenth-century Ukrainian school in Russian literature, whether they wrote in Ukrainian or Russian, were to be considered a part of Russian literary development. They all viewed Ukraine as merely a part of a greater Russia, and their literature lacked any independent dynamic.¹¹ Petrov’s views were answered by Nikolai (Mykola) Dashkevich, who argued in a long article that Ukrainian literature had originated within its own society, had built upon previous traditions, and was motivated by a love of the local nationality and a desire for greater self-consciousness – in short, that it was driven by an internal motive force.¹² The debate illustrates that even a limited role for Ukrainian literature was hotly contested.

Throughout this period from 1863 to 1905, when restrictions on Ukrainian publications remained in force, attitudes in the press and the broader Russian society often condoned them. In 1875, for example, Aleksandr Miliukov insisted, as Belinsky had done, that Ukrainian was a provincial dialect that should not be allowed a literature. He too called Shevchenko a poor writer and a retrograde phenomenon and wrote defiantly, “Russia is one, and she can have only one literary language, one Russian science and one Russian literature.”¹³ The debate on whether there even was a Ukrainian language surfaced occasionally in belles lettres. In Ivan Turgenev’s *Rudin* (1855), the boorish Pirogov makes fun of Ukrainian poetry, which he considers the naive, insipid imitation of folklore. He says that he would sooner

beat his best friend in a butter churn than admit Ukrainian as an independent language. Although Dobroliubov and Chernyshevsky rejected this kind of obscurantist and ignoble attitude, there is every reason to believe that such a supercilious treatment of the “peasant” language was the norm. Hrinchenko’s *Sunlight* (1892) portrays violently hostile views among reactionary landowners who consider the use of Ukrainian seditious and the reading of Shevchenko to peasants a form of separatist agitation. The contrast with Austrian Galicia, where the language was used in all aspects of public life, could only fuel a growing sense of outrage among young Ukrainians.

The language issue caused a public clash at the Eleventh Archaeological Congress in Kyiv, which took place in 1899 and in which scholars from various Slavic countries participated. Professor Hrushevsky, the head of the Shevchenko Scientific Society in Lviv, approached the congress with a request that scholars from Galicia be allowed to present papers in Ukrainian. The Kyiv organizing committee turned for advice to the Imperial Archaeological Society in Moscow and obtained permission. Members of the Russian press, however, ridiculed this decision and participants complained indignantly that they were forced to listen to the language in doorways and on staircases, called it a “jargon,” and insisted that its use went against “common sense.”¹⁴ The Galicians, as a result, were not permitted to speak.

In the aftermath of this incident a debate took place in the press that in 1904 resulted in the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Universities of Kyiv and Kharkiv officially acknowledging that Ukrainian was a language and petitioning the tsar for a repeal of the ban on Ukrainian publications enforced by the Valuev memorandum of 1863 and the Ems edict of 1876. The academy pointed out in its report that the ban had led to dissatisfaction among educated Ukrainians and to the growth of a hostile literature published in Galicia. It recommended that Ukrainians be given the right to speak in public and to print works in their native language. The academy found no evidence of separatist intentions among Ukrainians. The Council of Ministers, however, refused to lift the proscription until the impending revolution of 1905 forced its hand. On 28–31 December 1904 it decided that the ban had been a mistake. It had “severed the fraternal link between Russian and Ukrainian writing,” denied both literatures the “common ground upon which their mutual relations had been defined,” and “morally damaged the Russian people and their literature by cutting Ukrainian literature off from them.”¹⁵ Although restrictions were reimposed with the onset of reaction in 1906, the official recognition and brief lifting of publishing restrictions were an important, precedent-setting victory for the national movement.

Hegemony in Textbooks

Russian hegemony was reflected in educational literature, which drew on the elements of the public discourse to depict Ukraine as a fully assimilated “Little Russia.”¹⁶ In textbooks mandated for use in all imperial schools from 1860 to 1917, many of the anthropological, historical, and cultural views that have been observed in the wider literature were codified into descriptions that stereotyped peoples.¹⁷

As might be expected, the Russian people are always presented as the empire’s dominant race. A geography text by A. Baranov and N. Gorelov, for example, which went through numerous editions, informs students that the “Great Russians constitute the dominant and most active population in all parts of the Russian empire.”¹⁸ P. Belokha’s geography textbook of the 1860s similarly characterizes the Russians as the “dominant nation” and goes on to say: “All Russians are Orthodox and speak one language; they are distinguished by their physical strength, enterprising character, industriousness; besides agriculture they work in other occupations, and in manufacturing, trade and education they surpass all other native inhabitants of the Empire.”¹⁹ Ukrainians are always presented second, symbolizing their position in the hierarchy of “peoples.” In contrast to the Russians, they receive a much briefer characterization. The Belokha textbook, for example, offers the following definition: “Little Russians are Orthodox. Their main occupation is agriculture and animal husbandry, but other trades are also spread among them fairly successfully.”²⁰ Through similar comparative characterizations (Great) Russians emerge as the agents of history by virtue of their superior substance, which has been formed in favourable climatic and geographic conditions, while other peoples reveal deficiencies.

The subordination of Ukrainians is described as the inevitable result of defects in their nature. D. Ilovaisky’s history textbook, which was regularly republished from the 1860s to the revolution and became a standard text in all schools, makes the connection between national essence and state-building. The thirty-sixth edition of 1912 reads: “The rather warm climate and rich expanses of black earth ... facilitated the development of a predominantly agricultural way of life among the South Russian or Little Russian population; the close proximity of the steppe and of wild hordes prevented the consolidation of a strong state structure and successful civil society there. Meanwhile, the Great Russian tribe, which occupied a land with a rather severe climate ... developed an enterprising, energetic character and talents for various activities. Our state structure grew and strengthened here.”²¹

Besides encoding hegemonic views, textbooks officially inculcated the anthropological stereotypes that were widespread in the travel

literature and in belles lettres in the first half of the century. N. Zuev's geography book of 1887 comments: "Little Russians are a gentle people, good-natured, but lazy and apathetic, although distinguished by intelligence and comprehension. In spite of their apathy and tardiness, Little Russians are capable of long, hard labour. They unwillingly submit to innovations, preferring ancient ways."²² Such expositions constantly reinforced the distinction between active and passive natures, subject and subordinate peoples. Only an occasional phrase, such as the description of "unwilling submission" in the last quotation, hints indirectly at state violence and resistance to assimilation. The same points, using almost identical phrasing, were made in all similar texts. In Baranov and Gorelov, for example, one reads that "Little Russians have a peaceful and good-natured temperament; they are closely tied to their native land and do not easily part with it. At first sight lazy and slow, Little Russians are capable of long, hard labour. A tendency toward obstinacy, an attachment to antiquity and a dislike for innovations can be noticed in Little Russians."²³

Not only were these textbooks, it should be noted, republished from decade to decade with few substantial revisions, but because of the stress on rote learning in imperial schools, they were quite literally memorized by entire generations of schoolboys, who went on to become imperial civil servants. By the end of the century, of course, they could draw on a formidable tradition for supporting commentary, a discourse spanning belles lettres, journalism, and scholarship. The striking parallels with Belinsky's historiography demonstrate how mainstream his views on Ukraine had become. Ilovaisky, like Belinsky, held the view that "Little Russian" history was only a prehistory and had ended with its "successful" incorporation into the empire at the end of the seventeenth century. Although "Mazepa attempted to return Little Russia again to Polish subjection,"²⁴ from the onset of the imperial age announced by 1709, the country had been "finally" and permanently united with Great Russia, and henceforth its history could only be portrayed as a branch of the latter's. Any suggestion that imperial absorption might have had a dark side is vigorously opposed in all accounts. The historian Sergei Solovev, for example, found even mentioning the idea of Ukraine's persecution under tsarist rule so distasteful that he blamed the brutalities of imperial rule in the post-Mazepa period on the Ukrainians themselves: "The Little Russian people really did suffer greatly, not, however, from Muscovite tyranny but from their own Cossack *starshyna*."²⁵

Instructional texts assumed that "Little Russia" had accepted the metaphysical notion of a superior Great Russian character and destiny, that it had willingly identified with Great Russian culture and preferred

to use the Russian language. Zuev's textbook informed students, that in "Little Russia the Russian language is dominant. It is accepted in society, the press, in education, business, and the legal system."²⁶ In this and similar descriptions Ukraine is encapsulated as the quintessential subaltern; it is voiceless, and its history, language, and culture are now part of a greater identity that has been gratefully and willingly embraced in the name of enlightenment and progress.

The foundation myth of a transnational Russian-Ukrainian identity required the appropriation of Kyivan history in order to establish an ancient lineage for Muscovy and to bolster the claim of consanguinity. The most influential Russian historians from Vasilii Tatishchev (whose five volumes were published from 1768 to 1818), through Nikolai Karamzin, Mikhail Pogodin, Sergei Soloviev, and Vasilii Kliuchevsky developed theories to support Moscow's claims to the earlier heritage. They tend to deny evidence of cultural differences between the histories of Russia and Ukraine. As Paul Magocsi has pointed out: "The confirmation of such differences not only would undermine the idea of a single Russian people, but also might threaten the link between medieval Kiev and Moscow and thus render precarious the whole framework upon which the Russian imperial conception of history was built."²⁷ A serviceable history, anthropology, and ethnography had, therefore, to be developed out of the denial of difference.

Popular literature reinforced and perpetuated the idea that Ukrainians had no claims to national independence. A lubok (cheap, popular) version of Grebenka's (Hrebinka's) story "The Nezhin Captain Zolotarenko" (the original was written in 1842) was published in 1915 because it expressed the sentiment that "In 1654 the struggle for the faith in Little Russia ended happily with its adherence to Russia. The people began to rest easy."²⁸ *The Adventures of the Cossack Ataman Urvan*, a 1901 lubok version of Gogol's *Taras Bulba*, expressed a sense of Russian proprietorship over a vast land threatened on all sides by aggressive neighbours. The story begins, "It was necessary for the people living there to stand up for their native land and to preserve it from the invasions of wild hordes of Tatars, regiments of Poles, and the insatiable Jews."²⁹ In his study of popular Russian literature Jeffrey Brooks has pointed out that

When Ukrainians were mentioned specifically as an ethnic group, it was as defenders of the southern borders of Russia, or they were stereotyped as likable, thick-headed clowns. In one of Evstingeev's dialogues, a Ukrainian wants to buy pig fat and asks for hair grease instead, which, he finds, smells worse than the lard they make at home. In another, a general finds that a good-natured Ukrainian peasant, a *khokhol*, has been assigned to him as an orderly.

The fellow's entire face is obscured by his enormous moustache and sideburns. He cannot remember the name of his regiment and has difficulty making himself understood in Russian. The general does not lose patience but remarks good humoredly, "It is not your fault you are not a fellow from Iaroslavl."³⁰

Lubok publications from the end of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries demonstrate how hegemonic notions were distilled or reinterpreted from earlier literary publications, then recycled, simplified, and popularized in the penny press. It was an ideological manipulation of literary classics that often reflected the ideological import of educational textbooks.

Petr Struve, Pavel Miliukov, and Vasilii Shulgin

The right to use Ukrainian in public or in print was widely discussed in the years leading up to the Revolution of 1917. As the Ukrainian movement for cultural rights grew and became politicized, the attacks on it increased correspondingly, particularly in the period of reaction following 1906. Two of the most outspoken critics were the liberal Petr Struve and the conservative monarchist Vasilii Shulgin. Both were staunch supporters of the idea of a single pan-Russian culture and nation, and both linked any demands for Ukrainian cultural rights with political separatism. Following the loss to Japan in the war of 1904–5, the revolutionary upheaval of 1905–6, and the humiliation of Austria's annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, a Russian nationalist orientation with overtly xenophobic, racist, and chauvinist attitudes moved to centre stage in political life. Such an orientation appealed to many members of the Third Duma, the lower house of parliament that began sitting in 1907, and particularly to the gentry from the southwestern borderlands of the empire. This region had registered the highest number of disturbances per capita in the agrarian revolts of 1905 and 1906. In 1909 the gentry from this region organized the Nationalist Party, shifting the centre of gravity in the Duma to the right. It articulated its goals as the unity of the empire, the protection of Russians in all parts of the empire, and Russia for the Russians.³¹

Russian liberalism was also affected by this shift to the right. One of its leaders, Petr Struve, welcomed the assimilation of minorities and devalued their cultures. In his essay "Great Russia" of 1908, he reasserted the organicist views of the Romantics, arguing that a state was not merely a system of relationships but a living thing, a personality, and that strong healthy states strive for power and weak ones fall to predators. He called upon Russia to emulate the vigorous imperial

policy of Britain and Germany in order to stimulate national energies and cohesion.³² In 1911 he drew a distinction between two nationalisms: one free, creative, and open, “conquering in the best meaning of the term,” the other inhibited, passive, and insecure. The first, according to him, was Anglo-Saxon, the second Jewish. A “great” Russia, he argued, should emulate the assimilatory nationalism of the “conquering” Anglo-Saxons. The other, defensive nationalism in his view attempted to prevent this progressive, expansionary growth of the Russian nationality and Russian culture, which Struve compared to the American melting pot: “The ideal to which the Russian nationality in Russia ought to strive, in my deep conviction, can only be such a free and organic hegemony, which the Anglo-Saxon element has confirmed for itself in the United States of North America and in the British Empire ... Only an open, masculine, conquering nationalism, proclaiming and realizing the free competition of nationalities is morally fitting and in the health interest of a great people, the creators of a mighty state.”³³ Struve felt that Poland and Finland could preserve some peculiarities of their culture, but “in all the rest of the empire” assimilation to Russian culture was a “step up” for the subject people.³⁴

He believed that the creation of a “great” Russia could occur through expansion in “all the European and Asiatic countries” that bordered on the Black Sea. The basis for what he called “our undeniable economic domination” was to be found in the “people, coal and iron” of this region. After culturally assimilating it, the state would have the wealth and “labour energy” to economically conquer its Pacific colonies.³⁵ There could, in his mind, be no question of a separate Ukrainian culture. The hegemony of Russian was entirely natural and the product of historical development, and he called upon “Russian progressive social thought” to engage in a struggle with the Ukrainian movement, which threatened to undermine the great achievement of Russian history, the “common Russian culture.”³⁶ One of Struve’s apocalyptic fears appears to have been the splitting in two of the entire Russian culture (from “alphabet books” to scientific texts to translations of “Ovid, Goethe, Verlaine and Verhaeren”) by the emergence of a mature Ukrainian culture. In response to this perceived threat he put forward the slogan “Capitalism speaks Russian.”³⁷

The other major figure of Russian liberalism, Pavel Miliukov, described Struve’s thought as an attempt to link Russian patriotism to the imperial idea of a “Great Russia.” In Miliukov’s view, Struve “fell between the two stools” of ethno-cultural and state nationalism.³⁸ The confusion of the two had allowed mystical ideas of Russian ethnic superiority to be linked, yet again, with an argument for the progressive nature of state expansion. Miliukov rejected any idea of the state as an

organism or personality, viewing such ideas as a product of chauvinism. In his *Studies of Russian Culture* (*Ocherki po istorii russkoi kultury*), which went through seven editions from 1896 to 1918 and became the most widely read interpretation of Russian history since Karamzin's, he dismissed an essentialist understanding of nationality, arguing instead that it was a product and not a cause of historical processes. Miliukov accepted that once national consciousness had spread to the masses, as was the case in Ukraine, it became an irreversible phenomenon. He therefore rejected the notion of Russia as a single-nation state, seeing it as a state of nationalities, like Austro-Hungary, and argued that administrative districts ought to be constituted along national lines. He was prepared to accept the use of non-Russian languages in schools and lower courts, but only "up to the point where high culture begins." Russian, in other words, was still to remain the language of public administration and cultural life. A just nationality policy, Miliukov thought, would succeed in preserving the integrity of the empire. It is noteworthy, however, that during the First World War, he became obsessed with extending imperial boundaries by capturing Constantinople and the Dardanelles. Moreover, after the Revolution, he was united with Struve and other emigrés like the Eurasianists in his devotion to maintaining the integrity of the "all-Russian" state, and he resisted the concept of a federal state or the loss of Ukraine. Nonetheless, Miliukov did play an important role in restraining the "liberal imperial" politics that engulfed Struve and other Kadets (Constitutional Democrats), and he was the only head of a Russian political party to speak out publicly on behalf of Ukrainian culture.³⁹ He criticized the government's ban on commemorating the day of Taras Shevchenko's birth and spoke out in the Duma concerning the disregard for constitutional guarantees. In Russia, he said, "old state acts" contained "a whole cemetery of broken promises. Little Russia is there, so too are Georgia and the Baltic provinces, not to mention Poland ... For us to break promises seems in the nature of things."⁴⁰

In the prerevolutionary years, as Russian nationalism intensified, both antisemitic and anti-Ukrainian views were often heard. The Black Hundreds were formed in 1905, the Protocols of the Elders of Zion began circulating in 1903–7; pogroms, assassinations, and attacks on liberals and radicals intensified. Panslavist views advocating a Russia "from the Nile to the Neva, from the Elbe to Cathay" accompanied calls for the Russification of both Slav and non-Slav minorities throughout the empire. During the First World War speculation concerning the greatness of the Russian soul reached a peak and Dostoevsky's journalism was particularly influential. One observer commented, "Dostoevsky's fame was not caused by his prison sentence, not by *The*

House of the Dead, not even by his novels – at least not primarily by them – but by *The Diary of a Writer*. It was the *Diary* that made his name known to all of Russia, made him the teacher and idol of youth, yes, and not only of youth but of all those tortured by the questions that Heine called “accursed.”⁴¹ From 1917 to 1919 Vasilii Shulgin, a noble landlord from Volhynia, a leader of the Nationalist Party, and a leading apologist for Denikin’s cause, used the pages of the influential newspaper *Kyivite* (Kievlainin) to attack both Jews and Ukrainians. He ridiculed the idea of a Ukrainian culture and opposed granting it any rights. When, following the collapse of tsardom, Ukrainian leaders proclaimed political autonomy and began a policy of Ukrainianization, Shulgin was one of their most vociferous opponents. Throughout the revolutionary period he waged a campaign against the new Ukrainian government, the Central Rada, and its leaders. Under his slogan Against the Forcible Ukrainianization of Southern Rus he regularly printed lists of signatories to his letter of protest in the *Kyivite*.

The editorial of 11 April 1917 complained of the “Ukrainian hypnosis” that had overtaken citizens. In it Shulgin suggested that the Ukrainian identity in Galicia had been created by the Austrian government, which had “artificially” prevented the Russian language from penetrating the territory. He too scoffed at any thought of competition between Russian and Ukrainian cultures: “We do not believe in the victory of Ukrainianism – the struggle of cultures takes place in quite particular realms and we cannot imagine that Shevchenko alone, no matter how uniquely marvellous, could topple Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoi and all the rest of the Russian classics.” The Ukrainian language appeared to him so incomprehensible and unnatural that he reprinted part of the program of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Workers Party in the issue of 10 April as a linguistic joke.

Shulgin’s mantras were the emotional claims of a historical identity. Kyiv was for him “the mother of Russian cities” and “the cradle of Russian civilization.” He therefore found it unthinkable that Russia should renounce its own identity and become a “haidamak, without legitimate family or race.”⁴² He obstinately described Ukrainian as the “South-Russian language” (*iazykom iuzhno-russkim*) and acknowledged only a pan-Russian language and culture (*obshe-russkii iazyk, obshche-ruskaia kultura*). He refused to be called a Ukrainian, even signing one of his articles “the non-Ukrainian Shulgin,” and demanded that the “Little Russian” nationality be recognized as an alternative way for fellow citizens to identify themselves. In no doubt that things would eventually return to the old arrangement, on 1 December 1917 he wrote in the *Kyivite*: “in one or another form there will be a second Pereiaslav Treaty. Rus will be gathered together again in exactly the same way as the

endless number of German principalities were gathered into a united Germany in the second half of the nineteenth century."⁴³

Ukrainian society, however, had changed profoundly since the first half of the nineteenth century, when similar views had been voiced with no overt opposition. The newspaper *Ukrainian Life* (Ukrainskaia zhizn), which appeared in Moscow in Russian from 1912, printed forceful refutations of such colonialist views. In 1914, under the title *The Ukrainian Question*, it published a book in Russian that challenged this cultural imperialism.⁴⁴ In Kyiv, of course, Ukrainian newspapers such as *New Council* (Nova Rada) published answers to anti-Ukrainian attacks written by leading intellectuals. Shulgin's name became a by-word for anti-Ukrainianism, anti-Semitism, and all that was associated with the reactionary slogan "Russia one and indivisible." After the Revolution he continued to argue that communism would pass and that the same "indivisible" Russia would survive within its old imperial boundaries. Later in life he returned to his "Little Russian homeland." Dziuba has written that in the 1960s, as an old man, he still wandered about the country that was "so close to his heart ... happy to see that in spite of its new industrial landscape it has remained Little Russia," and he continued to philosophize "amiably on the eternal theme of Ukraine as one of the provinces, one of the 'borderlands' of Russia."⁴⁵ Dziuba associated Shulgin's return with a neo-Stalinist reassessment of values in the sixties and an attempt in some quarters to "rehabilitate" Russia's colonial heritage.

Such attitudes are evidence of an "uncrystallized" single-culture consciousness among Russian intellectuals. In the years leading up to the Revolution, the majority of Russian writers and readers seemed unaware that the nature of Ukrainian writing and consciousness had altered and that a new "horizon of expectation," as Grabowicz has argued, had emerged.⁴⁶ Ukrainian literature was still considered an aesthetically degraded medium and Ukrainian consciousness a manifestation of provincialism. The scholarly discourse concerning Ukraine had penetrated Russian literature only feebly, and the most forceful articulation of the counterdiscourse remained largely unavailable. As a consequence, Russian intellectuals marginalized Ukrainian issues. In literary portrayals Ukrainian characters were almost never allowed any depth, nor were their cultural concerns treated seriously. Ukrainians did appear in Russian realist fiction in the second half of the century (embodied, for example, in the various horse-grooms, gardeners, and rank-and-file soldiers identified as Ukrainians in Tolstoi's works), but they were distinguished from Russians only by their "dialect." Although Anton Chekhov and Ivan Bunin jokingly identified themselves as *khokhly*, they assigned no political importance to this characterization.

Bunin, for example, was clearly aware of a separate Ukrainian identity. His long connection with Ukraine and knowledge of its theatre, literature, and popular songs, its geography and history, all contributed to a sense of cultural distinctiveness with which he identified passionately. Nonetheless, it was a Ukrainian identity spliced onto a Russian identity. In his major emigré publication, the fictionalized autobiography *Life of Arteniiev* (*Zhizn Arteneva*; completed in 1933, first full edition published 1952), he records without comment the following words of one character: “That’s Shevchenko, a truly brilliant poet! There is no country in the world more beautiful than Ukraine. And the most important thing is that she has no history now – her historical life ended long ago, and once and for all. There is only the past, songs and legends of it, a kind of timelessness. That is what delights most of all.”⁴⁷

This, once again, is the image of a civilization that failed to mature – the same “immutable” image that delighted Belinsky and whose immortalization he ascribed to Gogol. Significantly, although he describes Ukrainian theatrical friends singing “their own Marseillaise,” quotes Shevchenko, and admits to reading Drahomanov’s anthology of folk songs, it is to quotations from Gogol that Bunin repeatedly turns when conceptualizing Ukraine. The cultural developments that interested Russian intellectuals were generally described in a manner that effaced any separate Ukrainian narrative. Korolenko commented explicitly on this in his memoirs when he wrote that “Nekrasov conquered Shevchenko in my soul.”⁴⁸

During the Revolution prominent writers like Illia Erenburg continued to attribute an amateurish character to the Ukrainian literary and cultural revival. In 1919 he wrote that although contemporary Ukrainian poets were attempting to “free themselves from the anonymous folk song, they had not yet created an individual poetry.” He dismissed Ukrainian cultural activists as “political adventurers” who demanded the “creation of a Ukrainian culture in twenty-four hours.”⁴⁹ Leading Bolsheviks made analogous comments in this same period. The discourse of Russian hegemony seemed to be, therefore, not only entrenched but so broadly based as to appear unanimous.

Early in the twentieth century, partly in response to the national movement’s growing assertiveness, Ukrainians began to be portrayed in literature as treacherous villains. The double agent Lippanchenko, “the crafty Ukrainian type” in Andrei Bely’s *Petersburg* (Peterburg, 1916, 1922), who is eventually murdered, is one such type.⁵⁰ A similarly sinister political atmosphere accompanies the portrayal of Ukrainians in later works like Olga Forsh’s “Suitcase” (Chemodan, 1921) and Bulgakov’s *Days of the Turbins* (Dni Turbinykh, 1926) and *White Guard* (Belaia Gvardiia, 1924).

Ignorance of a Ukrainian counterdiscourse made even relatively sympathetic Russian emigré writers like Fedotov, who struggled with the issue of imperial violence, accept the requirement of integrating Ukraine as a junior partner into a quasi-imperial structure. In 1929 he wrote candidly of the prevailing attitudes among Russian intellectuals: “We somehow missed the fact that the largest empire of Europe and Asia was built by a national minority that imposed its culture and state will upon a whole ethnographic continent. We asserted with justifiable pride that the hegemony of Russia was a happy destiny for almost all its people (except for the Western), that it gave them the possibility of acquaintance with a universal culture, which Russian culture was.”⁵¹ The euphemistic language here repays scrutiny: “somehow missed,” “ethnographic continent” (one seventh of the earth’s surface), “justifiable pride,” “happy destiny.” Most telling, however, is the fact that Fedotov excludes Ukraine from those Western cultures that did not require Russian mediation to become “acquainted with universal culture.” He proposes a triple identity structure as a means of retaining Ukraine within a “Russian” consciousness:

Our national consciousness ought to be ... simultaneously Great Russian [*velikorusskim*], Russian [*russkim*] and state [*rossiiskim*] ... For Little Russians, or Ukrainians, who have not lost a consciousness of their Russianness, this formula would appear as follows: Little Russian, Russian and state ... The task of safeguarding Little Russian traditions in an all-Russian culture is above all the task of those born in southern Russia who have retained loyalty to Russia and a love of Ukraine ... In the struggle with political separatism, in the defence of the Russian idea and of Russian concerns in Ukraine, one should not confuse the Russian cause with the Great Russian and impede the growth of other Russian (i.e., Little Russian) cultures.⁵²

This argument once again rehearses and reconfigures the nineteenth-century idea of Ukraine as a loyal member of the empire and an integral force in a unitary Russian culture.

THE LAST ROMANCE:
GRIGORII DANILEVSKY

The writer Grigorii Danilevsky (Hryhorii Danylevsky in Ukrainian) was very much in vogue in the second half of the nineteenth century. His works went through numerous editions, culminating in the posthumous, twenty-four volume eighth edition of 1901. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century his novels were translated into French, German, Polish, Czech, Serbian, and Hungarian. He gave up a successful

career in the St Petersburg bureaucracy in 1857 in order to return to his estate near Kharkiv and devote himself to writing. In the following decades he conducted research into ancient manuscripts and historical sites on behalf of the Ministry of Education and into the settlements on the Black Sea coast on behalf of the Ministry of Naval Affairs. He worked for the emancipation of the peasantry and for the educational and economic development of the Left Bank. In 1865 he was elected to the Kharkiv zemstvo (district council), and in 1881 he became editor of the *Government Herald* (*Pravitelstvennyi vestnik*) in St Petersburg.

Although Danilevsky wrote in Russian, more than half his works are either set in Ukraine or take as their subject the imaginative integration of Ukraine into the imperial narrative. The vocation of writer was taken seriously by him, as is evident from a letter of 1857 explaining to his mother his reasons for quitting the capital: "The writer is higher than any civil servant," he wrote, and the writer's creations "touch the hearts of many and teach the minds of millions."⁵³ Among his most important fictional works dealing with Ukraine are *Fugitives in Novorossiiia* (*Beglye v Novorossii*, 1862), the first part of a trilogy dealing with the settlement of the Ukrainian steppes by runaway serfs; *The Ninth Wave* (*Deviaty val*, 1873), which describes the struggle between conservatives and reformers in the sixties; *Mirovich*, which focuses upon the events of Peter III's reign (completed in 1875 but published only in 1880, when it was given the empress's personal stamp of approval); *The Princess Tarakanova, 1775–1776* (*Kniazhna Tarakanova, 1775–76*, 1882), which describes events of Catherine the Great's reign; *Potemkin on the Danube, 1790: A Historical Novel* (*Potemkin na Dunae, 1790 g.: Istoricheskii roman*, 1876), which focuses on Potemkin's relations with the Zaporozhians; and *The Uman Massacre, The Last Zaporozhians, 1768–1775: A Historical Novel* (*Umanskaia reznia, Poslednie zaporozhtsy, 1768–1775: Istoricheskaia povest*, 1878). In addition to these major novels, Danilevsky published collections of tales, travel sketches, pieces of journalism, and memoirs on Ukrainian subjects. He died in 1890. Although dismissed today by most literary historians as a second-rate talent, he warrants attention for his portrayals of the steppe Ukraine's integration into empire. His work trades in stereotypes of Ukraine but simultaneously challenges these commonplaces and raises historical grievances and issues of identity that in the years of reaction following 1905 became unpalatable reminders of resistance to empire-builders. The reasons for Danilevsky's neglect in the twentieth century can therefore be sought not only in a deficient literary technique but also in the content and ideological import of his works.

Danilevsky's accounts of the Left Bank's settlement draw on descriptions of the American South and abolitionist literature. One of his

best novels, *Fugitives*, describes how in the years leading up to the emancipation of 1861, the runaway serfs were mercilessly exploited by a new, heartless breed of plantation owner that had recently arrived from Russia. This class is represented by Colonel Panchukovsky, who describes himself as a “Columbus and a Cortes,” the colonizer of a “wild, empty land,”⁵⁴ and who makes enormous profits by shipping grain and wool through the newly opened Azov Sea ports to Western Europe. Having in a few short years extracted his millions, he plans to live a life of luxury and debauchery in European capitals. It is also made clear that these territories of the Black Sea littoral formerly belonged to the Zaporozhian cossacks. Some have now been settled by Russian landowners who have forcibly moved hundreds of serf families from the Russian interior. In other cases the settlers are Mennonites, Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbs, or members of other nations. The labour power is, however, most often provided by runaway Ukrainian serfs. These fugitives live without any rights and in constant fear of exposure, arrest, and deportation. The landlords, who need the labour of the people they call their “white negroes,” often turn a blind eye to their labourers’ past and protect them.⁵⁵ Some landowners, like the Mennonites, are described in positive terms. The more ruthless, however, use their power arbitrarily and cruelly, capturing and confining women as concubines, for example. In his home Panchukovsky imprisons Oksana, an orphan who has been raised by the Orthodox priest as his own daughter.

Colonel Panchukovsky sings the praises of the new frontier land, which he describes as an “Eden” and a “paradise” in which he has untrammelled freedom to enjoy pleasures that are forbidden in the “old cities.”⁵⁶ He compares old Ukraine unfavourably with this new, unbridled colony: “That old Ukraine was once beautiful! It is still today a delightful, but already sad and deserted grave ... Life is here, not there; here in our Novorossia! This is where all the hopes of the South are. From here will come its future.”⁵⁷ The mistreated runaways eventually rebel. Oksana’s fiancé Levenchuk and his friend Milorodenko become outlaws and escape abroad. The colonel is exposed as a cheat and a fugitive in his own right: he has absconded with his wife’s money, abandoning her with a child in Russia.

The conflict between colonizers and serfs is exacerbated by a clear national division with racial overtones. The colonel interprets the imprisoned Oksana’s resistance to him, her attempts at escape followed by her apparent submission, as evidence of a stereotype – the bestial, but “trainable” nature of Ukrainians: “Are those Ukrainian women, perhaps, really like cattle?” he muses.⁵⁸ Revolts and insubordination are suppressed by him with brutal beatings normally reserved

for the treatment of animals: “A khokhol is just like a dog,” he says, “sometimes you cannot even distinguish them.”⁵⁹

The character of the steppe people is constructed as a duality. On the one hand, the serf population is described as disciplined, freedom-loving, and just as industrious as Puritan colonists. On the other hand, it is made clear that when abused they will rise up and exact a violent vengeance. This duality permeates the book, even extending to descriptions of the weather: the coming of winter suddenly transforms the “South Russian Italy” into a “stern Scythia.”⁶⁰ Written at the time of the American emancipation and drawing on Harriet Beecher-Stowe and other abolitionist writers, the story can be read as a cautionary tale aimed at curbing the rapacity of colonists. The message is reinforced in the next two volumes of the trilogy, in which the new capitalists of Novorossiiia are described as interlopers and foreigners who have been attracted to the new frontier solely by the thirst for profit and acquisition. They are “not tied by any other interests to the land, which does not hold for them the significance of a motherland; they first view it as a place of temporary banishment, then as a way of improving their circumstances before returning home – to Germany, Greece, France, and the Russian interior.”⁶¹

Danilevsky’s attitude to the frontier settlers is, however, not without its complexities. In another story, “Pennsylvanians and Carolinians” (*Pensilvantsy i karolintsy*, 1860), he compares the practical-minded newcomers – the “Pennsylvanians” – to Yankee traders and capitalists. By contrast, the “Carolinians” represent a conservative and largely reactionary force aligned with outdated Ukrainian traditions:

Secretive and gloomy patriots, the Carolinians for the most part rest on the examples of traditional, old-fashioned Little Russia. These people are our southern Cossackophiles, although in the old Cossackdom there was more freedom than in their requirements. Their external signs are a reverence for pork fat and potato dumplings [*varenyky*]. Their ideals – a return of the steppes to Khmelnytsky’s times. They have nothing in common with the small circle of our favourite national [*narodnykh*] writers. They weep over the poems of Skovoroda, considering that mystic a poet, weep over the weakest stories of Kvitka and do not recognize Gogol. Our days, our beliefs, are not for them. In other words, here, as everywhere, the mind works, while folly places obstacles in its way.⁶²

From this perspective the new people of the new lands represent the future: a place where the most enterprising Ukrainians can be successful by reinventing their culture, retaining the best of the past while shedding the ballast of outdated customs and views. It is a vision of a

reborn, progressive Ukrainian society that has been improved by the rigours of frontier life. Significantly, it is a place where stereotypes, some of which Danilevsky appears to have accepted as accurate reflections of reality, can be overcome. In his first collection of stories, *Inhabitants of Sloboda: Little Russian Tales* (Slobozhane: Malorossiiskie rasskazy, 1854) he lists some of these now familiar received images of Ukrainians: they are indolent, wild, and backward; they can be simple, even stupid, and may occasionally be malicious; their rural existence is excruciatingly boring, populated by ignorant neighbours and rather attractive women; they live in an Italy that will never be visited by Russian readers because the road there is too long and arduous.⁶³ As the last phrase indicates, this is a playful and ironic treatment of a stereotype that appears to partially accept its verisimilitude. In the trilogy and other writings of the fifties and sixties he emphasizes the practical and industrious “southerner” in order to counteract the dominant portrayal of Russians, or “northerners,” as the more businesslike people, on account of their racial qualities and geographical and climatic conditions. In the words of one critic, the trilogy aimed at convincing the “superfluous” man who was unhappy with reality that the only means of salvation was escape from St Petersburg to the provinces, into the depths of the untouched and uncultivated lands of Russia, where wide vistas opened for ardent and enterprising activity.⁶⁴

Danilevsky's attitudes to Ukraine's historical involvement with Russia were similarly ambiguous. From the late sixties, his writings exhibit an interest in metaphors and narrative patterns that would express the symbiotic interdependency of capital and province, north and south. His well-researched historical novels of the seventies and eighties are written in this key. *Mirovich* describes the career of an imperial army officer in the 1760s. Peter the Great, the reader learns, had stripped the family of its estate and gentry status and deported it to Siberia following Mazepa's revolt. After returning from exile the family obtains the help of Aleksei Razumovsky, the Empress Elizabeth's consort, whose marriage to the sovereign has always been kept a secret. Through Razumovsky's intervention, the young Vasiliï Iakovlevich Mirovich obtains an education and embarks on a military career. Unable to have his gentry status or the family estate returned and rejected by his ambitious fiancée, the officer harbours resentment. His opportunity for advancement arrives suddenly when the new tsar, Peter III, notices him. Mirovich plans to serve the tsar loyally. When Catherine the Great deposes her husband, Mirovich attempts to organize a revolt by freeing an imprisoned claimant to the throne. He fails and is executed.

The fate of Mirovich can, of course, be seen as emblematic of Ukraine's powerlessness. Lacking real political influence, Ukrainian courtiers can only attach themselves to imperial pretenders or to other political players, in the hope of eventually winning favours. Although individual Ukrainians do play important roles in the corridors of power and achieve personal prominence, they are not capable of effecting significant political change or improving the status of their homeland. Hetman Kirilla Razumovsky (Kyrylo Rozumovsky in Ukrainian), Aleksei's brother, is part of the conspiratorial group that elevates Catherine to the throne. However, Kirilla is unable to obtain the domestic reforms, described as the "Swedish project," which are his aim. The powerlessness of Ukrainians is exemplified by Mirovich's fruitless attempts to assert his family's claims of service to the imperial throne. In one scene Grigorii Orlov ridicules these claims: "You khokhols, you archival sperm! ... you are all, forgive me, forever petitioning and cadging! You never labour patiently, wait modestly, serve. Your fellow-countrymen are always contriving some case and advancing it ... Do you really think that on account of you we are going to burrow through your ancient khokhol jottings and documents?"⁶⁵

This passage can be read as a broad reference to tsarism's refusal to countenance Ukraine's political claims. Aleksei Razumovsky's secret marriage is symbolically significant. Ukraine's imperial "marriage" and contributions to the union remain unacknowledged in public. As individuals, Ukrainians can attempt to influence imperial politics, but collectively their status and rights will not be recognized. Ironically, upon coming to power Catherine compels Aleksei Razumovsky to immediately surrender all documentation concerning his clandestine marriage to Elizabeth, lest it should cause any future political complications. In this case, Catherine's advisers show great alacrity and purpose in discovering and, presumably, destroying all documentary evidence. The portrait of a tearful, devoted, and ineffectual Aleksei, utterly devoted to Elizabeth, conforms to the rather pathetic image of loyal, harmless, and undemanding Ukrainian collaboration with and support of the empire builders. The juxtaposition of this figure with Mirovich only emphasizes the misguidedness, selfishness, and naivety of the latter's revolutionary hopes. Nonetheless, *Mirovich* also provides a reminder of unfinished business and unresolved grievances. The last pages of the novel mention, almost as an afterthought, the liquidation of the Hetmanate and the appearance abroad, in Venice, of the Princess Tarakanova, the daughter of the deceased Empress Elizabeth and Aleksei Razumovsky, who will become a pretender to the throne. These muted references to a marriage that has produced rebellious

offspring signal, rather ominously, the return of a repressed history and politics. They explain why the book could not be published without the empress's approval.

Danilevsky's entire oeuvre might, in fact, be viewed as a circumspect and understated form of petitioning on behalf of his homeland, in which claims of loyal service alternated with warnings of violent consequences should the "petitioning" go unheeded. His portrayal of the Zaporozhian contributions in the war with Turkey, described in *Potemkin on the Danube*, or of the old soldier Galaida in "Catherine the Great on the Dnieper, 1787" (*Ekaterina Velikaia na Dnepre, 1787, 1858*) are pleas for recognition of military services rendered. Danilevsky's works in the 1860s dealing with the mistreatment of the peasantry might similarly be considered pleas for the abolition of serfdom and for the improvement of conditions in agricultural labour. One of the best examples of the alternating, threat-of-violence structure is *The Uman Massacre*, which recounts the events of 1768. The causes of this bloody and tragic uprising are placed within a social and political context. The oppression of the peasantry at the hands of Polish landlords in Right Bank Ukraine has created a population of outlaws who inhabit the no-man's land in Dyke Pole (the "Wild Lands") on the lower reaches of the Dnieper and from there attack Polish settlements. Many of these outlaws are former Zaporozhians who have been thrown out of the Sich for their unruly behaviour and either cannot or refuse to find employment in Left Bank Ukraine. The narrator mentions the religious conflict between the Catholic Poles, who are supported by the Jewish tradespeople, and the Orthodox Ukrainians, as a factor exacerbating the class-national tensions. A further complication is the Confederacy of Bar, a union of Polish magnates that has itself risen up in revolt against the Polish king. The narrator's sympathies are with the oppressed peasantry: "Dyke Pole heard the groan of its oppressed co-religionists, and for a long time afterwards left a bloody memory in the bordering Polish frontierlands."⁶⁶ While the unsuspecting Polish gentry continues to feast in the town of Uman, the predominantly Ukrainian guardsmen under Ivan Gonta go over to the side of the rebel leader Maksym Zalizniak. The town is sacked, and an appalling massacre of Polish and Jewish inhabitants occurs. After the uprising is put down, the rebels are executed en masse in an equally brutal manner. Danilevsky understands the causes of the rebellion but does not condone its cruel violence, which he shows to be anarchic and pointless.

As the scene shifts to St Petersburg, it becomes clear that the empire fears a similar revolt being directed against itself. Potemkin values the Zaporozhian contribution to the Turkish campaigns and admits that

the Sich Cossacks did not participate in the Pugachev rebellion of 1772 that followed shortly after the Uman events. However, the imperial authorities continue to view the Sich as a hostile and dangerous force. Potemkin tells Holovaty, the Sich emissary, "You all have the same idea: we have weakened the Turk and Pole, now we will turn our attention to that idiot the Muscovite."⁶⁷ The empire conducts a deliberate policy of transferring Zaporozhian lands to Serbian and other non-Ukrainian settlers, and in 1775 an army is dispatched to destroy the Sich. Although most of the Zaporozhian cossacks manage to slip out of the encirclement and make their way to Turkey, the famous encampment on the Dnieper ceases to exist. The tsarist strategy of weakening and liquidating Zaporozhian autonomy has been accomplished.

In an epilogue, as the narrator surveys developments over the following century, he rejoices in the economic progress that has taken place throughout the region and in the return in 1828 of the Zaporozhians from their exile in Turkey – an event that symbolizes their reconciliation to imperial policies. The returning Zaporozhians are embraced as coreligionists who never fought for a foreign faith or turned their weapons against Russia in vengeance. In his concluding remarks, the narrator points out that "The steppe Ukrainian people, unexpectedly enserfed under Catherine and [subsequently] subjected to eighty-five years of servitude, has its own narrative of the Sich's end." A local legend speaks to the defiance of the local people. According to it, Potemkin, the Sich's destroyer, was challenged to a duel by his own general and was wounded and died abroad, forsaken by God and humanity. The duel took place on the very spot on which Peter the Great buried a stone engraved with the words, "Do not touch the Zaporozhians." The narrator continues: "The spectre of Pugachev, who until his escape to the Volga lived close by here in the village of Kabanie ... never troubled Ukrainians. The heroes of the Don and Volga schismatics, Razin and the impostor Pugachev, had no followers here."⁶⁸ We are left to infer from this that Catherine's policies, particularly the enserfment of the population, were the root cause of social unrest but that this did not lead to antitserist rebellions on the part of the Zaporozhians, at least not on the scale of those led by Razin and Pugachev. In this way the author banishes the nightmarish vision of a full-blown Ukrainian revolution, while simultaneously suggesting its frightening possibility.

Danilevsky's fiction negotiates the uncomfortably large discrepancy between two images of Ukrainians: on the one hand, a freedom-loving, enterprising, and irrepressible people with legitimate grievances against the imperial government and on the other hand, a loyal imperial citizenry. Both images were acceptable to tsarist censors and the general reading public in the nineteenth century, insofar as they

rehearsed already familiar patterns. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the Russian readership had lost interest in the romance of a freedom-loving, still-dangerous South and considered the territory fully assimilated. The Ukrainian intelligentsia, for its part, had developed a counterdiscourse that contradicted the kind of loyalty found in Danilevsky and the optimistic message of imperial progress and harmony.

POLARIZATION: PANTELEIMON KULISH,
MYKHAILO DRAHOMANOV, BORYS
HRINCHENKO, AND IVAN FRANKO

In the second half of the nineteenth century the major Ukrainian social novels written by realist writers challenged Russian hegemonic attitudes, particularly in Ivan Nechui-Levytsky's *Clouds* (Khmary, 1874), *By the Black Sea* (Nad chornym morem, 1890) and *Madwoman* (Navizhena, 1891); Panas Myrny's *Ruined Strength* (Propashcha syl, 1880), which also went by the title *Do Oxen Bellow When the Manger Is Full?* (Khiba revut voly iak iasla povni?), and *Loose Woman* (Poviia, 1884); and Borys Hrinchenko's *Sunlight* (Soniachnyi, 1892). Russian attitudes were satirized in Mykhailo Starytsky's dramas, such as the popular *After Two Hares* (Za dvoma zaitsiamy, 1875), which was an adaptation of a play by Nechui-Levytsky. In the early twentieth century these attitudes were more explicitly and pointedly attacked. Lesia Ukrainka's *The Boyar's Wife* (Boiarynia, 1910), and Volodymyr Vynnychenko's *I Want: A Novel* (Khochu: Roman, 1914), *Between Two Forces* (Mizh dvokh syl, 1919), and *To the Other Side* (Na toi bik, 1919–23) increasingly connected literary modernism to the political expression of nationalism and anticolonialism. The Ukrainian-language counterdiscourse in this period steadily took on its own dynamic, progressively distancing itself from the Russian discourse. That evolution can be traced through examining four key figures: Panteleimon Kulish, the leading intellectual of the 1850s and 1860s, Mykhailo Drahomanov, the outstanding figure of the 1870s and 1880s, and two dominant figures of the 1890s, Borys Hrinchenko and Ivan Franko. The first, as has been observed, was still able in the sixties to discuss his views in Ukrainian publications permitted by the censors. In the century's last three decades, however, most Ukrainian writings could be published only in Galicia or further abroad.

Panteleimon Kulish

Kulish, the most prominent Ukrainian writer of the fifties and sixties, contributed extensively to both Russian and Ukrainian literature and

was also a dominant force in scholarship, journalism, and literary criticism. He was not afraid to express unpopular views; indeed he delighted in challenging accepted notions, scoffing at “public” opinion, which, he said, was always formed in the “community of passive minds.” His is a particularly arresting voice in any discussion of the discourse of empire, on account of several controversial essays. Two late pieces written in 1882 stand out in particular: “A Letter of Appeal to the Ukrainian Intelligentsia” and *An Easter Egg for the Rusyns and Poles on Easter, 1882*.⁶⁹ They are interesting, in the first place, because they challenge populist assumptions, demonstrating by this very fact a growing maturity and self-reflexiveness in the counterdiscourse. Second, they proved intellectually stimulating to others and stand at the head of a list of self-critical, anticolonial voices, such as those of Ivan Franko, Lesia Ukrainka, Petro Karmansky, Mykola Khylyovy, and Ievhen Malaniuk.

It is perhaps best to approach Kulish as a prime example of an intellectual caught in the crossfire of discourses, constantly evaluating and shifting his position, leaning first toward one tradition then another, mapping the boundaries of discursive conflicts. At times this makes him contradict himself. He had begun as a Romantic nationalist in the 1840s, juxtaposing an exploitative, degenerate metropolitan civilization to the robust, honest one of the homesteads. At that time he viewed Russia’s influence on Ukraine as a destructive levelling. In 1850 Iu. F. Savarin summarized the message of Kulish’s *Story of the Ukrainian People* (*Povest ob ukrainskom narode*, 1846) as follows: “Ukraine could have become independent, if not for the treason of its gentry and the overlordship of Muscovy.”⁷⁰ Writing for *Foundation* in 1861, Kulish continued to develop the idea of Ukraine’s national distinctiveness and its forcible colonization:

Mazepa’s bold enterprise opened Peter’s eyes to a terrible perspective for his state, which he could not forget his entire life. The possibility of the destruction of the empire created by his mind and so close to his heart affected his imagination too strongly, and, with a genius peculiar to himself, he devised a plan to gradually destroy the Hetmanate. We do not regret the destruction of this corporation of the general *starshyna*, who with the hetman chosen by the tsar together divided among themselves the military’s possessions, showing no concern for the good of the people ... However, we cannot fail to grieve over the hard circumstances ... The distribution to Great Russians of the lands gathered by Mazepa and his supporters, in contravention of old Little Russian law, was accompanied by the unheard of enserfment of free peasants, which led to countless examples of oppression of the common people and the robbing of cossacks by the new rulers ... sent to Little Russia as to a conquered land. The introduction into the Little Russian tribunal of Great Russian

members led to scenes of violence and terror that are enough to make one's hair stand on end. The systematic weakening of the cossack military and their use in exhausting labour on earth removal in the Finnish marshes quickly depopulated the land and filled it with invalids. The billeting of Great Russian soldiers in Little Russia without any limits on their arbitrary behaviour ... often led to the impoverishment and destruction of entire villages. Not only the chronicles, but the archives themselves from that period are full of descriptions of the terrible tyranny of each bureaucrat, each commander and each courier that appeared in Little Russia.⁷¹

This line of argument was developed in Kulish's fiction. In the novel *The Major* (Maior, 1859), which was written in Russian, a leading member of the gentry, Sahaidachny, turns his back on St Petersburg high society and marries a local "Cossack girl" Parasia. Salvation, he believes, is to be found in the common people, whom he calls "the only independent society among us ... Only in that society, in spite of its underdevelopment, our basic mores have survived, unadulterated by anything foreign, uncharacteristic of our Slavic nature." He concludes that the local Ukrainian gentry ought "to live with the common people, to intermarry with them."⁷² It is a local society still deeply rooted in tradition, with a historical memory and a strong moral code. The account given of Zaporozhian society, purportedly a retelling from personal recollections, challenges depictions in Gogol and Shevchenko. It describes Zaporozhian cossackdom as a settled pioneer society with its own economy and system of education, which engaged in military activities only for part of the year. Kulish's portrays it as a prosperous, self-regulating community that has been laid waste by foreign invasion: "The Zaporozhians suffered a disaster: the Sich was surrounded, their wealth was taken from each company, the silver and gold, both that which belonged to the church and that owned by the brotherhoods, was taken out of the churches, even the wax candles were not left for God. They fell upon the Sich like hungry locusts. That is how our father described it to us."⁷³

The contemporary indigenous culture must struggle to avoid being entirely effaced by a constant media barrage: "newspaper announcements giving promotions in rank, journal articles devoted to the practical value of a common nationality [*obshchenarodnosti*], learned evidence against all that leading Ukrainians treasured, novels and stories about the life and activities of what are termed respectable people – in sum all those things that together are called gentry life and gentry literature."⁷⁴

This passage deconstructs the rhetoric and ideology of affiliation, demonstrating its coerciveness and intrusiveness. The upper crust of

St Petersburg society is portrayed in the novel with pointed irony as venal and uncouth. Sahaidachny, as one of its leading lights, has conducted an “endless battle with the horde of barbarians and plunderers who daily move upon the honest and unarmed part of society.”⁷⁵ The corrupt, dissolute, and incompetent prince represents all that is worst in the metropolis. He attempts to take over the old major’s estate upon which Sahaidachny and Parasia plan to live. When Sahaidachny informs his messenger that there are laws against the acquisition of ancient cossack lands by nonfamily members, “war” is declared. The prince, it is said, by plying contacts with “ministers, senators,” and other influential family and friends who are “above the law,” will inevitably get his way. Sahaidachny, however, stands firm, relying on “the power of things that keep in check such people as his highness,”⁷⁶ an ambiguous phrase that could be interpreted as a reference to the restraining of the prince’s arbitrary behaviour by either the monarch or popular opposition. In the end, the reader is led to understand that the prince does not obtain the estate, nor does he succeed in replacing its beautiful cossack homestead with the planned Gothic castle. Dispossession is averted and the road cleared for a new rapprochement of the Ukrainian gentry and the common people.

One of the more interesting aspects of the novel is how psychic dependency on high society is portrayed. The major, although he never meets the prince, has constructed an image of the man as a paragon of honour and virtue, and he even wills him his estate. Another character, Ivolgin, the prince’s flunkey, is similarly deluded. He suffers from a class-national inferiority complex. While disparaging his own peasant, Ukrainian identity, he admires the prince’s thoroughly disreputable behaviour as befitting the latter’s elevated social standing.

Kulich wrote devastating critiques of the spiritually crippled gentry leadership of Ukraine, which he accused of abandoning the national language and identity. He maintained this position until the mid-seventies, when his earlier “cossackophilia” was replaced by an outspoken critique of popular revolts and an apologia for the political elite. The condemnation of Muscovy, however, remained constant. He even denied the inevitability of the union with Muscovy, suggesting that, had the lower cossack orders and popular masses shown enough political wisdom and maturity, Muscovy would not have been able to overrun Ukraine. The year 1882 was particularly controversial. Since the mid-seventies, when the Ems edict came into force, Kulich had published almost exclusively in Galicia. He travelled there in the winter of 1881 and renounced Russian citizenship with the intention of settling in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and, with Polish help, opening a printing shop. The writings he produced in the year he

spent there were conciliatory gestures toward Polish society calculated to garner its support.

While in Lviv, Kulish arranged the publication of the collection *Homestead Poetry* (Khutorna poeziia, 1882). In it he calls Ukrainians a “Nation without direction, without honour or respect,” “barbarians” who like to boast of their fierce nature, but neglect cultural values.⁷⁷ In the essay attached to this collection, “A Letter of Appeal,” he charges the Ukrainian intelligentsia with forsaking its own people over the centuries in order to adopt the culture and identity of politically powerful overlords – either Polish or Russian. Those countrymen who had tried to climb the “Russian Helicon” had turned their back on the treasures of a national folklore and popular language that surrounded them. Such apostasy had enabled Russians to strike Ukrainians “from the book of living nations” without applying “any violence.”⁷⁸ The present imperial administration was continuing the same policy of denationalizing Ukrainians and attempting to entirely “extinguish” the people’s “spirit” by completely suppressing its press and schools.⁷⁹ A poem in the collection, entitled “The Slavic Ode,” was perhaps his most outspoken denunciation of imperial rule. It described Russia as building “a universal and inescapable prison” for all Slavs, while spilling their blood “like water.” True to his Romantic nationalist beliefs, Kulish predicted that the national spirit could not be crushed but would eventually find expression as the people once again threw up their own religious leaders, nobility, and intelligentsia. Kulish’s form of Romantic nationalism (or Ukrainophilism, as it was then generally known) stressed the primacy of culture. By developing its language, literature, and scholarship, he believed that the nation would win back the prominent cultural position it had once held and subsequently failed to protect against politically more powerful neighbours.

“Easter Egg” makes a gesture of apology and good faith toward the Polish people. It describes the ignorance and prejudice of Rus, the often senseless violence of the cossack rebellions, and the destructive hatred that had laid waste to both Poland and Ukraine. It bitterly reproaches the clergy for fomenting popular discontent and spreading slanders against the gentry. Departing from his earlier, Romantic enthusiasm for Ukrainian folklore (when, for example, he saw the *dumy* as reliable interpretations of national history), he attacks the “blind kobzars,” for spending their time “drinking with the cossacks” and composing *dumy* that often dreamed up abuses supposedly suffered at the hands of the Poles.⁸⁰ Cossack youth, claims the author, had been educated on the “chaos of medieval civic life”⁸¹ and were encouraged to blame everything they disliked in Ukraine on the established order, to believe any story of gentry abuse against them,

while ignoring their own savage acts. Ukraine, as a consequence of the prolonged strife that followed Khmelnytsky's revolution, had fallen into ruin, torn apart by the "drunken revolt" of the cossacks, on the one hand, and the gentry's government-sanctioned "right of robbery" on the other.⁸²

Kulich points to the collapse of the educational system and the decline of literature as primary factors in the loss of nationhood. It is in their restoration that he foresees the guarantee of a revival. In the postscript to this essay he urges the Poles in their turn to allow the development of a Ukrainian literary, educational, and cultural movement, to permit "Rusyns to be Rusyns" and not to force them to become Poles. He accuses contemporary Poles, whether "humanists," "progressives," or "liberals," of practising the same despotic behaviour toward Galician Ukrainians that the repressive Nicholas I had exhibited toward "Little Russians" in the first half of the century and of searching for a rationale to justify what "neither a Christian heart, nor political sense" could condone.⁸³

The self-critique was, however, widely seen as an embarrassing attempt to compromise with pro-Polish views, and his overture was, in any case, rebuffed. The harsh response from all sides and the simultaneous announcement that Ukrainian Uniate monasteries would be transferred to Polish Jesuit control produced a deep disenchantment and led to a shamefaced return to Russia, where he was placed under police observation.⁸⁴ Ukrainians, naturally, criticized him for opportunism, for downplaying socioeconomic issues, for refusing to rely on the evidence of the Ukrainian chronicles, archival sources, and *dumy* that he had earlier recognized, and for accepting the equally suspect evidence of Polish eyewitnesses and sources. Nonetheless, these essays raised several painful issues for Ukrainians: their self-indugent victim complex, their frequent ignorance of historical facts, the intelligentsia's low level of education and its inferiority complex. In *Homestead Poetry* and the two essays, "A Letter of Appeal" and "Easter Egg," he shifts much of the blame for the country's colonial status onto the ignorant populace and opportunistic national leadership, both past and present, initiating an argument that would resonate with future generations.

Kulich's comments exposed the lack of autonomy of the national discourse. Convinced that cultural production was of primary importance, he worked to create a national high culture – one that was not an alien imposition but drew on indigenous sources. His efforts to discover the "spirit" of the nation through the study of its folklore, history, ethnography, and literature were guided by this goal. His translation of the Bible and European classics were meant to aid the construction of a high culture by supplying the required great books

in the contemporary vernacular. There was, of course, a contradiction here between the desire to discover the unique character of the national spirit and the need to imitate foreign examples. It is a typical dilemma for the nationalisms of subject peoples that, unlike their pace-setting "Western" neighbours, sense a lack of linguistic, educational, and professional skills and therefore feel the need to transform the nation by "reequipping" it culturally. The "Eastern" intelligentsias have, typically, embarked on campaigns to regenerate their national cultures by adapting them to the requirements of progress, while attempting simultaneously to retain their distinctiveness.⁸⁵ Kulish's attraction to global standards set by the advanced nations of Western Europe and to examples of international success enjoyed by some Polish and Russian writers led him both to admire them as models and reject them as intrusive influences. As a national enlightener and awakener, Kulish felt this dilemma acutely.

Kulish's attitude to the brutality of popular uprisings illustrates the clash of discourses within his thinking. An intellectual shaped by post-Enlightenment trends, he rejected extremist politics and violence, indicating the dangerous potential of primitive superstition to ignite nationalist rage. At the same time his Romantic nationalism (Ukrainophilism) expressed a "rhetoric of the heart" that valorized the innocence, power, and beauty of popular culture and the justice of the national democratic struggle against colonial domination and exploitation. Kulish reconciled this contradiction by holding the position that the atavistic in the national culture had to be eliminated and the culture reshaped through rationalist, secular, Westernizing influences. The contemporary national culture, of course, frequently failed to live up to his ideals of the secular and modern; the popular and democratic could be "traditional and fanatically anti-modern."⁸⁶ Kulish's attitude to the popular and national, therefore, embraced a paradox: as a Westernizing intellectual he was at times profoundly hostile to popular tradition, while as a Romantic nationalist he was prepared to believe in its capacity to reflect the nation's unspoiled inner "spirit" or "soul." The fear of violent popular uprisings was, perhaps, at the root of Kulish's search for administrative backing for educational and cultural reforms. Although his criticism of popular ignorance was to be picked up by some later writers, his later fear of the volcanic power of agrarian revolts was not to be shared by Franko, Karmansky, Khvylovy, and Malaniuk, each of whom in his own way came to accept the inevitability, if not the necessity or desirability, of revolutionary violence.

In the last years of his life Kulish wrote a novel in the Russian language titled *Vladimiriia* (Vladimiria). It was completed in 1894 but not passed by the censorship and remained unpublished until 1998.⁸⁷

The book explores the reasons for the separation of Western from Eastern Ukraine and suggests that Galicia can become the Ukrainian Piedmont. In the conclusion, the main character, Andrii Nezhliakailenko, repents his defection to Uniate Catholicism and returns to the Orthodox faith. In this ending Kulish makes it clear that he thinks a rejection of the Uniate Church and a return to what he considers a national faith – Ukrainian Orthodoxy – will bring about Ukraine’s spiritual and political reunification. In conformity with his conviction that spiritual resistance and cultural work outweigh the value of political action, he proposes the concept of a single national church as a key to national revival and social progress. Although the book’s ending includes a call for the unification to occur within imperial borders, this was an obvious requirement if the text was to have any hope of passing the censors, and Kulish had hopes that it would indeed be published within the empire. The empire, however, is clearly a minor issue. The focus of the book is on the regeneration of Ukraine. Kulish criticizes both Uniate Catholicism and Russian Orthodoxy as centralized, authoritarian, regimented, and beyond the control of the lay community, suggesting an autonomous or autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodoxy as the ideal. Such a position is in alignment with his conviction that Ukrainian spirituality differs markedly from Russian and that pre-imperial Ukrainian Orthodoxy manifested the best and traditions of Eastern Christianity. *Vladimiria* bears witness to Kulish’s return to traditional Ukrainian Orthodox values after various and many intellectual infatuations.

Kulish’s stubborn struggle to define a Ukrainian spirituality with deep roots in the past, his recognition of the need for high culture, and his complex and often hostile relationship with popular nationalism were not viewed sympathetically by populists in the seventies and eighties. However, these aspects of his thought were rediscovered by the modernist generation that followed, whose pursuit of high culture led it to echo many of his concerns and, as he did, to demand autonomy for the national discourse.

Mykhailo Drahomanov

Historiography became a contested subject in the second half of the nineteenth century as Ukrainian scholars and writers challenged the imperial version of history. Not only Panteleimon Kulish but Mykhailo Maksymovych, Mykola Kostomarov, Volodymyr Antonovych, and Viacheslav Lypynsky debated Russian historians concerning the origins and development of Ukrainian society. One of the most influential voices in these discussions belonged to Mykhailo Drahomanov, who

from his exile in Geneva (from 1876) and Sophia (from 1889 to his death in 1895) exhorted Western and Russian intellectuals to consider Ukraine's claims to a historical identity and cultural rights. In what is perhaps his best essay, "Historical Poland and Great Russian Democracy" (1881), he put forward the case that Ukraine had been the victim of the imperial contest between Russia and Poland.⁸⁸ His argument is summarized here as a classic example of how the Ukrainian counterposition sought to undermine the tenets of imperial historiography.

Drahomanov began by arguing that the Slavic peoples, having settled on their respective territories in Central and Eastern Europe, found themselves cut off from the shores of the Baltic and Black Seas, which they had begun to colonize before the fourteenth century. In the middle of the fourteenth century the Poles, having lost the Baltic littoral and Oder basin to German expansion, began to search for compensatory territory in the east. This development destabilized the existing Lithuanian and Belarusan-Ukrainian state on their eastern border. Ukraine (Rus) was incorporated in 1569 by the Union of Lublin into Poland "without any regional, or national, autonomy, or representation that recognized its integrity."⁸⁹ This unfortunate political union was followed in 1596 by a disastrous attempt at a union of churches, whose intention was the Catholicization of the population. Drahomanov argued that Poland lacked the strength to effectively rule such an enormous territory with a social system that was quite different from its own. Polish society recognized only two classes, the gentry and the common people, and was therefore unable to deal with the dominant Ukrainian estate, the cossacks. Both the failure of the state to incorporate the Ukrainian cossacks into the gentry and the frustration felt by those Ukrainians who had not been allowed to enter the cossack estate led to the Polish-cossack wars of the late sixteenth and seventeenth century. In the course of these conflicts Ukrainian society turned for support to Muscovy and recognized the protection of the tsar in 1654.

The despotic behaviour of Muscovy, however, immediately caused alienation. Four years after the agreement of 1654, a visiting Serb observer reported the widespread "political heresy that life under the famous Muscovite tsardom was worse than Turkish torture and Egyptian labour."⁹⁰ Drahomanov pointed out that Russian historians, in reviewing Ukrainian history, have consistently attributed every success to the tsar and centralization, while simultaneously condemning every opposition to them. In this way "the fault for all the bloodshed from Bohdan Khmelnytsky to the fall of Mazepa, in their opinion, lay with Ukrainians, especially with the cossacks, who were [depicted as] accustomed to instability and unruly behaviour."⁹¹ Unable to subdue the

Ukrainian cossacks and Belarusian townspeople, Muscovy cooperated with Poland in dividing their territories and suppressing opposition. In the seventeenth century Russia, Poland, and Turkey even designated half of Right Bank Ukraine as an empty buffer zone between them, so that each could deal in its own way with the unruly local population. This division of Ukraine was a “fatal blow to its independent development.”⁹² Poland, although it lost Left Bank Ukraine, could still rejoice in retaining the Right Bank for another century.

The multinational and heterogeneous nature of the state meant that “Bureaucracy in administration, and dictatorship in politics inevitably became the forms of state life in the vast empire.”⁹³ The Russian administration turned for assistance to the Polish landowning gentry in Ukraine in order to gain control of the population and strengthen its rule, in the same way that it struck alliances with the gentry element in other parts of the empire. Naturally, neither the Russian state nor the dominant Polish gentry had any interest in extending any rights to the local Ukrainian population. In fact, it had every reason to erase the memory of a “third force” and to deny the existence of another nation on this territory. The study of the history and present condition of these Ukrainian lands was particularly neglected after the failed rebellion of 1830–31, which led to the closing of the universities of Warsaw and Vilnius and the lyceum in Kremenets. The critical attitude Polish historians like Lelewel had expressed toward the old Polish state now gave way to an uncritical idealization of its achievements: “Polish society developed the idea that the cossack-Ukrainian revolutions were not the result of a natural reaction to magnate-Jesuit politics, as the serious historians of Lelewel’s school had argued, or a social reaction complicated by a national reaction, as Lelewel’s followers had taught, but saw it as the acts of brigands (cossacks), stimulated by Muscovite intrigue ... The Ukrainian school in Polish literature died out in the thirties, and the ethnographic study of Ukraine among Poles, which had been initiated by Chodakowski, Zaleski, Pauli, and others began to die out in the 1840s.”⁹⁴

By the mid-nineteenth century, members of both Russian and Polish educated society could claim to be unaware of the existence of a Ukrainian people, of its history or culture. Even the work of proscribing, to paraphrase Terdiman, had been thoroughly proscribed.⁹⁵ Drahomanov, however, argued that the second largest Slavic people, the Ukrainians, had always been a part of the triangular political-cultural relationship and that their removal from history and the silencing of their voice was primarily a result of the competition for supremacy between Poland and Russia. He was convinced that the great cossack rebellion of the mid-seventeenth century had come close to giving Ukraine not

only national independence but also viable political and social institutions. The devastation that followed the country's division between Poland, Muscovy, and Turkey and the years it spent as Muscovy's protectorate had set back socioeconomic and cultural development.

Gradually, as the universities of Kharkiv and Kyiv began to produce Ukrainian historians, as modern Ukrainian writing began to appear, and as the sense of a shared identity grew, the claims that Ukraine was an invention of Polish, Russian, Austrian, or German intrigues became less tenable. The "third force" had reappeared. Evidence for its continuous existence was detected in the literature and folklore of the preceding centuries. Drahomanov himself contributed to the research by editing and introducing anthologies of Ukrainian historical songs and folksongs that, over the centuries, bore witness to a strong sense of social awareness and shared national goals.⁹⁶ In short, like other nineteenth-century intellectuals, he discovered a counterdiscourse that was now fuelling the sense of a national identity.

Drahomanov's writings demonstrate how perceptions formed within the limits of discursive constraints could be challenged. Foucault has characterized discourse as the "delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts or theories."⁹⁷ If we take these three assertions in order, we see how Drahomanov's analysis overturns that of the colonial discourse at every point. First, he demands that new facts and phenomena be given attention, that the proscribed history be studied. Second, he insists upon the right to speak, to gain entry into the discourse, foregrounding in this way issues of legitimacy and authority. Drahomanov had been thrown out of his position at Kyiv University and had subsequently been asked by Ukrainian intellectuals to present their case from abroad. His works were published in Geneva, Sophia, and Western Ukraine and from there had been smuggled into the empire. Third, in reading Drahomanov, we become aware of how these views, considered illegitimate and nationalist by the authorities and many Russian intellectuals, were denied access to a wider forum. As a consequence, the counterdiscourse necessarily turned in on itself and evolved its own concepts and theories.

As a socialist, Drahomanov argued that Ukrainophiles should take up not only cultural but also social issues, in particular the concerns of the peasantry. His political thinking was dominated by the need to extend individual civil liberties. National emancipation, as he stated on several occasions, was merely a means to this end. He refused to follow the Romantic nationalists in unconditionally privileging the rights of the national "organism" over wider political, social, and economic concerns. His writings therefore reflect upon the dilemmas and

complexities of national dependency within the overarching narratives of enlightenment and progress. The prerequisites for the achievement of socialism were, in his mind, the spread of education, the widespread acceptance of cultural standards, and the establishment of voluntary associations that would be united on federal principles.

Opponents termed this contextualization of the national question “cosmopolitanism.” In particular, his view of Russian literature as a conduit for progressive European ideas was challenged by those who adhered to a “nativist” position. The discourse of empire had bifurcated in the last two decades of the century into a Russian-language and a Ukrainian-language stream, and younger writers now increasingly questioned the wisdom of contributing to the former. One of the most important exchanges over this issue was a debate between Borys Hrinchenko and Drahomanov that took place in 1892–93. They had already clashed in the Lviv journal *Star* (Zoria) in 1888–89 over the attitude to be taken toward Russian literature, and the novelist Ivan Nechui-Levytsky had earlier, in 1891, also championed the idea of a national literature independent of Russian influences.⁹⁸ However, Hrinchenko’s “Letters” to the Chernivtsi journal *Bukovyna* in 1892–93 and Drahomanov’s responses in the Kolomyia journal *Narod* in 1893–94 constituted the high point of this debate.⁹⁹ Drahomanov represented the older generation of activists, and his writings make the best case for maintaining a dialogue with Russian liberals and radicals.

In his response to Hrinchenko’s criticisms he carefully complicates the organicist view of nation by pointing out, for example, that the seventeenth-century cossack class was composed of various elements: “Ukrainians, Poles, Wallacians, Tatars, Serbs, even Greeks and Jews, and later, Russians.” In the eighteenth century this class could not adapt itself to the lower Ukrainian social element but had to model itself on the existing Russian system. Given the historical circumstances, its Ukrainianization could not have occurred quickly but was dependent on a gradual evolution – in his words, on “time” and the spread of “democratic ideas.” Drahomanov argues that democratic and liberal ideas, which encourage the spread of education, had in fact often come to Ukraine through Petersburg and Moscow and continue to do so. Kapnist’s “Ode on Slavery” of 1783, the *History of the Rus*, and Ryleev’s poetry were all written in Russian. All were products of European liberal, democratizing ideas, and all were instrumental in raising Ukrainian national consciousness. Ukrainians, argues Drahomanov, ought in the present, as they had in the past, to appreciate enlightened views in whatever language they present themselves.

The same argument was also used by Franko in 1895, when discussing Ivan Vyshensky’s obstinate rejection of the Catholic-Latin-Polish

culture of the seventeenth century. He wrote that by following Vyshensky's advice and turning their backs on the dominant culture, the Rus citizens of Lviv had placed themselves, in the words of a contemporary, "outside Lviv, outside the burgher estate and, one might even say, outside their own society," becoming "greater foreigners in the Rus city than the Germans, than the first Poles, than even the Armenians."¹⁰⁰ Franko makes the point that this "program of separatism, which immediately placed the Ruthenians outside civic life" was, however understandable, a demoralizing factor. It led to the liveliest minds and spirits searching for wider horizons elsewhere. "Separatism, which was meant," in Franko's words, "to save Rus, ended up causing moral and material harm, and might have destroyed it altogether, if its complete implementation had been possible."¹⁰¹

Drahomanov's second response to Hrinchenko is a socioeconomic argument. In the eighteenth century, the Ukrainian population, according to Drahomanov, sensed the urgency of dealing with the Turkish-Tatar threat on their southern border and the Polish on its western. Although they had no enthusiasm for Peter the Great's Baltic campaigns, the moment the tsar turned his attention to capturing Turkish strongholds on the Azov Sea, they provided their fullest support. In the same way, argues Drahomanov, the Ukrainian people "instinctively sensed" (*chuv niukhom*) that Catherine's capture of the Black Sea coastline had opened up for them the possibility of settling the rich steppe region they had long disputed with the Ottoman Empire and Tatar raiders. Up until the abolition of serfdom in 1861, Ukrainian serfs were still escaping to the landlords' *slobody* (free lands) within these territories. Moreover, Ukraine's security and development required the establishment of a friendly Constantinople with guaranteed access for Ukrainian ships to the Mediterranean and, later, the Suez Canal. In short, there were moments when expansionary tsarist policies fulfilled Ukraine's "elementary geographical and national" interests and were therefore treated with sympathy: "tsarism, when all is said, to a certain extent organized the forces of the community ... and accomplished our national goals from the historical moment when we were unable to accomplish them ourselves."¹⁰²

Drahomanov demonstrates, first, that expressions of support for imperial expansion by Ukrainian writers like Kotliarevsky and Storozhenko, who served in the imperial army, were not necessarily expressions of abject servility, as Hrinchenko had assumed. Second, he wishes to suggest that Hrinchenko was misguided in dismissing almost the entire nineteenth-century Ukrainian literary tradition (with the exception of Shevchenko). Writers, he states, should be given credit for making the best of historical situations. Sometimes the motivation, as

in Kostomarov's case, might have been opportunism, to "fool the Russian," as he puts it, and the use of Polish, Latin, or Russian was not, as Hrinchenko argued, self-abnegation but in many instances a legitimate and effective tactic. Kostomarov, after all, published "fifteen to twenty volumes" in Russian that propagated the case for federalism and served as the basis for "every intelligent work that Ukrainian historiography has [since] produced."¹⁰³ But above all Drahomanov argues that the psychology of national identification is itself multilayered and can coexist and merge with other forms of identification and be expressed in various languages and manners. He is able to assert, therefore, that "Ukrainians would, perhaps, always be left with two literatures [Ukrainian and Russian], not one. Nature is a more complex thing than doctrine!"¹⁰⁴ Moreover, Russian hegemony, according to Drahomanov, had never been total and had always been vulnerable; the subaltern had in every historical situation found ways of challenging and undermining it.

The Ukrainian scholar's determination to recover this subaltern voice and his high level of comfort with notions of cultural hybridity prefigure some of the ideas of postcolonial theory, in much the same way as his complication of the Romantic nationalist viewpoint anticipates postmodernist uncertainties.

Borys Hrinchenko

Hrinchenko was a member of the younger generation of activists who formed the Brotherhood of Taras in 1891 from among Kyiv and Kharkiv students. In his "Profession de foi," he called for the active development of a national consciousness among all Ukrainians through mastery and dissemination of the language and the study of culture and history.¹⁰⁵ He was particularly outspoken on the question of Russification and demanded a clear cultural separatism in place of the biculturalism that characterized many members of the intelligentsia.

Hrinchenko's main argument in the "Letters" is the inevitability of rapid Russification if the Ukrainian intelligentsia fails to use its own language and develop its own literature. Second, he portrays past writers as lacking a firm national consciousness. They often had "two souls: one Ukrainian, the other Russian" and as a consequence attempted to serve both their native land and the oppressor. He lists odes to Russian tsars and generals written by Kotliarevsky, Kvitka, Hulak-Artemovsky, and Storozhenko and complains that Kulish's views on history and Kostomarov's on the role of Ukrainian literature only served to justify the hegemony of Russia. As a result of this schizophrenia, writes Hrinchenko, Kulish, in his *History of the Reunification of Rus*

(Istoriia vossoedinenie Rusi), ended up maligning the cossack period of Ukrainian history, portraying Sahaidachny as a “brilliant pirate and plunderer” (genialnyi pirat i naezdnyk) and the whole cossack period as a history of “Ukrainian banditry” (ukrainskikh razboev). The same schizophrenia caused Kostomarov, in his *Two Russian Nationalities* (Dve russkie narodnosti), to argue for the incapacity of Ukrainians to rule themselves and to subsequently put forward the view that the Ukrainian language was fit only for “local use,” in this way encouraging assimilation to the Russian language and culture.¹⁰⁶ Hrinchenko described these views as expressions of servility that had only hindered the development of a national consciousness.

The “Letters” were an attack on the older generation of Ukrainophiles, who included Drahomanov, and a call for an intransigent stance toward Russian literature and culture. Hrinchenko was convinced that by writing for the Russian press, the Ukrainian intelligentsia was becoming part of the “all-Russian intelligentsia,” accepting its way of thinking and feeling, and turning its back on its own people. Worst of all, it was accepting the imperial point of view. Did this mean, Hrinchenko asked himself, that all that had been done in Russia to unite the two peoples should be seen as ruinous for the Ukrainian national cause? His answer was affirmative: it had all been done in the name of Russian, not Ukrainian, unity. Hrinchenko ridiculed Drahomanov’s orientation to Russian literature and Russian “pseudoliberals.” In particular, he took offence at the idea, expressed in Drahomanov’s article “Russian, Great-Russian, Ukrainian, and Galician Literatures,” (Literatura rosiiska, velykoruska, ukrainska i halytska) that there could be a common “Russian imperial” literature (*rosiiska*) that should serve as a forum in which matters of importance to all intellectuals in the empire could be discussed and that should differ from the literature devoted to Russia proper and Ukraine proper.

These comments, reminiscent of many twentieth-century statements by intellectuals seeking to reject the intrusions of a metropolitan culture, are a typical anticolonial reflex that seeks to draw firm lines of demarcation between the colonizer and colonized. Working from a Romantic nationalist framework and holding an organicist conception of the nation, Hrinchenko’s metanarrative of the Nation insists on it distinguishing itself from others, particularly from close relatives. The “Letters” mark a conscious attempt to break from the previous intellectual tradition and to radically reformulate national tasks. It is clearly an important moment in the discourse of empire and can be theorized in several ways.

Most discussions of national movements have, since the sixties, been under the spell of Miroslav Hroch’s tripartite scheme, which saw

national movements developing from an academic, through a cultural, to a political stage.¹⁰⁷ If the period from 1800 to 1840 could be represented as the academic stage, the cultural could be seen as the period from 1840 to 1890, and the 1890s could be characterized as a time when political parties emerged and mass mobilizations began. There are, however, problems with the rigidities inherent in a scheme that fails to account for the emergence of the “political” in earlier periods or for the possibility of lapses and uneven developments. Even more questionable is the applicability of the sociological model (on which Hroch’s analysis relies) to the psychology of individual writers. A second model, which allows for greater flexibility in distinguishing the imaginative construction of the national, is the colonial/anticolonial/postcolonial progression that has been proposed by Marko Pavlyshyn.¹⁰⁸ Hrinchenko’s “Letters” can accordingly be seen as an attempt to break with all attempts by the colonial to inscribe hegemony, an announcement of an unambiguous anticolonialism. There is much to recommend this second interpretative model, especially when it allows for the layering of colonial, anticolonial, and postcolonial in individual writers. A third interpretative framework has been proposed by Serhy Yekelchuk, in order to gain a more nuanced view of the counterdiscourse and its relationship to the growth of national movements. He has suggested viewing national movements in Eastern Europe through the concept of discursive strategies. He outlines three principal strategies: substitution, identification, and projection.¹⁰⁹ Substitution describes the psychological process of transference or sublimation. It would apply to the desire of writers to study their folklore and local dialects, to juxtapose or “substitute” a local patriotism and political interests in the place of the imperial. Identification is described by Yekelchuk as the fusion of an individual with another identity, in this case with an “imagined” nation. The counterdiscourse figures prominently in the construction of such an imagined national identity. And, finally, the nationalist strategy of projection is, according to Yekelchuk, the aggressive propagation of nationalist ideas and symbols over an entire region or country.

The second, identificatory stage in this scheme would appear to characterize Hrinchenko’s “Letters.” The writer’s position is that Ukrainians must be aware of the discourse of nation and its development. According to him, a “normal” Ukrainian consciousness began with Shevchenko, whose uncompromising stance is to be emulated. Hrinchenko finds the selection of symbolic features important for self-identification. Such features include not only texts and national heroes (Shevchenko, Hrushevsky, and so on), but also styles (in the arts, appearance, dress, and manners). The 1890s can, in such a

revision of Hroch's scheme, be seen as involving an intensified self-identificatory process that precedes a strategy of mass action.

Ivan Franko

In 1906 Ivan Franko wrote an article on Drahomanov in which he characterized his former intellectual mentor as a product of both Western liberal ideas and Russian critical thought.¹¹⁰ Franko argued that Drahomanov's generation came on the political scene after the abolition of serfdom in 1861 and became advocates of elementary education for the common people and basic language rights but still remained wedded to Russian colonial ideas and culture. Drahomanov and other activists justified the teaching of Ukrainian in elementary schools in terms of creating a bridge to Russian culture – the real language of education and ideas. This manner of thinking gave birth to several theoretical propositions, the most famous being Kostomarov's concept of Ukrainian as a language for domestic use and Drahomanov's idea of Great Russian, Ukrainian, and Galician literatures as three components of a common Russian literature.¹¹¹

Franko argued that the two chief influences on Drahomanov's intellectual development – his progressive, European side and what Franko called his Russian "muzhikophilia" – never fused into a harmonious and convincing synthesis. Here, in Franko's opinion, lay the key to understanding Drahomanov's positions and activity. Fear of the state's intrusiveness drew him toward an emphasis on what Isaiah Berlin later termed negative rights: the freedom from state control and the liberties of thought, speech, and association. Drahomanov's ideal was a universe of self-governing, small-scale communities that would be linked in a federal system. The rights of the individual (and the local community, which functioned as an individual) were always his fundamental concern. Franko summarized this position in the following terms: "Drahomanov's liberalism was based above all on the rights of the human individual, on the autonomy of the individual, on the freedom of speech and thought."¹¹²

At the dawn of the twentieth century Franko surveyed this classical form of Western "liberalism" Drahomanov had taken from the British example and found it wanting. He felt that Drahomanov's theory of the state provided no place for an autonomous Ukraine and indicated no path toward its realization. Drahomanov, he wrote, "recognized the dominance, both spiritual and political, of only one nation in multinational states ... Nationalities were only forms, ways of expression, contours that had to be filled with the same human or ... European content."¹¹³ As a result, in spite of his fine article on "Historical Poland

and Great Russian Democracy,” which explained the consequences of ignoring the national question, when, in 1884, he came to draft a project for a liberal constitution for Russia, Drahomanov ignored the principle of national autonomy, foregrounding only the right of regional autonomy. Five years later, when challenged by proponents of cultural independence, he responded negatively by indicating international elements in all cultures. Franko considered Russia’s intellectual culture so much a part of Drahomanov’s intellectual formation that the latter simply could not imagine Ukraine without Russia. The focus on local interests and small-scale organizations appeared, therefore, to be a way of avoiding the larger political issue of nation-building. As a result, Franko defined his political identity as “gente Ukrainus, natione Russus.”¹¹⁴

Drahomanov’s view of the Ukrainian nation as a plebeian people who spoke only their native language and were therefore cut off from richer intellectual sources determined his cultural and political strategies. Under such circumstances the national movement could only restrict itself to educational activities of a primary nature and make basic demands for human rights. The strategy coloured his interpretation of figures like Shevchenko, whom he saw as a rebel against serfdom and caste egoism, not as an advocate of nationhood. The view of Ukrainians as a plebeian ethnos, in Franko’s opinion, inadvertently confirmed the claims advanced by the Polish gentry in Western Ukraine that there was no Ukrainian nation but simply an ethnographic mass that would, in time, under the influence of Polish culture, acquire a Polish identity. Franko argued that Drahomanov’s focus on the peasantry was, in short, not the tactic of a nation-builder who recognized the importance of popular education at a given stage of development but the product of an imperfect national awareness, a failure to recognize the nation as “something organic, historically necessary, indivisible, and higher than all territorial organizations.”¹¹⁵ For Franko the task of winning national political autonomy became the goal, one that required an immense common effort and the mobilization of all available social forces.

National self-determination was for Franko a necessary step on the path to individual emancipation. Literature, by adopting this liberationist national ethos, played an enormous role in educating the colonized. Franko’s great philosophical poems, particularly *The Death of Cain* (Smert Kaina), *Ivan Vyschensky*, *Funeral* (Pokhoron), and *Moses* (Moisei), and prose works like *Zakhar Berkut* deal with national liberation and the struggles of intellectual leaders to enlighten their people. Oksana Zabuzhko has described the structure of feeling in his poetry as the “fear of unpreparedness,”¹¹⁶ the sense of an impending international

crisis for which the colonized were not adequately mobilized. This fear drove the writer to portray characters who are activists and national awakeners with demiurgic desires to form, out of the popular masses, an organized nation conscious of its political goals. Franko differs profoundly from Drahomanov in his emphasis on the crucial role of the intellectual who must provide his people with spiritual leadership and in his modern sense of the nation as intellectually and politically constructed. The trials and tribulations of the intellectual, whose consciousness is in advance of the masses and who is frequently misunderstood by them, is, in fact, Franko's great theme. It is best captured in his opus magnum, *Moses*. A similar portrait of the far-sighted but unheeded prophet was shortly afterwards produced by Lesia Ukrainka in her *Cassandra* (*Kassandra*) and *On the Ruins* (*Na ruinakh*).

Franko, however, was no isolationist, as is indicated by his already quoted comments on the Lviv Ruthenians in Ivan Vyshensky's day. Ukrainians had to strive to participate fully in international cultural and political life as equals. Self-imposed isolation (the choice of the Lviv burghers) would lead to ignorance, a loss of faith in one's own powers, and demoralization. Ukraine had always drawn on the cultures of Europe and should continue to do so, without, however, retreating from the ultimate goal of autonomy. These remarks were frequently linked to a critique of the narrow-minded populism that many of his compatriots embraced. The poet wrote damningly not only of the conceited, intellectually stultifying atmosphere of Western Ukrainian letters but, pointedly, of the complex and strained relationship between the intellectual and "the people." Many of his best poems, like *The Death of Cain*, *Ivan Vyshensky*, *The Funeral*, and *Moses*, are in fact challenges to any simplistic notions of national solidarity.

The move toward an independent cultural stance at the turn of the century can, in fact, be attributed to and correlated with the enormous number of foreign contacts and influences at work among writers. Awareness of the "other" stimulated awareness of the "self." Ukrainian culture at this time shed the image of a provincial or regional product and, as several observers have noted, assumed a self-sufficient, self-determining attitude.¹¹⁷ Zabuzhko has written that "The transfer of the "spiritual capital" of Ukraine from Kyiv to Lviv had a decisive influence on the "reorientation" of culture and its entry into the pan-European cultural context, principally because it drew the Ukrainian national revival into the epicentre of those turbulent processes of nation-building in which all Europe ... was involved during the 'age of nationalism.'"¹¹⁸

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, members of Franko's generation, who sometimes referred to themselves as Young

Ukraine (*Moloda Ukraina*), attempted, like the analogous Young Poland and Young Italy movements, to revive the national spirit and to break decisively with the dual loyalty that they detected in previous generations. Their sense of serving a “national idea” was governed by a deep sense of humanism and an emancipatory ethic that is strongly reflected in their literary works and that is one of their great legacies. It set their nationalism apart from later forms, like the integral nationalism of the 1930s and 1940s that downplayed or denied the ethical imperative. An episode in Franko’s life can serve as an illustration of the importance he attached to the ethical. The Ukrainian writer had been heavily involved in Polish politics as a founder of the Polish National Party and a correspondent of the *Lviv Courier* (*Kurier Lwowski*) for ten years. Moreover, not only had he been educated in large part on Polish literature, but about a fifth of his own writings, including literary writings, were in Polish. Nonetheless, he decisively ended his association with Polish radicals in 1897, the moment he published an article entitled “The Poet of Treason” and two other articles condemning Polish attitudes.¹¹⁹ Outraged by the fact that they had placed their own national interests ahead of granting elementary legal rights for Ukrainians in the 1897 elections, he accused them of harbouring a Wallenrod complex.

In Mickiewicz’s poem of the same name, the hero, a Lithuanian under the assumed name of Konrad Wallenrod, becomes Master of the Order of Crusaders and deliberately leads the German crusade against Lithuania to destruction. After being exposed, he commits suicide. Treason, the poem suggests, is sometimes the only weapon available to the oppressed. Franko indicates this and other frequently anthologized works by Mickiewicz as a source of the immoral behaviour of Polish radicals, whom he charges with using internationalist slogans as a cover for colonial policies. As the poet who legitimized such “patriotic treason,” Mickiewicz, argues Franko, is guilty of undermining universal ethical principles.¹²⁰

Polish patriotic views had begun to dominate the *Lviv Courier* from 1894. The editors found Franko’s political views an increasing embarrassment, while he, in turn, found his association with the periodical increasingly untenable. The political polarization along national lines was proceeding rapidly in Galicia, with the case for Ukrainian independence first being made by a young Ukrainian radical, Iulian Bachinsky, in 1895 in his *Ukraina irredenta*. The election of 1897, therefore, brought several issues to a head. In its aftermath Franko vowed that he would from that time devote himself, if not exclusively, then at least primarily, to the Ukrainian cause.¹²¹ It was a declaration that other Ukrainian activists would make frequently in the ensuing decades as

they moved out of Polish or Russian into Ukrainian reform movements. In the light of this traumatic episode in his life, Franko's break with Drahomanov's Russian liberalism and insistence on Ukraine's becoming an agent of history can also be seen as a response to the personal disappointment and the sense of betrayal that accompanied the break with Polish allies.

6 Modernism's National Narrative

FEMINISM: LESIA UKRAINKA'S
BOYAR'S WIFE (1910) AND
STONE MASTER OF THE HOUSE (1912)

In the work of Lesia Ukrainka (real name Larysa Kosach) the discourse of national liberation is complicated by two important factors: feminism and a revolt against populist attitudes. Both these “iconoclastic” aspects of her work challenged the Ukrainian counter-discursive tradition as much as the Russian colonial one. Ukrainka had assimilated feminist ideas from her reading of French, German, and East European authors. The other leading contemporary Ukrainian woman writer Olha Kobylanska was a close friend, and the women grouped around the *First Wreath* (Persnyi vinok) anthology, published in Lviv in 1887, were her allies in furthering an awareness of female issues. She followed the textual strategy adopted by other nineteenth-century writers by deconstructing and reconstructing images of women inherited in literature. As for her antipopulism, in the decade preceding the First World War it was a trait shared by the modernist generation of writers – The Young Muse (Moloda Muza) in Lviv as well as those who were associated with the journal *Ukrainian Home* (Ukrainska khata) in Kyiv. Most leading modernists shared a cult of aestheticism and individualism, saw the development of high culture as a national imperative, and set themselves apart from populist writers by focusing on the life of the intelligentsia and the urban environment. No one, however, interwove the issues of feminism and antipopulism as seamlessly as

Ukrainka. Her great dramatic works (especially *Cassandra* and *On the Ruins*) echo Franko's call for national preparedness, but they also break new ground by challenging the dominance of patriarchal and populist views. The subaltern's protest in her work can be read, therefore, as a textured layering of oppositionist voices in which her feminist protest is directed both at the imperial oppressor and the national movement itself. The anti-imperial notes have frequently been described, but critics have often failed to hear the subversive feminist message directed at both the "imperial" and the "domestic" patriarchy.

The settings of Ukrainka's works, which are mostly historical and frequently biblical, make impossible any easy allegorization or interpretation in terms of contemporary politics. This fact has been attributed to the pressures of censorship or the desire to introduce "universal" themes into Ukrainian literature. Although both explanations are valid, a more persuasive argument is that such a selection of themes allowed her to focus on an issue that cut across both the colonial discourse and the national counterdiscourse. In particular, they enabled her to develop a sophisticated and subtle critique of oppressive male attitudes with respect to both the ruling powers and the domestic opposition movement. The dramas that she wrote between 1896 and 1913 and that constitute her greatest literary achievement are in fact a comprehensive challenge to patriarchal norms as expressed in Ukrainian and Russian literature. These plays typically portray the heroine as trapped between two patriarchal societies, an establishment order and an oppositionist group. She is compelled to deny her own needs in order to satisfy the demands placed upon her by both these societies. Like Ibsen (whom she greatly admired), Kobylanska, and other contemporary women authors, she portrays her heroines as trapped in roles from which they wish to escape. They are generally not the docile, self-sacrificing figures frequently depicted in populist writings of both the colonial and anticolonial discourse but assertive women with intellectual concerns, a need for political involvement, and powerful emotional and sexual desires. In attempting to break out of the confinement imposed upon them, they succeed in expressing their point of view but are ultimately driven to madness, sickness, or alienation by the social order. Two works are particularly relevant for a discussion of Ukrainka's relationship to the national movement: *The Boyar's Wife* (Boiarynia, 1910) and *The Stone Master of the House* (Kamynnyi hospodar, 1912).

The first, after it appeared in a collection of the writer's works in 1929, was omitted from all subsequent Soviet editions until 1989.¹ It has frequently been seen as her most overtly anti-imperial drama. The action centres on the marriage of Oksana to a Ukrainian nobleman,

Stepan, who lives in Moscow and serves the tsar. The events take place in the decades that followed the Pereiaslav Treaty of 1654, the period known as the Ruin. During this time Ukraine was essentially partitioned between Russia, Poland, and the Ottoman Empire, each of which supported its own protégé hetman. Petro Doroshenko, in alliance with the Turks, attempted to reunite the country and win back for it the greater degree of independence enjoyed in Khmelnytsky's time. As a result Ukraine was torn apart and depopulated by a prolonged series of wars. Throughout these events, Stepan claims to be pursuing a cautious advocacy in Moscow on behalf of Ukraine. In fact, his role is indistinguishable from that of a cowardly opportunist and renegade.

The anticolonial message of the play is clear enough. Ukraine has been overrun by Russian forces who abuse their authority. The tsar prevents any Ukrainian, however loyal, from being appointed as governor and makes no effort to stop the abuses that lead to revolt against his rule and to the ensuing military destruction. The dramatist's attitude toward Russian rule was negative. In a letter to her brother of 13 November 1902, she described the "Muscovite transgressions" and the "demoralization" that Muscovite rule brought the Ukrainian nation following the Treaty of Pereiaslav. The destruction of the Zaporozhian Sich was to her "the last and most significant act in the enserfment of our people." Tsarist rule brought "hard labour," "unnecessary wars," "the yielding of Right Bank Ukraine to Poland," and "serfdom and servitude in the tsar's army." These views concerning the period of Ruin were influenced by Kostomarov's book on the subject, which was critical of Muscovy's policy of exploitation and centralization and sympathetic to Petro Doroshenko.² In *Ukrainka's* play, Muscovites treat the political views of Ukrainians with suspicion and their religious practices, customs, and language with contempt. There are also echoes here of the anger felt by *Ukrainka* and other members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia toward Russian intolerance. Agatanhel Krymsky, a modernist writer, eminent Orientalist scholar, and close friend of *Ukrainka*, complained to her uncle, Mykhailo Drahomanov, in a letter of 15 May 1890, of the impossibility of cooperation between Russian and Ukrainian intellectuals, whether "conservative" or "progressive," in the struggle against tsarism: "How can you compel us to love those who, even in their liberalism, do not consider us a nation? What kind of common action is possible here ... How can and ought Ukrainians to join with Russians (*moskaliamy*) who are hostile toward them in order to win rights and freedoms (including, of course, national rights), without drowning in the "general Russian sea"? How can Russian intolerance be transformed into tolerance?"³ Krymsky (who, it might be noted, was himself of non-Ukrainian extraction) had this letter published in the

October issue of the Lviv journal *Pravda*, the main organ of the Galician populists. He followed it with another open letter in which he complained of Russian “muzhikophilia,” which failed to distinguish between the Russian and Ukrainian peasantry.⁴ In the light of these attitudes and Ukrainka’s own correspondence, in which she voices similar views, her play can be seen as a response to her uncle’s populism and faith in Russian liberalism.

Upon arrival in Moscow, Oksana is shocked by how different Russian traditions are from Ukrainian. Women, in particular, are given far less independence than is allowed by Ukrainian customs. The bride is shocked to learn that she must be segregated from male company and submit to humiliating customs, such as being kissed on the mouth by male visitors. Stepan, too, must adapt his dress, speech, and politics, but in Oksana’s case national discrimination is coupled with gender discrimination. Oksana initially submits to the indignities and suffers isolation and enforced passivity for the sake of her husband and his career. The idea of helping Ukraine through cautious diplomacy is, however, exploded when a guest, Yakhnenko, arrives. He is an emissary from Ukraine who reports that if the tsar does not put an immediate stop to the country’s exploitation, there will be a revolt and enormous bloodshed. Stepan promises to speak to the tsar, but either he never does so or his warnings are ignored. Driven by fear of the draconian punishment that the tsar is known for, his primary motivation is to avoid being suspected of contact with the planned insurrection. When Oksana suggests that aiding Doroshenko might be the best strategy for Ukrainians, he is appalled. He postpones any involvement in Ukraine’s affairs until some time in the future when the troubles subside. Oksana asks him to leave Moscow, which she compares to a Tatar captivity, and to escape either to Ukraine or abroad. Stepan finds this impossible, since his entire personal career has been built on court politics. At their initial meeting in Ukraine, Oksana had been attracted to Stepan because his hands were not “bloodstained” as were the hands of so many young men in her native land. At the end of the play she realizes that avoidance of bloodshed is not an answer to the political or the personal predicament. She says: “We’re clean, yes – but no use to anyone.”⁵ She describes their relationship as a sword and scabbard rusted shut from lack of use. The image suggests both political and sexual impotence.

The complexities of the play, however, are to be found in the linking of this theme to others. Supporting Doroshenko’s revolt might be the only option left. It is not, however, an attractive choice. The play portrays the country’s predicament in all its tragic insolubility. Against the sober assessment of the situation provided by Oksana’s father and

the heroine herself, the headstrong militancy of her brother Ivan sounds immature. Stepan's appeasement might not have brought the desired results, but, the reader is asked to consider, will military involvement be any more successful? The political and personal choices are neither clear-cut nor easy. In the final lines of the play, Oksana condemns her own and Stepan's lethargy and isolation, recognizing that she will never be able to return to Ukraine because she no longer dares to "look her relatives in the face." She, too, has been guilty of abdicating responsibility and failing to assert herself. She says, "here's where women fail ... they fear too much."⁶ In the time that remains in their lives, she instructs Stepan to help the defeated and the wounded to recover so that, perhaps, one day they may return to the ranks of fighters. One message here is that the development of national consciousness and oppositional politics must be conducted even in the most demoralized environment and in "unheroic" activity. An equally powerful message, however, is that women need to be active politically and not defer to men, particularly when the latter are ineffectual, cowardly, or treasonous to their own country.

Criticism of the male leaders of the Ukrainian movement and their opportunism is but one aspect of her feminist and antipopulist critique. Another is her portrayal of female heroism. The image of the woman as a mature, far-sighted, and clear-thinking tactician, ready to suffer and face defeat in a just cause, is one of Ukrainka's great contributions to literary characterization. This image, of course, overturns some traditional perceptions and portrayals of female character. In *The Boyar's Wife* Stepan is in fact the passive, timid, and emotional character, whereas Oksana is the more committed, valiant, and thoughtful individual. Ukrainka's other major plays similarly disappoint stereotypes inherited from populist and male literature. In *The Forest Song* (*Lisova pisnia*, 1911) the image of the female monster-nymph and the cult of male genius, both of which had enjoyed a wide currency in literature since the Romantic age, are challenged.⁷ It is, however, in *The Stone Master of the House* that the critique of male attitudes is most forcefully articulated.

The play has been interpreted in strictly political terms – as the depiction of opposition to imperial rule. This is a possible reading. In Ukrainka's version of the Don Juan theme, both Donna Anna and Don Juan are finally seduced by power and status. The final moments of the play see Anna forced to submit to the Commander's authority and Don Juan turned to stone. Anna's description as an eagle invited to share the Commander's eyrie on the mountain top and, after the Commander's death, her invitation to Don Juan to share the same nest with her suggest the dominant importance of political ambitions

and the consequences that their attainment entails. The seductive nature of power and the opportunism of leaders constitute a strong theme running through this work. Clearly, however, the main polemic is with male attitudes that underpin the drive for power in both the personal and private realms. The critique of the male drive for power makes Ukrainka's treatment of the Don Juan theme differ from that of Mozart, Byron, or Pushkin. It also can be seen as a response to Lermontov's *Demon*. There is in Ukrainka's Don Juan still much of the traditional male seducer who desires the subjugation of women. As in *The Boyar's Wife*, however, it is the heroine, in this case Anna, who is at the centre of the plot. Her intelligence and ambition appear to offer her two choices: either, like Don Juan, to free herself of the deadening hand of societal norms and expectations by staging a personal revolt against society or to gain emancipation by rising to the summit of power from which she can survey society fearlessly. Attracted to Don Juan's iconoclasm, she nonetheless realizes its limitations. It is a dead end. Don Juan himself is not free; he is constantly pursued by society and is bound by certain personal commitments. More importantly, his actions are neither honourable nor sincere. His behaviour in duels is, for example, base: he attempts to strike his opponent in the back and kills him when the latter is distracted by Anna, and he is willing to implicate his lovers in the murders. He is egotistical and dishonest and full of a deluded self-importance, and, most importantly, he succumbs to Anna's temptation of personal aggrandisement. She paints a picture of the enormous powers that await him if he accepts the dead Commander's role and puts on the white coat. By accepting them and succumbing to the temptations of power and privilege, Don Juan exposes the superficiality of his societal revolt. Ultimately, he and the Commander turn out to have much in common. The exercise of power in male-female relations is shown to be analogous to its expression in politics.

Ukrainka's interpretation of the legend turns out to be a demythologization of the traditional Don Juan and a critique of male authority and its practices. The play is therefore not about the Promethean revolt of the individual but about the entire "elaborate system of patriarchy which consists of insignificant men such as Juan and the Commander."⁸ It is particularly interesting that spirited, intellectually astute, and beautiful Anna should consciously set herself the goal of achieving supreme power and should take the lead in convincing Juan to join her in this quest. Unlike Dolores, who maintains a pessimistic, even fatalistic, view of men, even though she is self-sacrificing and loving to the end, Anna is forceful, independent, and ambitious. She is the strong heroine at the centre of the action who pays the penalty

for her choices. It is, in the end, the proud Anna who discovers that she has submitted to life's established pattern – the pursuit of power and prestige – precisely at the moment when she thinks she has escaped its petrifying influence.

What is significant and rarely mentioned in explications of the play is the implicit critique of all patriarchal structures, including the Ukrainian. The play is deliberately structured to allow several readings. Its message is at once a critique of male behaviour within the Russian imperial regime, within the family, and within the Ukrainian opposition movement. The Commander and the summit of the stoney mountain could just as easily be interpreted as the national movement, which has its own rigid demands for decorum and loyalty. Don Juan's declaration of his motives are a good example of the possibility of more than one interpretation. In seducing and "conquering" women, he claims that he gives them what they desire and are capable of accepting: "a dream, a few brief hours of happiness, excitement."⁹ He views his own actions as courageous, generous, even liberating and is oblivious to the fact that this "liberation" demands their subjection. In this respect the character of Don Juan can plausibly be seen as a veiled critique not only of Russian liberalism's condescending and chauvinistic stance toward the Ukrainian movement but also of the Ukrainian male leadership, which was condescending and chauvinistic toward the women's movement. The exposure of subtle connections between the personal and the public, the "domestic" and the "universal," or the national and the imperial is a conscious strategy employed by the author. Ukrainka's sensitivity to authoritarian behaviour in family and personal relations and her ability to demonstrate the operation of similar patterns in the political arena make her works complex studies of power relations. She admitted two years after writing the play that upon rereading *The Boyar's Wife* she felt a certain dissatisfaction with its "elementary," "black-and-white" nature.¹⁰ Her displeasure was, no doubt, caused both by the failure to present a richer texturing of the play's historical conflicts (in the same letter she complained of her limited historical knowledge) and also by her desire to convey the presence of the subtle threads binding personal and public lives. She subsequently wrote *The Stone Master*, which focuses on the latter and is less easily assimilated to patriarchal, populist pieties. This her final major drama was a work that could also be read simultaneously in several ways. It complicated the emancipatory discourse by including the feminist perspective and by raising the issue of manipulative male behaviour and populist prejudices.

Ukrainka was herself a product of the nation-building movement. A child prodigy who was already composing poetry in her early teens,

she was guided, trained, and “shaped” by her parents and instructed by her uncle, Mykhailo Drahomanov.¹¹ On a personal level her plays can be read as a poignant record of her own struggles to free herself from the great expectations placed upon her by her family and the “national liberationist” milieu. Her heroines are frequently supporters of an oppositionist movement who disagree with some key aspects of its philosophy. They may have a close personal relationship with a male figure who plays a leading role in a movement, but they do not entirely support his political views. Solidarity, her dramas suggest, may be extended for various reasons. Complete ideological agreement need not be one of these. Personal loyalty, love, and the fulfilment of emotional needs are among some reasons that might figure more prominently. In any case, it is indisputable that after the writings of Olha Kobylianska and Lesia Ukrainka the solidarity of women in the national movement could not be taken for granted in the same way as it had been previously. The brunt of the antimodernist and antifeminist response to such views was felt by Kobylianska, who was strongly criticized by the leading populist critic Serhii Yefremov. Ukrainka escaped the same sort of attacks, even though her plays explored female awareness and made the same claims for recognizing a woman’s point of view. The reason for Ukrainka’s immediate “canonization” as a national icon lay partly in the readership’s ability to misread some of her plays, whose “arguments” are couched in subtle terms, and to focus only upon those works that best suited their predispositions. The attacks on Kobylianska were not, in any case, overtly antifeminist. The dominant issues were modernism’s aestheticism, mysticism, intellectualism, and individualism, and the attacks constituted part of an extended polemic with modernism’s perceived abandonment of the common cause. Yefremov’s primary concern was with the cult of individualism, in which he suspected a threat to the national movement’s cohesiveness.

It was a misplaced fear. Ukrainka, like other modernists, felt that a high culture was necessary to serve a consolidatory, regulatory, and emancipatory function; it would define, sustain, and direct the nation-building effort, providing it with what Gellner has described as “cognitive centralization and codification.”¹² In the estimation of modernists, their politically fragmented nation required a tradition of high art (a coherent, normative culture) precisely in order to forge a unified consciousness. Moreover, a high culture that served the emancipatory dynamic in Ukrainian society could only be developed by acknowledging and integrating women’s awareness. In the years following independence contemporary Ukrainian feminists like Oksana Zabushko, Tamara Hundorova, Vira Aheieva, and Solomiia Pavlychko

have faced similar dilemmas in reconciling national and women's issues. Not surprisingly, they have been attracted to and felt the need to reevaluate the life and the writings of Lesia Ukrainka. They have seen the conflict between the Ukrainophile populists and modernists as a profound issue. The modernists, in particular the feminist modernists, challenged the deeply ingrained ideals, the rituals, and the ceremonies of the Ukrainophiles. Overturning patriarchal taboos and myths, deflating the idea of the male legislator, and questioning faith in a structured, unchanging civilization of ancient provenance was akin to dethroning the father-figure.¹³ Modernism had allowed the repressed individual voice and the unconscious to speak. Frequently, these were the voices of women.

FAILED REVOLUTION:
PETRO KARMANSKY'S
THORNS OF THE ROSE (1921)

The First World War, Ukraine's declaration of independence in 1918, and the failed struggle to create an independent state profoundly affected Ukrainian society. The transformation it wrought on the modernist generation is dramatically illustrated in Pavlo Tychyna's poetry, particularly in his *Instead of Sonnets and Octaves* (*Zamist sonetiv i oktav*), which created for the twentieth century the myth of Ukraine as a crucified martyr and at the same time expunged any lingering, nineteenth-century images of the country as a peasant paradise. Karmansky's two-part novel of 1921, *Thorns of the Rose* (*Kiltsia rozhi*) is based on the writer's own experiences during this same period and provides an analogous image of the martyred nation. Unlike works such as Leonid Andreev's *Red Laugh* (*Krasnyi smekh*, 1905) and Osyp Turiansky's *Beyond the Bounds of Pain* (*Poza mezhamy boliu*, 1921), which describe individual suffering against a distant, generalized background of war, Karmansky's chronicle is, in large part, an eyewitness account of actual historical events. The author's main task is to portray the shifts in political consciousness of his hero and all Galician society from 1914 to 1920. Like Conrad's war-time "plain narratives of fact,"¹⁴ it aims at an unadorned account of the personal soul's gradual merger with the fate of broader society and describes a shared movement through a national purgatory. In contrast to accounts such as Babel's *Red Cavalry* (*Konarmiiia*, 1926), Myroslav Irchan's *Films of the Revolution* (*Filmy revoliutsii*, 1923), or the numerous Soviet depictions of revolutionary events, it does not perceive the war from the bolshevik side. Karmansky's hero, Sviatoslav Petrovych, experiences the conflict as a nationalist.

In this his major prose work, the writer offers an apologia for his own evolution. He reassesses his earlier aestheticism, condemns Europe's moral blindness, and espouses a passionate nationalism. In many respects the work develops the "prodigal son" myth that had already been taken up by writers from Eastern Ukraine like Volodymyr Vynnychenko, who in his *I Want! A Novel* (Khochu! Roman, 1914) had described the coming to national awareness of a Russified member of the intelligentsia of St Petersburg. Karmansky paints a similar picture of decadence rejected and political links reestablished.

Western Ukraine, as part of the Austrian crown land of Galicia, was disputed by both the Polish and Ukrainian national movements. When the Habsburg Empire collapsed in 1918, Poland was reconstituted as an independent state. The Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR) declared independence from Poland on 1 November 1918 and then united with the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) on 22 January 1919. The Ukrainian state fought a war on several fronts before being defeated by Poland on the western flank and the Red Army on the eastern.

Karmansky spent the First World War years in Austria working with Ukrainian prisoners of war. In 1918 he lectured to teachers in Kher-son. Returning to Ternopil in the autumn of 1918, he edited the newspaper *Voice of Podillia* (Holos Podillia), which, under the title *Ukrainian Voice* (Ukrainskyi holos), briefly became the Western Ukrainian People's Republic's organ when it moved to Ternopil. He became a member of the city council, then a delegate to parliament. He was the republic's representative in Kyiv when the unification with the Ukrainian People's Republic was proclaimed. The government then assigned him to its diplomatic mission in the Vatican. His novel was completed in Vienna, along with a second volume of poetic satires and a translation of Giovanni Papini's short stories. After Karmansky quit Vienna, he attempted unsuccessfully to have the manuscripts returned to him.¹⁵ Although the last two have never been recovered, his novel was eventually located in Rome, and sections of it were published in 1989.¹⁶

The story begins in Rome with Sviatoslav Petrovych's crisis of faith. He prefers the city's old pagan ruins to contemporary museums and would sooner spend his time in the coliseum, contemplating the past, than attend church services. To the local children he distributes reproductions of paintings by Raphael, Botticelli, and Fra Angelico, rather than the usual images of saints. The square on which he lives is flanked by the Ukrainian theological seminary, the Collegium Ruthenorum, and a church, but his rooms are full of reproductions of ancient art, antique vases, and classics of Italian literature. On his table lie copies of Leopardi's poetry and prose.

The free-thinking artist has also rejected national pieties. To his countryman the visiting artist Bohdan Rostkovich, he confesses that the new turbulent Rome reminds him of his own detested Lviv. He particularly loathes Marinetti and the futurists who proclaim the necessity of destroying ancient art and all monuments to the past. Still, he muses, Italy, which has a strong sense of history, can digest this blasphemy, but in his homeland, which represents but a "farce of pseudo-culture and pseudo-liberation," such sentiments are incomprehensible. His retreat from the world appears complete. Given to contemplating contemporary life against the span of recorded history, he sees vanity in all human activity except art. Artists, he states, are the nation's slaves, its forced labour; unappreciated and unrewarded in their own time, they unearth treasures that will be needed in a distant future. Petrovych believes that posterity will appreciate his work, but only after "a powerful cataclysm" has disrupted the placidity of "our social pond." In the meantime he has nothing but contempt for the commercial interests, bureaucrats, and journalists who constitute his milieu and whose chief concern is a comfortable career. Petrovych represents the paradoxical combination of fervent cosmopolitanism and sense of nationalist high cultural mission that was typical of Central European modernism at the end of the century and that Karmansky espoused early in his literary career.

Alienated from his countrymen, he has also neglected his wife, a Pole, who embarks on an affair with the younger and livelier Rostkovich. The yoke of national oppression is in this way shown to be responsible for damaging individual psyches as well as distorting societies. The connection between the personal and political is made clear during the climax of the first book. Petrovych strikes and abandons his wife on the same day that the newspapers announce the outbreak of war. The purgatory that will transform the alienated couple and all Ukraine begins. The masses are aroused and suddenly everything changes. The individual finds reason for action in the political; personal salvation becomes inseparable from social renewal. Whereas in the past the poet had seen his task as describing inner states of consciousness, these are now subsumed in public moods; the political is now dramatic and exciting. As he is drawn into the national liberation movement he asks himself: what has happened to give him such optimism about the success of the cause? His answer is that the Galician peasant has ceased to be an easily manipulable, "mindless machine." The poet too has changed. The Baudelairean spleen has gone; his heart, which was full of self-destroying venom, has now rediscovered its better feelings: "He felt that he had been wearing a mask that covered his true appearance. And he began to detest himself. Immediately he felt an invincible longing for liberation" (1.16).

The Romantic disdain for the profit motive and the unheroic middle-class society cease to be relevant. Problems of the heart still remain: the hero struggles to master unruly, unworthy emotions and instincts and to deal with his rage, which follows the discovery of his wife's adultery. However, the emotional adventure that the narrator describes from now on runs parallel to the shifting moods and attitudes of the masses. Rage, despair, admiration, and contempt overpower him at every turn, but the contrast between the first part of the book and the second is between personal and collective emotion. There is a new sensitivity to history's dialectic and the growth of a national awareness. Criticism of Ukrainian leaders is now balanced against a new-found respect for the political maturity exhibited by the peasantry and the rank-and-file intelligentsia.

Karmansky's book represents an exorcism of his earlier fault-finding and refused commitment. The modernist poet known for sneering at "patriots" and accused of spreading socially destructive attitudes in his poetry picks up the mantle of the national revolution – becomes, in fact, its official Western Ukrainian bard. His hero, through disillusionments with successive nationalist governments, is inspired and sustained by the steadfast patriotism and iron will of the Ukrainian Galician Army, which is drawn mainly from peasants. It forms the backbone of Ukraine's defence against Russian and Polish incursions and performs heroically on the battlefield. In the final pages the hero is reunited with his wife, who has been through her own personal hell and is now a nurse working with the nationalist wounded. He dies in the knowledge that some barrier in the national psychology has finally been breached: the momentum toward independence will now prove unstoppable.

Much of the interest of the book lies in following the hero's path to such convictions. Elation alternates with depression. The hero-narrator has a keen eye for moral injustice and a nose for hypocrisy, which he detects most frequently among his own countrymen, particularly among jumped-up officers and carpetbaggers. The depressions are, in turn, overcome by anticolonial anger. It is unique among Ukrainian novels in its outspoken condemnation of all imperial attitudes – Austrian, Russian, Polish, and French – for the tragedy of aborted statehood. The first disillusionment is with the Austrians who, immediately following the declaration of war, abrogate civil rights and fill the prisons with Ukrainian activists: "The Ukrainian nation was left with no rights: Austria had only the hangman and the military court for us; we were merely cannon fodder" (1.13). His experience in Eastern Ukraine is equally disheartening: "He saw that Ukrainian society did not have one soul; that this soul had become atomized, fragmented; that petty slogans drowned out the main one, the liberation of Ukraine;

that the sickness of individualism had sapped its strength.” (2.6). The blame for this tragedy could ultimately be laid at the feet of “Moscow’s despots and their millions of henchmen, who had, on the orders of these despots, disfigured this soul over the centuries” (2.6).

Unable to continue a war on several fronts, the Western Ukrainian Republic turned unsuccessfully to Europe, which, however, supported Poland’s claims to the territory: “All along the Zbruch stood Moscow’s bird of prey, which the Galician army had held back from its westward march for a long time. From the west, French tanks approached along with the Polish hordes under the command of liberal French generals, fitted out in English uniforms and armed with French machine-guns” (2.10). It could hardly have been otherwise, argues the author:

European justice, which has millions of dead, wounded and crippled on its conscience and a whole sea of tears, cannot sympathize with an entity as small as Galician society ... The despairing voice of five million does not even reach the ear of European justice. It does not even figure in the combinations of those who divide up entire continents ... The entire world seemed to have conspired to let the Ukrainian people perish, or to allow it to become an eternal outlaw, an eternal revolutionary, an eternal enemy of the civilized world harbouring the desire for revenge in its soul. (2.13)

The hero sheds tears over the fate of his people, is deeply touched by the stories of the individuals who cross his path, and is left, in the end, physically and emotionally devastated. The body is not distanced, as it will be later in the twenties and thirties, from public displays of emotion: the hero cries and rages frequently, his wife is physically overcome by emotion, and even delegates at congresses weep publicly. The devices for examining the inner life are conventional: the diary and letter, the internal monologue, and the inclination to recite poetry and snatches from the scriptures. In all these moments characters find words to describe their feelings: the hero in his most exalted moments declares his love for his wife, for the nurse who loves him, and for the simple Galician peasant-soldier. One is aware in all this sentiment of an appropriation of the modernist cult of feeling for the national cause. In the New Testament imagery that runs through the book – Gogotha, the crucifixion, the tears over a condemned Jerusalem, Christ’s agony – one sees the fusion of Christian with nationalist symbolism. Petrovych is a secular Christ, suffering on behalf of his people, expiating their sins and dying so that one day in the future their salvation may come.

In Karmansky’s earlier work this ability to display and articulate emotion had been associated with finely tuned, aesthetic natures,

whose existence served to rebuke the rationalism and materialism of the age. The secularization of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had directed this cult of feeling away from the love of God to the love of the individual human being. It reappears in this novel as *amor patriae*. In a writer with his kind of sensibility and religious temperament it was natural that the loss of religious faith, which Karmansky felt as a young man studying in the religious seminary in Rome, should have led to a search for another authority to validate life and serve as an emotional focus. The moments of ecstatic love and the declarations of fraternal unity described in the novel make it clear that Nation has replaced God, a new sacrament of political activism has taken the place of religious ritual.

This aspect of Karmansky's work has already been remarked upon by Mykhailo Rudnytsky. One wry insight in the provocative essay he wrote on Karmansky concerns the writer's fondness for litanies: "Perhaps as a holdover from his days studying for the priesthood, Karmansky retained the habit of repeating words mechanically as though in prayer – repeating the same words endlessly, in the faith that this would bring relief more quickly."¹⁷ The hero's declarations of nationalist faith take the form of prayers. In his final ecstatic vision an avenging Ukrainian Titan appears as a Last Judgment over the country's enemies and says: "Woe to the blind, who themselves being blind led others astray! Woe to the criminals, who filled their chalice with the blood of people and drove tanks onto their brothers' graves! Woe to those who had little faith, who left the people defenceless in their moment of grief and took up service with foreigners and enemies! Woe to those who doubted the power of the nation and sold the blood of their brothers! Amen, amen, the hour will come and the people will separate the chaff from the grain and will burn the weeds mercilessly and blow them over the steppes!" (2.16) The opposition to chaos, to animal passions and appetites, to the shameful abdication of higher goals is in the end maintained by the individual who has asserted commitment, public and irreversible, to a consolidating idea.

The modernist ennui caused by a loss of meaning and realization of the world's formlessness is in this way cured. The description of the journey through war's suffering again reveals the writer's conservative cast of mind. The conclusion offers the restoration of a familiar pattern, the comfort of a rediscovered identity accompanied by a call for order, unity, and discipline. Artists, it suggests, have to be brought back into the community's bosom. They have a special role to play in healing the community's sicknesses through demonstrating that the real Ukraine is still in the catacombs in the hearts and minds of intellectuals and activists. The narrator rejects the contemporary atomization and

formlessness of ethnographic populism, on the one hand, and selfish individualism on the other. Both deny the higher unity, the acceptance of common historical experience and shared responsibilities, that must crystalize as national consciousness. This simultaneous desire to restore order and to shock into a new awareness reveals a dichotomy in Karmansky's thought. On one side, artists represent national truths long known and suppressed; on the other, they must challenge accepted notions with the visionary zeal of the avant-garde. Karmansky's novel of 1921 represents an attempt to combine these two stances: the hero surveys an ancient people who are struggling for their twentieth-century political rebirth.

The final page poses the great dilemma. Late in 1919 the Ukrainian forces have been surrounded by three enemy armies: the Poles, the Bolsheviks, and Denikin's Russian Volunteer Army. An alliance with one of these three enemies is necessary, but in spite of repeated overtures the Ukrainian commanders have been rebuffed by each of them. Petliura's forces are in favour of making an accommodation with the Poles. Most of the Ukrainian Galician Army, however, opposes such a turn. On his deathbed the hero learns that the army has thrown in its lot with Denikin.¹⁸ He dies with the words "But I am free!" on his lips: the idea of national emancipation will continue to live on in the individual consciousness.

Karmansky's vision of an insensitive, deceitful, and powerful geopolitical order, eternally hostile to Ukraine, serves as a justification for national egoism. It was this lesson that an entire generation drew from the traumatic events of 1917–20. Conrad, too, in the last two years of his life, described Poland (much as Karmansky represented Ukraine) as an outpost of stability and civilization in face of Russian destabilization. After 1918, however, Poland was accepted into the fold of European nations and granted support from Western powers; the Ukrainian drive for independence, on the other hand, was dismissed and the country allowed to be partitioned between its old imperial masters, with the inevitable consequences of mass repression and forced assimilation. However, both the Polish and the earlier Italian example of renewed statehood figured prominently in the consciousness of most educated Ukrainians. The success of these two nations is invoked several times in the novel, notably in its conclusion, which pointedly looks forward to an age of cooperation and mutual understanding between Ukraine and Poland. Petrovych's reconciliation with his wife elicits the following comment from him on the fate of the two countries: "I believe, that they will ... understand their mutual need for one another, that they cannot survive without one another, because they have a common enemy in an insatiable Moscow which is trying to drown the freedom

of all its neighbours in blood" (2.16).¹⁹ This passage suggests an equal relationship with Poland in a future political order and predicts that Ukraine will follow Poland's path to independence.

The war, Edward Said has written, "restored Conrad's patriotism. More, it affected Conrad in the manner of a startling religious experience."²⁰ Karmansky's novel records a similar conversion, the more powerful since it overcame an individual whose early education had been deeply religious and patriotic and who, from being a distant critical observer of political life – even a resister of nationalism's siren-call – found himself suddenly thrust into the vortex of a war of independence and became its spokesman.

7 Subverting Leviathan

THE STRUGGLE FOR DISCURSIVE CONTROL IN THE SOVIET UNION

There were strong messianic undercurrents in the revolutionary period of 1917–23. Siniavsky and Berdiaev are among those who have argued that an unacknowledged religious motivation, an inverted form of faith, fuelled the revolutionary zeal and commitment to apocalyptic change in many communists. Communism, according to Siniavsky, entered history, “not only as a new sociopolitical order and economic system, but also as a new great religion denying all others.”¹ Ukrainians who joined the bolshevik party during the revolution or in the twenties were acutely aware of how closely this messianism was allied with a potent Russian Romantic nationalism. Russian “national bolsheviks” like Nikolai Ustrialov, as Mikhail Agursky and Iver Neumann have indicated, adeptly assimilated communist fervour to Russian nationalism, turning the new “faith” to state-building purposes. Agursky has written: “National Bolshevism does not reject Communist ideology, though it strives to minimize its importance to the level necessary for legitimacy. However, its objectives are different from those of Communist ideology. National Bolshevism in its original form strove for world domination, conceived as the universal Russian empire cemented by Communist ideology.”² Both Agursky and Neumann feel that the national bolshevik current played a dominant role in Soviet communism, and they describe its effortless adaptation in the postcommunist period to the Russian nationalist revival and to demands for an aggressive

and imperialistic foreign policy. In the post-1991 period the ever-present Romantic nationalism has once more, in Neumann's words, "slithered effortlessly out of its underground existence and into public political space."³ In recent years it has drawn together figures like Valentin Rasputin and former communists into a "united Romantic nationalist position."⁴ Agursky argues that the bolshevik party was always under "massive pressure from the dominant national environment" and had to compromise with Russian nationalism. The compromise was achieved in the twenties when Russian statist nationalism, which was "ready to recognise Bolshevism as a Russian national power," fused with bolshevism, which had become "nationalized geopolitically and integrated many nationalist movements."⁵ It has been argued that because the Russian national idea never had to undergo a destatization or to emancipate itself from the dream of imperial power, the Russian sense of nation has for centuries been unable to break its "incestuous ties" with empire and has been condemned to repeat theocratic ideas.⁶ This "immaturity" of the Russian national consciousness, which has caused it to assimilate and Russify territories and traditions in the name of a putative universality, was challenged in the twenties by the appearance of a Ukrainian national Bolshevism.

In 1922 the Ukrainian republic became a founding member of the Soviet Union. Although the period of imperial rule that had begun with Peter in 1721 had formally ended, it was clear to everyone that Moscow had not relinquished its rule over the vast territory it had inherited. A belief in Russian hegemony continued to dictate policies and attitudes in formally independent republics. In the early twenties, Russian bolsheviks expected that the planned modernization of the Ukrainian republic, led by local "national bolsheviks" under Moscow's tutelage, would create a state socialist in spirit, one that was national only "in form." Most leaders in Moscow and many Russians in Ukraine assumed that Ukrainians would willingly assimilate to what they considered the superior, more progressive Russian culture. This would lead to cultural convergence and, ultimately, to homogeneity in the form of a "pan-Russian" identity. However, the creation of a national republic and its successes in Ukrainianizing the state, the schools, and the indigenous working class boosted the national movement.⁷ The Ukrainian nation-building process was aided enormously by the institutionalization of the Ukrainian language and state, in spite of the fact that concerted efforts were made "to integrate the populist mythologemes and icons into Soviet mythology."⁸ The mid- and late-twenties were characterized by a struggle between Russian centralizing and hegemonist views, on the one hand, and the growing assertiveness of national republics and their indigenous cultures on the other.

In viewing the Revolution of 1917–20 as a complete historical rupture, one obscures the continuities in power relations, ideology, and culture that continued to shape life under the new regime. Poorly concealed behind slogans like the “friendship of nations” and the “alliance of workers and peasants” lay expressions of the doctrine of coercive Russification, which still governed many aspects of postrevolutionary society. An early example can be seen in the “struggle of two cultures” theory, which was proclaimed by party leaders in Ukraine in the early twenties. It held that the Russian culture was the superior, urban culture and would, in a Darwinian contest of cultural strength, gradually absorb Ukrainian culture. Although the theory was officially condemned at the twelfth party congress in 1923, the attitude it reflected continued to dominate among Russian party leaders and the rank and file.⁹ In 1923, within the Communist Party of Ukraine, Ukrainians in fact constituted only the third largest ethnic group (after Russians and Jews). The influence and role of Ukrainians in the party began to change only in 1925 when Lazar Kaganovich, Stalin’s hand-picked deputy, was sent to Ukraine to breathe life into the Ukrainianization policy, while simultaneously taking firm control of it.

The majority of Russian political leaders and cultural figures had been educated on disparaging or hostile attitudes toward Ukrainians. In the twenties, literary portrayals still frequently stereotyped Ukrainians as unsophisticated or brutal peasants subject to outbursts of violent and irrational nationalism. Mikhail Bulgakov’s *Days of the Turbins* (Dni Turbinykh, 1926), the most popular Russian play of the postrevolutionary years, and his novel *The White Guards* (Belaia gvardiia, 1925) are influential examples. They portray the Ukrainian nationalist movement during the Revolution either as an operatic display of national regalia behind which stood the German army (Hetman Skoropadsky’s government) or as the “peasant horde” so detested by the author (the troops loyal to Symon Petliura). Petliura’s army is portrayed as a barbaric, antisemitic, and culturally impoverished mass. In either case, the irruption of a nationalist movement in Ukraine is merely a fleeting, unpleasant moment of collective madness that will pass. The real issue is the conflict between conservative and communist Russians. The monarchists, in contrast to the peasant insurrectionists of Petliura, are presented as highly cultured, sensitive individuals. They represent a Russian civilization besieged by an anarchic Ukrainian peasant army. There are two versions of the play, one completed in September 1925 and entitled *The White Guard* and the reworked version completed in August 1926, which became the celebrated *Days of the Turbins*.¹⁰ All versions of the play contain a similar conclusion: the Turbins move toward an acceptance of bolshevism as the lesser of two evils. It, after

all, has the attraction of being a powerful Russian military force intent on preserving the territorial integrity of the former empire. Like a bad dream, Petliura and the nationalists melt away, and the Turbin family decides to rebuild its life under the new regime. Their motives for supporting Hetman Skoropadsky were, in any case, based on the illusion that he would defeat the bolsheviks in Ukraine and then drive them out of Moscow, thus “saving” an immutable Russia. They treat the hetman’s Ukrainianization policy as a farce. These ideas are even more explicit in the 1925 version of the play. In it Aleksei, for instance, comments that a card table will always be a card table, whether you turn it upside down or plaster bank notes over it. Eventually, it has to be placed in its normal upright position. In the same way, “Russia can be turned upside down, but a time will come, when it will right itself ... They will never succeed in building anything but Russia. She will always be the same.”¹¹

The image of a beleaguered cultured class carrying the white man’s burden in Kyiv is supported by an array of motifs: the upper-floor apartment that is described as a ship being deserted by rats, the clock that plays Boccherini’s minuet, the cream-coloured blinds, the singing of the tsarist national anthem and, from Anton Rubinstein’s opera, “The Demon,” based on Lermontov’s poem. Elena reinforces the image by describing her nightmare of being in a ship that has been caught in a storm: “The water is rising to our very feet ... We climb onto some kind of bunks. But the main thing is the rats. They are loathsome, huge.”¹² Against this background of civilizational stability, the hetman’s revival of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ukrainian state traditions is viewed as a ridiculous costume drama. In the 1925 version of the play, his calls for an independent Ukraine are explicitly mocked and his insistence on increasing the use of Ukrainian are described as “terrorizing the population with that vile language.”¹³

The demonization of the Ukrainian national movement by linking it to a barbaric peasantry is achieved in several ways. A brief scene is set in the headquarters of the First Cavalry Division. It portrays Colonel Bolbotun first interrogating a deserter and then verbally abusing and punching a bootmaker, possibly a Jew, who has been found near the camp with a basket-load of boots and is suspected of being a spy. The scene derives its strength partly from the contrast it presents with the more dignified behaviour of the White officers. This scene, however, is almost the only one in which the Ukrainian language is used. It is full of coarse expressions with an admixture of Russian words. The earlier version of 1925 also contained a scene in which three Ukrainian-speaking bandits rob the Turbins’ downstairs neighbours. It is suggested that the robbery is an expropriation by Petliura’s troops:

one intruder wears the military cap of Petliura's army, while the other is described as "wolf-like" in appearance. However, a literal demonization occurs in a scene that was eventually dropped from the first version. In it Aleksei is visited by a nightmarish devil-like character that recalls one of Dostoevsky's self-projections. The vision is dressed in bad taste and wears a morning coat in the style of the 1870s. After bringing "greetings" from Dostoevsky, he speaks of the impoverished and dangerous peasantry for whom "human dignity is a superfluous burden."¹⁴ The fact that this vision is an incarnation of the barbaric *muzhyk* is made clear at the end of the scene. As he awakes, Aleksei cries that he has seen Petliura's men and a Jew they have killed.¹⁵ The vision is a materialization of the writer's deepest subconscious fears – the revolt of a Russian-hating peasantry. Analogous scenes recur in his other works; in them the revolutionary peasant is always painted as the quintessential ogre and bogeyman of nightmares.

The production played a key role in rehabilitating the Whites, the protsarist military, and their slogan of a single, indivisible Russia. It was a box office success that played 987 times at the Moscow Art Theatre (MKHAT) alone. In an amended version that contained the scene in which the downstairs neighbours, Vasilisa and Vanda, are robbed it was performed in 1927 in Riga, in 1928 in Berlin and Breslau, then later in Prague, London, Narva, Warsaw, and New York. Banned in the Soviet Union in February 1929, at the time of Stalin's attack on Bukharin and the Right Opposition, it was restaged in Moscow on 18 February 1932, apparently at the request of Stalin himself, who liked the play and saw it fifteen times. It continued to play to sold-out audiences. Many viewers reported being deeply moved by the "discovery" that the Whites could indeed be honourable human beings and Russian patriots. At the same time, the play reinforced disdain for the Ukrainian national movement and peasantry, which, viewers could only conclude, was more alien to the new regime than the counterrevolutionary monarchists. The "humanization" of the counterrevolutionary White officer class was, ironically, coupled with the "dehumanization" of a recalcitrant Ukrainian population. It was no accident, of course, that the revival of the play coincided with the attack on the Ukrainian national movement and the peasantry during the collectivization and famine. Nikolai Ostrovsky's propagandistic *How the Steel Was Tempered* (*Kak zakalialas stal*, 1932–34), which portrayed the fighters for independence as chauvinists and anti-semites with no redeeming features, was also canonized at this time. The book went through fifty editions before 1936. In subsequent years it was continually reprinted and used to indoctrinate secondary school youth.

Ukrainian writers protested both the one-sided portrayal of the national movement and the demeaning attitude to their language and cultural symbols. The protest, however, had no apparent effect on Stalin. Bulgakov's play became the most debated theatrical event of the postrevolutionary decade, but its political message failed to charm many viewers. Walter Benjamin, who saw the play in Moscow on 14 December 1926, called it "an absolutely revolting provocation. Especially the last act, in which the white guards 'convert' to bolshevism, is as dramatically insipid as it is intellectually mendacious. The communist opposition to the production is justified and significant. Whether this final act was added on at the request of the censors, as Reich [Benjamin's guide in Moscow] claims, or whether it was there all along has no bearing whatsoever on the assessment of the play. (The audience was noticeably different from the ones I had seen in the other two theatres. It was as if there were not a single communist present, not a black or blue tunic in sight.)"¹⁶

It is clear from Bulgakov's other writings that he viewed the Ukrainian movement as the embodiment of chaos, violence and evil. His story "I Killed" (*Ia ubil*, 1926) is a scene from Kyiv in February 1919, when Petliura's troops were losing control of the city and conducting pogroms. His stories "The Raid" (*Nalet*, 1923) and the unfinished "To a Secret Friend" (*Tainomu drugu*, 1929) relate the beating of a Jew by Cossacks. Bulgakov, however, went beyond a condemnation of atrocities committed by the nationalists. A contempt for what he perceived to be half-educated, wild, primitive, and inchoate seemed to lie at the root of his aversion to things Ukrainian. In "Kyiv-City" (*Kiev-gorod*, 1923), which was composed during a return to the city, probably to gather material for his novel and play, he expresses regret at the passing of the world of his youth. He calls Kyiv the "mother of Russian cities," a traditional imperial designation that elides its millennial history into that of Russia. He reserves particular animosity for Petliura, who has disturbed the faith in a single Russian identity and, as in his play, he ends with a wish that the tsar-like (*tsarstvennyi*) city might rise again and "the memory of Petliura might perish."¹⁷ The contempt for the half-baked is evident in his irritation at the appearance of hastily made street signs in Ukrainian, some of which are ungrammatical, although the cause of his infuriation at others appears to stem simply from his inability to understand them. Another new creation, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, whose priests are remarkably active, drives him to distraction. He is appalled that the Ukrainian language is used in church services in St Sophia's Cathedral while the Russian Orthodox serve their mass in a small nearby church festooned with ancient cobwebs. He spitefully suggests that the Ukrainians are

praying for Petliura's return – prayers, he insists, that God will not answer. The text shows a colonialist's anger at the insolence of natives who demand visibility and linguistic and cultural rights in a republic that is, at least nominally, theirs. The visitor takes his revenge on the changes by comparing the city unfavourably with his new home, Moscow. The local population is less dynamic, the city lags two years behind the Union capital (“the NEP is slowly rolling towards the periphery”), and Kyivites are cut off from the flow of information at the centre. More than this, “their putrefying proximity to places which gave birth to various Tiutiunnyks [the name of a famous commander of the Ukrainian People's Republic's army] and, finally, their belief – born of 1919 – in the fragility of earthly things” allows them to place excessive faith in marketplace gossip.¹⁸ The sniping tone manages to suggest indirectly that the current political and cultural concessions to the national movement are not permanent.

The trauma of 1919 remained with Bulgakov. His vision of a homogenized and complete Russian culture with long-established norms was thrown into confusion by the appearance of a national movement whose existence he had not suspected and continued to deny. His writings on Ukraine can be seen as an attempt to put the genie back into the bottle by reintegrating events of the period into a dominant and satisfying cultural pattern. The fact that many readers have unquestioningly accepted the portrayal of the Ukrainian revolution as a senseless and brutal force testifies to the success of his writings. The play and, especially, his novel, which is still widely used to teach students about the events of the Revolution, adopt a strategy of representational containment by denying the subaltern the ability to speak in its own voice.

Maksim Gorky, upon his triumphant return to the USSR in 1928, also made disparaging comments about the Ukrainian language when he “categorically opposed” the translation of his work and expressed amazement at the fact that efforts continued to transform the “dialect into a language.” He claimed that by doing so, Ukrainians were “oppressing the Russians [*velikorossov*] who had found themselves a minority in the region of the dialect.”¹⁹ Although confronted with this statement at the time by Ukrainian writers, Gorky never withdrew the comments and never apologized. The most celebrated and important figures in Russian literature, it seemed to many, held views similar to those of prerevolutionary chauvinists.

The growing assimilatory strength of urban Ukrainian society, however, led to a loss of discursive control by proponents of Russian hegemony, a fact that was most clearly manifest in the Literary Discussion of 1925–28. In these years a sophisticated and innovative Ukrainian

literature was being created, some of which took direct aim at the Russian attitudes. Mykola Kulish's dramatic trilogy *Myna Mazailo* (1927), *The People's Malakhii* (Narodnyi Malakhii, 1928), and *Sonata Pathétique* (1931) and Kost Burevy's *Pavlo Polubotok* (1929)²⁰ all deal with the question of Russian hegemony and the legacy of imperial rule. *Myna Mazailo* and *Sonata Pathétique* were implicit responses to Bulgakov's play. The first focuses on language politics; the second takes issue with Bulgakov's interpretation of the Revolution, providing a different picture of the social genesis of the national movement and of events. Denied permission to be shown in Ukraine, it opened in Russian translation in Moscow on 20 December 1931 and, after having a quarter of the text cut, in Leningrad on 16 January 1932. The play was banned on 24 March 1932 after being denounced by an anonymous critic in *Pravda* on 4 March 1932. The arrests of scores of Ukrainian writers began several weeks later, on 12–13 May 1932. Kulish himself was interrogated, tortured, and killed in 1937. Although the play was a success, it was poorly understood, and many viewers were disgruntled at not seeing the stereotypical portrayal of Ukrainians. Kulish's intentions were, of course, to escape preexisting discursive parameters. His plays examined the complexity and variety of political, social, and psychological responses to the Revolution in Ukraine. In doing so, they challenged received ideas of the Ukrainian identity as simple, primordial, or inchoate. The banning of his plays is an example of how entry is restricted for texts that do not fit the stereotypical idea of the other and the field is left open for works that conform to already-existing patterns. Through a process of reduction, events are simplified, issues manipulated, and an acceptable identity for the other is formulated based on literary expectations and in conformity with political requirements.²¹

Hryhorii Kosynka's "Faust" (Favst) is another significant work that demonstrates the desire to break through discursive limits. Written in 1923, the story, which remained unfinished, was published in 1942.²² It is particularly interesting because it depicts a nationally conscious peasant, in this way denying what for many Russian writers had been axiomatic in their portrayal of the village. Other characters imagine Koniushyna, the hero, to be naive and unenlightened, whereas in fact he is a shrewd, experienced, and committed partisan. His Faust-like appearance, dignified behaviour, and refusal to submit make a strong impression on other prisoners in the cell. The other characters represent different ideological camps: Klientsov is a tsarist officer and Russian chauvinist; Iatskivsky a Polish nationalist who dreams of a Poland that would include its "historical" Ukrainian territories; Beiser a sadistic jailer; Kononchuk is another Ukrainian, who represents the

illiterate, “blind” village. The conflict between the hero and Klientsov, who hates “independentists” and “bandits,” is a clash of irreconcilable enemies, but the opposition between Koniushyna and Kononchuk is the splitting of the same social type. Even their names are similar. As he is led away, the Faust (Koniushyna) gives Kononchuk his bread – a symbolic act of reaching out to the politically unconscious village.

The regime was highly sensitive to any mention of imperial conquest of foreign lands or of Russian mistreatment of Asian and native peoples. Just as the Russian author Leonid Leonov had to remove references to conquest from the Kalafat story in later editions of his *Badgers: A Novel* (Barsuki: Roman, 1924), Volodymyr Gzhytsky was similarly compelled to undertake several revisions of *The Black Lake* (Chorne ozero, 1929), a novel dealing with racist tsarist and Soviet attitudes toward the native people of the Altai region. Another group of works deals with a problem Russian authors do not explore: the need to prove one’s “internationalism” and gain acceptance with Russian communists. This is achieved by executing fellow Ukrainians in order to prove one’s loyalty, the equivalent to metaphorically killing the national within oneself. This painful reality of the revolutionary and postrevolutionary period is the subject of Borys Antonenko-Davydovych’s *Death* (Smert, 1928) and Mykola Khvylovy’s *I (Romanticism)* (Ia (Romantyka)).

When Stalin restored a large measure of discursive control in the late twenties and early thirties, this was accompanied by a reversal of the Ukrainianization policy and by massive political repression. Thousands of Ukrainian intellectuals in all walks of life (among them scholars, writers, artists, politicians, religious leaders, musicians, and actors) were arrested and executed. Many more, of course, were silenced through intimidation. The campaign of terror coincided with the collectivization of agriculture and the famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine, which, scholars now agree, took the lives of some five million people.²³ At this time outspoken anticolonialist historians such as the Ukrainian Mykhailo Yavorsky or the Russian Mikhail Pokrovsky were condemned, and the official attitude toward national liberation struggles of the non-Russian peoples against Russia was radically revised. Russian imperialism, it was declared, had been the “lesser evil” for the nations conquered by the empire; they could have fared far worse had they been incorporated into other states. Ukraine’s absorption by Russia, according to this formulation, was less of a disaster than absorption by Poland, Turkey, or Sweden would have been. The theory was first articulated in 1937 and received general recognition by 1951. It was subsequently modified and the claim advanced that conquest by Russia had been an “absolute good” that had brought untold benefits to non-Russian people.²⁴ From the thirties, therefore, the attitude toward tsarist

empire building and Russification was gradually rehabilitated in historical writings, literature, and the cinema. At the same time the concept of patriotism was modified to glorify figures and events that had strengthened the Russian state and expanded its borders. Stalin's famous toast of 24 May 1945, given at a reception in the Kremlin, signalled a complete return to the prerevolutionary idea of Russians as the leading people. He said, "I drink, above all, to the health of the Russian people, for it is the most outstanding nation of all the nations forming a part of the Soviet Union ... I toast the health of the Russian nation not only because it is the leading people, but also because it possesses a clear mind, a steadfast character and patience."²⁵ The concept was advanced of the Russian people as the "elder brother" who enjoyed seniority and was entitled to deference on the part of the "younger" Ukrainian people. The best Ukrainian writers, like Maksym Rylsky, were compelled to write poems not only glorifying the leading role of the Russian people but praising Stalin's Kremlin toast.²⁶ These formulations provided the justification in the postwar years for fierce campaigns against writers who voiced even the mildest non-Russian patriotism or who failed to acknowledge the "leading role" of Russians sufficiently. Mykhailo Braichevsky, in his celebrated dissident publication *Annexation or Unification?* (*Pryiednannia chy vozziednannia?* 1966), commented sardonically on the implication behind this theory, namely, that all oppressed nations throughout world history have struggled for independence, with the exception of the Ukrainian nation, which struggled passionately for "unification" with another nation and "against its own national independence."²⁷

From the early thirties an attempt was made to develop a Soviet patriotism that would win the allegiance of all nationalities within the USSR. It was an attempt to transcend local nationalisms by spreading the "imperial idea," albeit in a Soviet incarnation. The idea was periodically challenged by non-Russian patriotisms (in the twenties and in the post-Stalin years, for example) and frequently displaced by or blended into Russian patriotism (as Stalin's exaltation of the Russian nation demonstrates). The adoption of a more nationalistic and proimperial stance was, in the mid-twenties, greeted with enthusiasm by the accommodationist camp among emigré Russian nationalists (the *Smenovekhovtsy*). They declared their acceptance of the Soviet state on the grounds that the new régime was the legitimate heir to the empire's expansionist policy, and they were often allowed to return. Some, like Aleksei Tolstoi, became prominent literary figures. It appeared to many observers at the time that Russian emigrés, whether monarchists, *Smenovekhovtsy*, or Eurasianists, were welcome and could be repatriated as long as they voiced support for the unitary

state and expansionism. By contrast, any association with the Ukrainian People's Republic of 1917–19 or the voicing of demands for national self-determination was treated in many quarters as seditious.

RUSSIA REFUSED: MYKOLA KHVYLOVY'S
POLEMICAL PAMPHLETS (1925–26)

In 1925–26 Mykola Khvylovy mounted a forceful challenge to the idea of Russian hegemony in a series of articles that have become known as the *Polemical Pamphlets*. He argued that the “Ukrainianization” policy of the indigenous national bolsheviks had run up against the expectations of the party majority, who wished to retain Russian linguistic and cultural dominance of the republic and were working to reverse the policy. The pamphlets were both a nationalizer's protest and an expression of insecurity in the face of Russificatory demographic, linguistic, and cultural pressures. Khvylovy had already established his reputation as a leading postrevolutionary prose writer with the collections *Blue Études* (Syni etudy, 1923) and *Autumn* (Osin, 1924) when he initiated what became known as the Literary Discussion. Of his four pamphlet cycles, the first three were banned after their initial appearance in the twenties, and the fourth was not published until 1990. It was only in 1991, the year of Ukraine's independence, that the complete text of all three cycles appeared.²⁸

Comments on the *Pamphlets* by various critics and political figures in every decade since their original appearance provide ample examples of reductive and one-sided readings. Much of the recent discussion has aimed at restoring them to an honoured place in the nationalist treasury of anticolonial manifestoes.²⁹ To a great extent they are an angry, anticolonial “writing back,” a challenge to empire and hegemony. Their examination, however, in the light of postcolonial theory, suggests other possible readings and helps to recover some of the boldness of thought and playfulness of argument that made them such exhilarating reading for contemporaries. Khvylovy bolstered resistance to assimilationist ideology and answered disparagers of national movements within the USSR. However, it is, perhaps, the richness of nuance and the “problematic” aspect of his work that need recovering, because they reveal him as an ironic figure and a literary persona of considerable ideological complexity.

His persona has intrigued many critics and biographers, and his works have been interpreted in widely differing fashions. The task of exegesis is not made easier by the writer's preoccupation with mystification, masks, and political illusions and delusions. The ultimate message of his stories in fact frequently comes down to an acceptance of

the unfathomable in the human character, the conviction that life's complexity cannot be reduced to the reassuring simplicities of slogans, and the intuition that the endlessly surprising dialectic of history will make fools of all.³⁰

A playfulness, a textual richness, and an internal tension has allowed the same *Pamphlets* and stories to be seen as Marxist calls to revolutionary action and unambiguous parables warning of the communist evil. There are inconsistencies in the tone of the *Pamphlets*, which fluctuates between the positive and the ironic, the lyrical-affirmative, the cynical, and the self-flagellatory. Much of the charm of reading the text lies, in fact, in following the mercurial changes of tone, the paradoxes, and the wit. The very ebb-and-flow of Khyvlov's ideas is built upon the play of continuity and discontinuity, tradition and rupture. Even his language, peppered with expressions and calques from the Russian, has long been a source of irritation to purists,³¹ although this aspect of his writing can be seen in positive terms, as a literary attempt to assimilate and exploit the macaronic Ukrainian-Russian argot called *surzhyk*, which is common among uneducated urban strata. This language is a product of a cultural border zone, one that constitutes a rich and, until most recently, almost unacknowledged resource for the investigation of a "carnivalized" and "hybrid" reality.

Occasionally a mistake in editing or a misquote has completely altered the meaning of a passage. In a crucial paragraph describing Moscow as the centre of universal philistinism, for example, a confusion of two words has occurred: "basis" and "oasis." The correct reading of the key sentence appears to be: "Today the centre of all-Union Philistinism is Moscow, in which the proletarian factories, the Comintern and All-Union Communist Party figure as an oasis on the world scale."³² Changing one letter (from "oasis" to "basis" in Hryhorii Kostiuk's edition) identifies the factories and communist organs not as the exception but the root of philistinism, making it possible to extract an entirely different meaning.³³ Such ambiguities have long made the author's intellectual commitments disputable. His affinity with conservative thinkers like Mykola Zerov and his defence of the great books of European culture coexist with a radical political maximalism. This pungent combination has moved several critics to comment on the contradictory emotions that stirred the author.³⁴

Key terms like "culture," "Europe," and "Asiatic Renaissance" are unstable concepts. Are we to understand culture as great books and great thinkers or as all the arts of representation and communications? His image of "Europe" seems at times to be the great books and thinkers idea, at other times something closer to the second definition of culture. Defenders of Khyvlov include Hryhorii Kostiuk and Iurii

Sherekh in the forties and James Mace, whose recent article argues for a “profoundly thought-out, mature system of philosophical views.”³⁵ These authors have argued, for example, that Khvylovy’s key ideas (to imitate Europe, to develop a Ukrainian culture independent of Russia, and to adhere to the world cultural revolution that he termed the “Asiatic Renaissance”) were interrelated, compatible, and consistent. The interpretations that have been advanced in order to demonstrate consistency of thought, however, have not been convincing. Khvylovy’s thinking is stimulating and suggestive but full of inconsistencies and discontinuities.

Many of his metaphors and important symbols can be developed in opposite directions: Asia can be backwardness but also radical change and revival; Europe can be a spent force and the oppression of tradition, but it can also be cultural richness and the greatness of tradition; Ukraine is a backwater, but it also has pent-up cultural potential. Khvylovy’s invocation of history’s great catalytic figures, such as Luther, Peter the Great, Voltaire, Rousseau, Marx, and Lenin, can similarly be read in two ways. At times he offers unequivocal praise for history’s imperial midwives, at others his thought moves in the opposite direction – toward a sympathy for their victims and a condemnation of violent change. Throughout his work there appears to be a contradiction between the urge to accept, even embrace, revolutionary violence and the humane desire to reject it. The treatment of leading intellectual figures in Russian culture (Belinsky, Pisarev, Tolstoi, Dostoevsky, Mikhailovsky, Gorky) is characterized by a similar tension between attraction and repulsion. He is concerned with the role of intellectuals in history. Do they have the right to speak for the masses? To what extent do they represent progressive movements? They construct narratives of liberation, but whom do they really represent and what do they oppose? If icons of Russian radical thought like Belinsky and Gorky express the view that there is no Ukrainian literature or identity, what should be the position of a Ukrainian revolutionary toward them? Khvylovy uses a quotation from Belinsky to open the final chapter of his third pamphlet cycle, “Apologists of Scribbling” (Apolohety pysaryzmu). It reads: “If the Russians can boast a few poetical talents, they owe this above all to the proximity of their history to the history of Europe and to those elements of life assimilated from Europe. As for the Little Russians, it is ridiculous to even think that something might develop from their poetry. One could set it (Little Russian poetry) in motion only if the best, noblest sector of the Little Russian population gave up the French quadrille and began dancing the *tropak* and *hopak* once again.” Khvylovy makes the following observation: “With this eloquent and piquant quotation we do not at all

intend to accuse Belinsky of chauvinism; we wish to underline the extent to which hatred of Ukrainian poetry saturates that literature which our Muscovites advise us to learn from. This does not at all mean that we dislike this literature; it means that we are organically incapable of educating ourselves on it. Besides, we are joking; we did not cite this passage for this reason either."³⁶ The reader must consider what exactly Khylovy is saying. Is he accusing Russian writers of chauvinism, expressing admiration for Russian literature, or suggesting that this literature is vitiated by hatred of his nation? The evasiveness suggests that the issues raised were too painful and dangerous to be broached in any manner other than obliquely. In this final chapter of the *Pamphlets* to be allowed publication in his lifetime, the author began an analysis of Russian chauvinism and messianism and continued it in his fourth cycle, "Ukraine or Little Russia?" which could only be circulated privately.

The most common interpretation of Khylovy is that he represented what Dmytro Dontsov called a *cri de cœur* against the Russian Empire.³⁷ Observers have seen his orientation to Europe's past and Asia's future as anti-imperial reflexes, conscious attempts to imagine Ukraine outside the sphere of Russian dominance. This view has been presented as an ultimate explanation, a key to his system. According to it, the project of cultural nationalization was to be aided by the examples of the West and East, and the republic's Russified urban population would be encouraged to "reidentify" with a resurgent Ukrainian culture. Although the Ukrainianization of education, the administrative bureaucracy, and industry had to continue, a psychological reorientation of individuals was urgently required.

Khylovy's anti-Russianness, although axiomatic for many readers, is more problematic than is often admitted. The phrase most frequently attributed to him, "Away from Moscow!" was never used by him. It first appeared in Stalin's letter of 26 April 1926 and was the latter's distillation of Khylovy's views. The Ukrainian writer's actual words were, "by which of the world's literatures should we set our course? *On no account by the Russian.* This is definite and unconditional. Our political union must not be confused with literature. Ukrainian poetry must flee as quickly as possible from Russian literature and its styles."³⁸ The context confirms that Khylovy was focusing on the need to assert a cultural identity that had been saturated by the notion of Russian hegemony. That identity had now to be reasserted and revitalized in literature and the arts. The writer, in short, was arguing for a new kind of cultural product that would reject and transcend the imagery of cultural colonialism. The main point was a new aesthetic and a remodelled cultural life. At the same time he was admitting a typical

postcolonial malaise – the difficulty of escaping imperial structures of thought and feeling for writers and artists whose education had been thoroughly shaped by them.

The creative problem is frequently elided into the political by commentators. From Khvylovy's earliest appearance in print, however, it was the former that consumed him. The *Pamphlets* began as a public exploration of a personal and national self-representation, making explicit the dilemmas implicit in his fiction. Like most of his contemporaries, Khvylovy was educated on nineteenth-century Russian literature, debates between Westernizers and Slavophiles, discussions of "superfluous" and "new" men, and populism and Marxism. In his most anti-Russian diatribe, the suppressed "Ukraine or Little Russia?" written in 1926, he says: "Russian literature was for us a ray of light in a dark kingdom. We knew how to cry over *The Storm*, how to dream in *Literary Musings*, how to sense the "laughing sea" in the "green-eyed Malva's" pupils, knew how to recognize the depths of Dostoevsky's psychoanalyses, to sense the breadth of *War and Peace* and to shudder when the night watchman's clapper sounded in *The Cherry Orchard*.³⁹ We know Russian literature and, on its behalf, feel painfully insulted that bureaucrats are today defending it."⁴⁰ In the same way as Salman Rushdie admits ambivalence toward Kipling or Edward Said toward Conrad, Khvylovy reveals both nostalgia for a formative cultural influence and a desire to move beyond it.

The rejection of Russian literature's tutorship therefore needs to be set against the writer's reverence for it and recognition of its potency. Even the structure of Khvylovy's imaginative universe is markedly Russian in inspiration. He develops major themes in Russian literature: the intellectual and the masses, revolution and tradition, the call (echoing Chaadayev and Belinsky) for brilliant minds to get the nation thinking. The form of the argument, an encoding of social, political, and cultural issues in character analysis, is a method assimilated from nineteenth-century Russian critics. Khvylovy's real name was, of course, Fitolov. He was the son of a Russian schoolmaster and was steeped in this tradition. Nineteenth-century Russian classics were his touchstones. Even in his final despondency, in the moments before his suicide, it was Pushkin's "Demons" (*Besy*) that he played on the guitar to his friends.

Patterns of thought and feeling assimilated from Russian writers also pervade his fiction. Critics have drawn attention to the influence of the Serapion brotherhood and Andrei Bely on his imagery and thought. Another insufficiently acknowledged but deeply felt influence was Dostoevsky. The Russian writer's pitting of egos against alter egos and dialogic exploration of ideas had a deep influence on his

Ukrainian admirer. Two of Khyvlovyy's most discussed fictional characters, both from *Woodsnipes* (Valdshnepy, 1926), recall Dostoevsky. They are Dmytro Karamazov, a Ukrainian who suffers a Russian sickness, and Ahlaia, a Russian who, in rejecting her homeland, has become a fanatical Ukrainian. The mysterious "Muscovite" Ahlaia is identified as the descendant of an illustrious ancestor, who, the reader is led to think, might have been a cossack leader. The novel dramatizes the Ukrainian consciousness at war with itself, struggling to clarify its identity and place in history. The debate between Dmytro and Ahlaia is a dialogic investigation of the schizophrenic Ukrainian identity. This novel, Khyvlovyy's most explicit fictional treatment of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, was written at the same time as the last two cycles of his *Pamphlets* and echoes its arguments. Although the novel's concluding section was printed, the entire print run was destroyed, and no copy has ever been found, a circumstance that allows for a permanently "open" ending and for the advancement of a variety of interpretations. Whatever the conclusion was (most speculations lean toward the victory of the determined, passionate Ahlaia) it is clear that the work expresses the same anxiety of influence and fear of creative impotence that Khyvlovyy had voiced in his *Pamphlets*.⁴¹ A similar structure of characterization that contrasts a sceptic with a believer occurs in other stories. In most, however, the utopian idealists die with their dreams unrealized, as is the case, for example, in one of his best stories, "Blue November" (Synii lystopad), where the idealist's death ends the relationship and leaves in doubt the political issue that has divided the couple.

Woodsnipes is an answer to Dostoevsky's emotional nationalism. In Dostoevsky's *Idiot* Prince Myshkin arrives from abroad to find his country in a decayed condition. He attempts to propagate a new collective feeling, a communion of the national imagination emancipated from corrupting Western influences. Khyvlovyy's Ahlaia also arrives in Ukraine with an invigorating, unificatory message. She is an apostle of courage and daring who wishes her countrymen to turn their backs on subordination and freely develop their own identity. In Dostoevsky's novel *Nastasia Filipovna* had written to Aglaia that "an abstract love of mankind almost always boils down to a love of one's own self." Commenting on this passage, Thomas Masaryk argues that humanism was "neither supra-national nor anti-national" but could only in practice be expressed "through labour on behalf of one's own people."⁴² Dostoevsky "would have been right" if he had expressed his humanism in terms of a love of Russia, but for him the moral idea is precursor to the national. His Russia is "Holy Russia" and the Russian people a "God-folk." In Dostoevsky's view Russia alone is holy, its

people alone hold the key to salvation. In Masaryk's view, "Messianism and universalism are transformed into Russian imperialism."⁴³ At the time of writing *The Idiot*, Dostoevsky made some of his most fanatical statements concerning the moral elevation of the Russian spirit, the messianic destiny of this "great nation," and its infinite superiority to all others. Much of this was incorporated into Prince Myshkin's harangue at the engagement party in the final chapters of the book.⁴⁴ Dostoevsky's ideology confused the ethical-universal (the idea that Russia would install a Christian rule of goodness and justice on earth) with the egoistic-imperialistic (which argued for the extension of Russian political power).⁴⁵

The Ahlaia of *Woodsnipes* represents a reaction against this messianic and mystical ideology in its contemporary communist/Russian nationalist symbiosis. She not only understands it clearly but recognizes the need to counter it with an equally potent ideology. In its place she offers a mirror image in the form of a messianic faith in a resurgent Ukraine as a well-spring of liberationist ideals and anti-imperialist struggle. Ahlaia's views are not, of course, necessarily to be identified with Khylovy, but they resemble ideas that he expressed in his polemical writings at this time and that have been attributed to him by radical nationalists and leading intellectuals of the interwar nationalist generation, in particular by Dmytro Dontsov and Ievhen Malaniuk.

Today's Sumska oblast, where Khylovy was raised, is part of the core Ukrainian territory that has interfaced with Russia for centuries, a land with no natural boundaries that has always met and resisted the influence of its Northern neighbour. The geography of this region plays an important role in the writer's works, mixing evocative historical memories (the burial mounds of soldiers killed in the battle of Poltava) and suggestions of an inscrutable identity (an "Asiatic" land of murmuring pine forests). This imagery constructs Ukraine as a land of sweeping vistas stretching to the North and East, an exposed plain in the path of migrating armies. The geography is an appropriate backdrop to his dominant concern, the struggle to remember one's history and shape one's identity in the face of past conquests, to reinvent oneself as a modern nation. Khylovy can, in short, be seen in terms similar to the way Homi Bhabha has described Fanon's divide between black skin and white masks, not as "a neat division" but as "a doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once ... It is not the Colonialist Self or the Colonised Other, but the disturbing distance in between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness."⁴⁶ The other within oneself and oneself within the other was Khylovy's disturbing theme.

Khylovy's works were important in articulating a twentieth-century Ukrainian identity. In his *Pamphlets* and *Woodsnipes* he draws attention

to psychological and cultural issues of importance to Ukrainian nation-builders, away from the disparagement of local nationalism to its theorization as indispensable for the decolonizing project. He employs a standard tactic of anti-imperial writing by reevaluating the empire-nation opposition in favour of the second term: Ukrainian literature is portrayed as closer to Europe⁴⁷ and Russian as incurably infected with the bacilli of imperialism.⁴⁸ He is careful to stress his rejection of Russia's colonial myths, its degenerate contemporary condition, but not all its cultural accomplishments. His advice to flee from Russian literature is the refusal of a literature formed by and implicated in imperialism, a literature that was blocking the emergence of an anti-imperial consciousness. The culprit is the Russian intellectual tradition, but Ukrainians are deeply implicated in its creation.

Although his works were less successful in catalyzing the crucial Russian-Ukrainian dialogue that had to occur, they were, nonetheless, addressed in some measure to the Russian public and to Russified Ukrainians. "Ukraine or Little Russia?" is as much a commentary on Russian problems and obsessions, an exploration of imperial sicknesses as it is a commentary on the Ukrainian colonial mentality. The writer himself was in many ways a product of Russian literature, familiar with its insights and aware of its blindnesses. He challenged Russian liberals and revolutionaries to break with their regressive imperial history, which was perverting their consciousness: "In contemporary Russian ethnographic romanticism such an idealization of past Razins and Pugachevs fuses with a sense of Russian "imperial" patriotism and obscures dreams concerning the future. It is incapable of going beyond this. The great Russian literature has reached its limits and has halted at the crossroads."⁴⁹

The colonial myths embedded in classical Ukrainian literature were equally to be shunned. The optimistic philosophy inherited from the Enlightenment by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers like Skovoroda and Kvitka, their conviction that the way things are is necessarily the way they should be, might have been adequate for an age that believed firmly in the people's survival, but it had become a dangerously complacent attitude in the twenties. It is criticized by Khvylovy in his story "Ivan Ivanovych," which portrays a postrevolutionary Candide convinced that "all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds." This attack on quietism and complacency is another common postcolonial reflex.

It led to accusations of anti-Ukrainianness. The strongest of these accusations concern his criticism of the national populist tradition and Shevchenko. It was Khvylovy's view that Ukrainian writers should create a new poetics and take responsibility for developing a new self-

image. He criticized Shevchenko for overemphasizing the nation's victimization and underestimating the importance of self-assertive activity. This was a call to break with the stereotype of the helpless victim. His attacks on quietism were stimulated by a sense of cultural weakness, a lurking fear that the cultural construction of the twenties might stall and fail. After all, if in the modern world nations and national cultures can be constructed and deconstructed, power is vital to their survival. The vitality of the ethnos in which Skovoroda and Kvitka believed is not eternal. It is a force that acts blindly, often misguidedly, and requires intellectuals to shape, guide, and provide it with an identity. Without them it has difficulty withstanding the pressures of foreign hegemonies.

Here, perhaps, lies the explanation for Khylovy's definition of himself and his revolutionary generation as "Romantic" and of his style as "Active Romanticism." Fearing the persistence and resilience of cultural colonialism, he demanded its displacement. Literature was to administer the shock required to shake people out of their ideological conditioning by overturning the crippling colonial myths. Khylovy's stated task was to inspire young people to think about the question of representation in literature and the arts. To do so, he attempted to develop a public debate on imperial/colonial relations. The *Pamphlets* and the fiction stimulated interest in the issue and in the short-lived journals he founded, *Vaplite* (1927) and *Literary Market* (*Literaturnyi iarmarok*, 1929). They excelled in the deconstruction of both colonial and anticolonial myths and provided a liberating self-confidence, a playful, ironic writing now associated with a postcolonial perspective, in which the writer recombines mythologies in order to redefine contemporary consciousness.

SUBVERSIVE STORIES:

VIKTOR DOMONTOVYCH'S EARLY NOVELS

Viktor Petrov graduated from the University of Kyiv in 1918 and became a prominent scholar in the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences created by the Ukrainian People's Republic and continued by the Soviet régime. For the next twenty years he filled many important positions in the academy, among them secretary of the Historical Dictionary Commission and director of the Ethnographic Commission. Until he stopped publishing in the thirties, he was also known in literary circles as Viktor Domontovych, a prose writer and member of the neoclassicist circle around Mykola Zerov. During the Second World War, after the academy had been moved to the Urals, he suddenly reappeared in occupied Kharkiv, where he worked for the German Propagandastaffel

editing the journal *Ukrainian Seeding* (Ukrainskyi zasiv). After the evacuation of Kharkiv he retreated with the German front. In the postwar years, which witnessed a burst of literary activity in the camps that housed displaced persons, he once again became a productive writer and, by virtue of his intellectual stature and organizational abilities, played a leading role in the formation of the emigré Ukrainian literary organization MUR. Iurii Sherekh called him “one of the greatest, if not the greatest intellectual figures in the emigration.”⁵⁰ On 18 April 1949 he suddenly and inexplicably disappeared, resurfacing just as mysteriously in 1956 in Kyiv as the senior staff member at the Academy of Sciences Institute of Archaeology and as its director of scientific archives. In the years that followed he wrote scores of articles on ethnography, excavated Trypillian and Proto-Slavic settlements, and investigated ancient burial mounds and Scythian artifacts,⁵¹ but he no longer worked as a creative writer. In 1965 the public learned that he had been honoured with a medal for his achievements as a Soviet spy. He died in 1969. The involvement with the Soviet secret police remains a controversial and unexplained issue. Shevelov has denied this possibility, maintaining that Petrov was probably kidnapped, imprisoned, and only allowed to return to active scholarly life in the post-Stalin thaw.⁵²

Domontovych was known for a deep scepticism and a penchant for irony and mystification. These characteristics appeared to be the product of hostility toward the Soviet state, technological society, and the avant-garde, aversions that had to be concealed and therefore appeared in veiled fictional form in the twenties. According to this interpretation, the erudite and sophisticated author stood outside the fanaticisms of his day, seeking to quietly puncture and deflate them.⁵³ However, in the immediate postwar years in Germany Petrov was also known as a literary historian (who signed his articles, V. Petrov) and a philosopher (who used the pseudonym V. Ber). There is nothing tentative about Petrov-Ber, who argues:

there is only one history, not many: it is impossible for literature to have its separate history, painting its own, philosophy, the natural sciences, etc., each their own. Just as there cannot be many histories, there are not and cannot be many historical periodizations in each sphere. It is therefore impossible for literature to have one periodization and for politics or art to have another. There is only one history and therefore only one historical periodization. Literature does not exist alone. It exists in its dependance on a given historical epoch, carries all the signs of the given historical age and changes with the age.⁵⁴

In vigorous polemics with other academics Petrov-Ber put forward the new teaching on the unified mentality of an age. A corollary to this

thesis was the belief in periodic spiritual-artistic revolutions – radical paradigm shifts that fundamentally redefine all aspects of a culture. The scholar saw the contemporary period as undergoing such a shift and denounced the previous generation’s outdated populism: “Historically, the twenties and thirties had to complete the move from ethnographic-populist positions to national ones ... The people consolidated themselves into a nation. Ethnographic provincialism was transformed into an organic whole of national action.”⁵⁵ His “revolutionary” generation had completed the shift to a national awareness and nation-building action. They had no time for conciliation: “Our predecessors spoke of development and progress. For us the word evolution has already lost its taste. We speak not of progress, but of catastrophe and crisis, of negation and not of agreement ... In the early twenties, the most pressing problem was drawing a distinction between two currents: the populist and the anti-populist.”⁵⁶

The quotations reveal a determined, impatient modernizer and nationalist who was demanding a radical reshaping of culture in line with national political requirements – something Ukrainian modernists had insisted upon since the turn of the century and had championed, particularly in the prewar journal *Ukrainian Home* (*Ukrainska khata*).⁵⁷ The militant, uncompromising tone of these quotations, however, and their conflation of art and politics also recall formalist views of revolutionary change in the artistic sphere and the avant-garde’s idea of a total aesthetico-political project.⁵⁸ There is a clue here to the decoding of Domontovych’s fiction, in which the radically new clashes with the old. The new art-politics in his fiction calls for mastering nature and altering all aspects of social and cultural life.⁵⁹ The conflicts between and within the characters of Domontovych’s fiction reflect this discourse of the twenties concerning modernizing change. A particular focus of the novels is the clash between avant-gardism and neoclassicism.⁶⁰ They both reject the legacy of populism and pre-1914 Ukrainian modernism. Populism is despised for its didacticism and apotheosis of the *narod*, modernism for its subjectivism, cult of feeling, and lack of intellectual rigour. Avant-gardism and neoclassicism each project a new type of consciousness. The avant-garde, represented by the futurists and constructivists, develops iconoclastic forms that capture their vision of a dynamic, urban, technocratic modernity.⁶¹ Neoclassicism, on the other hand, counterposes a cool scepticism to the revolutionary fervour.

This conflict serves as a structuring principle in Domontovych’s two early, acclaimed novels, *Girl with Teddybear* (*Divchynka z vedmedykom*, 1928) and *Doctor Seraphicus* (*Doktor Serafikus*, 1947) and in the programmatic story “Eckerhardt and Gozzi,” written in 1925 for a planned but never-published anthology of neoclassicist writings. All

these works date from the twenties, although *Doctor Seraphicus* was only published in Munich in 1947 and bears the marks of some later revisions. They deal with the inevitably tragic fate of the characters who adopt the avant-garde's response to modernity, whose strivings for the new are frustrated by biology (innate and hereditary factors) and tradition (historically sanctioned attitudes and behaviour). The "avant-garde" characters reject the authority of European classics, are passionately committed to social and spiritual transformation, and explore new forms of sexual relationships. The counterposition is presented by the "neoclassicist" characters, whose behaviour is informed by an awareness of the European literary tradition, scepticism toward the possibility of revolutionary change, and demureness and self-control in matters of the heart.

In *Girl with a Teddy Bear* a bookish young scientist is appointed tutor to two young daughters of a successful industrial planner, one of the new Soviet men. The teacher, Ipolit Mykhailovych Varetsky, becomes infatuated with the younger girl, Zyna, and their worlds collide. He is blinkered, emotionally naive, and to a large extent still tradition-bound. She, at the age of sixteen, has already assimilated the ideas of the futurists concerning the need to destroy the old art and morality and proceeds to put into practice her ideas of sexual liberation and personal freedom, with devastating results.

Zyna represents an attitude to life and a manner of conduct that is widely shared. Stefan Khominsky, a parody of the futurist poet and a spirit of the time, is her acquaintance. But the radical morality of these young people is part of an entire social atmosphere. Older men who are involved in developing the technological society are also affected. They include Ipolit Mykhailovych, Panas Hryhorovych, and Semen Kuzmenko – all parodic portraits of the optimistic captains of industry and heroes of the construction novels of their day, who herald the new and throw out the old. The Achilles' heel of all these "new" people is a lack of cultural breadth and a limited understanding of human nature – especially of their own emotional lives. Zyna, the youngest product of this brave new world, is therefore mimicking an accepted, indeed mandatory, style, and applying its theoretical premises in her personal life.

The *reductio ad absurdum* of the new religion of reason and the unsentimental, utilitarian morality is represented by the figure of Mykola Butsky. Having fallen on hard times, he has been reduced to selling matchboxes on the street. Eventually he murders his wife, but before carrying out the killing, he discusses it for several weeks with passers-by. It is clear that he considers the act a "logical" solution to his predicament: his motivation is a "rational" desire to relieve suffering.

This episode is closely related to Ipolit Mykhailovych's thoughts concerning Machiavelli and the need to plan social behaviour. Discussing terror in Machiavelli, the hero muses: "Love is not always soft and gentle; sometimes it is cruel and severe. And often in an act that at first sight appears brutal and monstrous one can observe the lofty impulse of a spirit devoted to love."⁶² Shevelov has written of the importance of this episode for an understanding of the text, which in his view is a study of "uncontrolled human behaviour and the contradiction between intention and action."⁶³ He also suggests that Domontovych foresaw the terror of the 1930s carried out in the name of humanity's future happiness: "Domontovych not only affirmed the irrational nature of man and the impossibility of establishing the kingdom of reason. He went further. He stated that those propagating the idea of reason's domination were themselves irrational."⁶⁴

The moral experiments of Zyna and Mykola Butsky are linked to the dominant art-politics of the twenties. *Girl with Teddy Bear* is a critique of a generation that is in the grip of a myopic, heedlessly aggressive determination to reshape society and human nature in the name of a new, supposedly rational order. The writer's concerns, however, reach beyond the immediate postrevolutionary situation. His books raise wider issues that stem from the encounter with modernity: the consequences for society of a loss of faith in religion, the transference of this faith to reason and progress, the fear that at the root of all human conduct there might lie a fundamental irrationality.⁶⁵

The prewar generation of Ukrainian modernism is presented as offering an inadequate alternative to the new reality of the twentieth century, especially to the "irrational" faith in reason. It can suggest only an escape into a symbolist dream-world, represented by Maria Ivanivna, or into the philologist's paradoxes, represented by Vasyl Hryb, who produces a cynical, oxymoronic wisdom. The only real opposition to the new politics and aesthetic of rupture comes from Zyna's sister, Lesia, who represents the neoclassicist model of restraint, "all within the canonical exactness of iambic tetrameter and classical versification."⁶⁶ She behaves with dignity and stoical resignation, accepting the time-honoured role of wife and mother. In one exchange with her sister, Lesia expresses admiration for Goethe's Iphigenia. Characteristically, her younger sister Zyna passionately disavows tragic victim-heroines like Goethe's Iphigenia and Margarita. She expresses a determination to shape life to her will.

Zyna and Ipolit end in tragedy because of a fatal blindness. Ipolit Mykhailovych, by trusting to reason alone, fails to grasp his own love for Zyna or to understand her motives and ends by driving her to more willful and, finally, catastrophic acts. She escapes to Berlin, where

he is unable to find her. In the end not his powers of observation or deduction but his subconscious mind reveals to him in a dream that the woman he witnessed shooting her companion in a Berlin night club was, in fact, Zyna. The hero observed but was unable to see until it was too late. Both Ipolit Mykhailovych and Zyna are products of the new world and its project of a functional, "rational" alternative to the old. Lesia, on the other hand, represents the timeless lessons of moderation and harmony. She does not "belong to today," she is "beyond time and place," her today is a "repeated yesterday."⁶⁷

The older Ipolit Mykhailovych Varetsky, however, still finds himself attracted to the old symbolist aesthetic of pre-1914 modernism. His trip to the beach with Maria Ivanivna contains an epiphany, a mystical moment in which the unity of all things is sensed: "Solitude, silence, sun, sand, willow bushes. You can lie on the beach for hours motionlessly looking at the azure of the sky. Your sight disappears into infinity. In the endless azure time loses itself, consciousness, "the ego," everything that was and will be."⁶⁸ In these contemplative moments Varetsky recaptures the attitudes and sentiments of his youth that were formed by the transcendental yearnings of the symbolists and other authors of the prewar modernist period. This makes him partly a transitional figure, a man still under the spell of the subjective dream-spinning of this ineffectual generation. To this old aesthetic, the new futurist-constructivist generation has counterposed the destruction of all art, illusion, and mysticism in the name of lucidity. Varetsky calls Zyna "too intelligent to attach importance and significance to values that the previous generation had considered rules, principles, norms and morals. For Zyna there was nothing forbidden ... With lucid consciousness she observed herself, Lesia, myself, her feelings, the environment, people, objects, events, ideas, and facts. She liked to proclaim thoughts that loudly and incongruously contradicted the quiet atmosphere of the Tykhmenev household ... She spoke as though she wanted to destroy everything others considered untouchable and sacred."⁶⁹

The adolescent Zyna expects that revolt will lead to passion and will usher in a new consciousness and a spiritual emancipation: "She thought that *love* would be something bigger than *loving*, that *love* would turn to ashes the ashes of days and weeks of routine, that in love the azure dream of an unknown future would blossom."⁷⁰ This, however, does not occur. Instead, she destroys herself. In words that prefigure Maiakovsky's suicide note by seven years, Zyna composes her final communication: "We sought improbable truths. We did not find them. Life broke us."⁷¹

The plot of *Doctor Seraphicus* follows a similar pattern. The dry pedantic hero, Vasyl Khrysanfovych Komakha, who is known to his

friends as Seraphicus, teaches reflexology (a form of behaviourism) and the scientific organization of labour (Taylorism and assembly-line management techniques). His study of abstractions and the general principles of group behaviour has done nothing to prepare him for contact with psychological complexities. Naive concerning his own emotions and incapable of understanding those of others, he is the victim of an experiment in free love by the beautiful Ver Elsner. She, like Zyna in the previous novel, is part of an avant-garde milieu that also includes her friend Korvyn, the constructivist painter, whose abstract forms represent plastic analogies to Seraphicus' abstract principles of behavioural and organizational science.

Seraphicus feels a strong urge to father a child. He hears the call of biology but cannot answer it through normal sexual relations. His sterile rationalism suggests the idea of giving birth "by the most rational method, namely by avoiding the participation in this matter of a woman."⁷² Another disastrous experiment, this time in love "without strings," is initiated by Ver. Like all experiments in Domontovych's world, this one receives rational elaborations and is the result of willfulness. Komakha does not accept the impossibility of childbirth without women nor Ver the impossibility of a purely sexual relationship, if they so will. Both experiments fail because some laws and constants in human nature have been overlooked. Seraphicus does not conceive and Ver makes Komakha fall in love with her. Nature takes her revenge on both characters.

The cubist portrait of Komakha-Seraphicus emphasises the abstract, the product of rational experimentation: "Komakha had a disproportionately large head with a protruding forehead, and on his broad muscular nose, instead of glasses, he had complex lenses which refracted the light into geometrical flashes – triangles, cubes, squares. The geometricised light seemed to transform itself into mathematical schemes. His heavy lenses appeared to serve not for seeing the world and people, but for experimenting with light."⁷³ The rationalist aesthetic and morality meet resistance and failure everywhere. Tetiana Berens, like Maria Ivanivna in the first book, is a member of the prerevolutionary symbolist-modernist generation. She rejects the constructivist Korvyn because she seeks marriage and a family. Taisa Pavlivna, who like Lesia in the first novel represents the ideals of moderation and harmonious development, leaves Komakha. The five-year-old Irtsia, who is charmingly spontaneous and frank, also serves as a contrast to Komakha's alienation.

There is also a brief sketch of an earlier, perhaps homosexual, relationship with Korvyn.⁷⁴ The importance of this episode lies in its connection with a time when "infatuation, tenderness and devotion"

were the fashion, when ineffable, “azure” dreams were dominant. “There are such absent, fantastic, ephemeral moods, which are never realized, which in reality do not exist. They are no more than expectations, bright sunny expectations that somewhere in the world there is another, different, better life.”⁷⁵ This statement could refer to the symbolist-modernist youth of both Komakha and Koryn, but it is strongly suggestive of the first year of the revolution, a time of enthusiasm when hopes for an independent Ukrainian state were at their height. It is a mood most famously reflected in Pavlo Tychyna’s brilliant collection of poems entitled *Sunny Clarinets* (*Soniashni kliarnety*, 1918). The Komakha-Koryn relationship appears to have coincided with this atmosphere of social elation captured by Ukraine’s greatest symbolist poet.

As in the first novel, the denouement is preceded by a journey, which this time it is to Mohyliv and which underscores the hero’s complete estrangement from his surroundings. He has boarded the wrong train and thinks he is in Kamianets. The humorous discussion with the sullen cab-driver, who is prepared to drive the customer anywhere and to go along with his whims, hides another meaning. The cab driver offers to travel “left, right or forward,” however he is instructed, but is adamant that there never was a street named Petrohradska and that no street in the city by that name has recently been renamed Leninhradska. Political leaders, this appears to suggest, can change street names, construct and deconstruct history and morality, but these are surface phenomena. Beneath there remains a firmly unchanging reality – something the simple cab driver understands. Like politicians who are in the grip of self-deluding ideologies, Komakha-Seraphicus has superimposed a false geography and itinerary on a real city. Unable to admit his mistake and afraid of losing face, he is relieved to return to his room in Kyiv and resolves not to venture out again. There is an obvious warning here against the machine age (the train carries him off to an unexpected place) and the danger of abstract constructs. As though to emphasise these points, the episode is immediately followed by Ver’s disastrous experiment in free love.

The clash between neoclassicism and avant-gardism over the issue of modernity was not without paradoxes. As has been shown, the scholar-philosopher Petrov-Ber, like the futurists and constructivists depicted in Domontovych’s fiction, was himself attracted to abstract forms. An intransigent structuralist, during the polemics of the forties in Germany he could write: “we establish the laws of poetics not by researching the material, natural or external environment from which a work arises, not the country’s climate, the society and biography of a writer, but only the given work, its internal structure. Its internal

structure, which grows out of itself, defines the work's essence, its characteristic features. Form has an independent existence. Matter, as such, does not exist; there are only forms of matter."⁷⁶ Structure revealed the meaning of an individual work, the character of a period or an epoch. This idea of a complex pattern linking form, style, and epoch had been assimilated from Heinrich Wölfflin's *Renaissance und Barock* (1888) and *Die Klassische Kunst* (1899) and from the teachings of Russian formalists. An elegant historiographic scheme was used by Petrov-Ber to "emplot history," frame events and explain individual behaviour. It dominates his writings on literary and intellectual history.⁷⁷

Was not the totalizing view of style Petrov-Ber proposed also the dogmatic imposition of an abstract scheme on life's multiplicity? Would it not necessarily require a standardization in order that the criteria of typification be met? Domontovych's own novels push the historiographic argument with pedantic insistence – a fact noticed by critics, who have spoken of sections that sound like essays inserted into the text⁷⁸ and who have described the "collision around feelings" as reminiscent of "an algebraic problem."⁷⁹ Why would the scholar Petrov-Ber, who adamantly defended the necessity of philosophical abstractions and revolutionary, modernizing change, allow his alter ego, the writer Domontovych, to produce fiction that apparently undermined these convictions? There appear to be two answers. First, Domontovych's argument is not with reason as such but with its excesses, its reduction to mathematical concepts, its exclusion of whatever in material reality could not be translated into a language of formulas. It was this kind of consciousness, he felt, that ran the risk of simply detecting everywhere one and the same pattern. This was a problem the writer would have known from Kant's discussion of the relationship between the noumenal and the phenomenal. The schemes and experiments of Domontovych's characters spring from minds that are disconnected from experience or can draw only on a narrow emotional, lived experience. Second, Domontovych was concerned with the implications for human freedom of any radical social engineering. He could see that the demystificatory and emancipatory projects of "revolutionary literature" posed fundamental problems: the crisis of legitimacy that followed the loss of faith in humanist or post-Enlightenment values and the moral dilemmas posed by the exercise of power.⁸⁰

For all the potential dangers of schematism, the analysis of character through conflicting period styles in his novels is engaging because the author allows for a subtle layering of traits. For example, Ver Elsner's intellectual evolution is shown as moving from populism, through symbolism-modernism and futurism-constructivism to a final denial of

the value and significance of art. The chapter in which this is outlined could stand on its own as an essay on the evolution of literary styles from 1910 to 1930. It also represents character as a construct of several historical periods. A similar analysis based on period styles serves as the methodology for an “in-depth” characterization of Seraphicus, Korvyn, and Tetiana Berens in *Doctor Seraphicus* and for Zyna, Stefan Khomytsky, and Maria Ivanivna in *Girl with a Teddy-Bear*.

A more nuanced characterization is also achieved through the accumulation of nicknames and aliases. Ipolit Mykhailovych Komakha is also known as Seraphicus and referred to by the narrator several times as mastodon (*mastodont*), a reference to his size that also suggests a pun on the author’s own name, Domontovych. The need to rename and redefine Komakha is felt by Irtsia, who calls him “pups” (a small doll). Korvyn, who denies the previous generation’s cult of feelings (“We disregard feelings,” he says of his contemporaries), as though rejecting his own past, calls Komakha “a gnome, a homuncule, a paper doll.”⁸¹ This play with naming produces a shifting, multifaceted impression, a counterpart to the earlier cubist physical description.

Another layering of features is achieved through literary allusion. References to Goethe’s heroines and Machiavelli are important cases, but there are many more. Hans Christian Andersen’s “Nightingale and Rose,” Gogol’s *Marriage*, and Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*, as well as Savonarola, Thomas Campion, Seneca, and Plato are among the literary works and historical figures that serve in *Girl with Teddybear* as devices of allusive characterization and veiled plot commentary. Many references are to classical and Renaissance texts. The intertextual game can be read as a defence of the European humanist tradition then under attack from radicals: the neoclassicist sees permanence beneath the surface of change, the irony of repeated literary patterns and archetypes surfacing in the contemporary revolt against tradition. At the same time, it signals the author’s anxiety over the death of the subject in a modern world of broken images and self-reflections. In the wake of the collapse of belief in progress and the values of humanism, the new subject can be constructed only from fragments.⁸²

Domontovych’s characterization to a certain degree complicates and subverts the schematism of Petrov-Ber. The novelist appears to be working out the implications for human character of theoretical premises advanced by the historian and philosopher while at the same time suggesting that there are limitations of theory and that contradictory drives are present in human conduct.

The books raise the moral issue of the legitimate use of power. What right does the new have to destroy the aesthetic and the worldview of the old? If a character’s identity is bound up with a paradigm, then

to destroy it is to do violence to the individual. Perhaps people are better off with their illusions? Ipolit Mykhailovych at one point says: "But having destroyed this illusion, what did I achieve? Did I feel some relief? Did I recapture peace and my former spiritual balance? No! Well, then? Would it not have been better to continue living in anticipation of this impossible meeting, which until now had governed my actions?"⁸³ The price of modernity for the main protagonists – Varetsky, Zyna, Komakha, Elsner – is shown to be cultural dislocation and rootlessness. Cut adrift spiritually, denied access to tradition and the literary classics, their understanding of human nature is impoverished. This message makes the two novels subversive of the politics of human engineering self-confidently advocated by Russian utopian thinkers from Chernyshevsky to the revolutionaries of the twenties. It required little imagination on the part of readers to detect a critique of cultural homogenization and the forced marches to progress that had been a feature of Russian imperial history. The imperial state had felt the impact of forced experiments in social planning since Peter's time. In this context the eternal cab-driver represents sullen popular resistance. His aimless and unnecessary wandering might also be seen as an ironic comment on Gogol's famous ending to *Dead Souls*, in which "Rus" is portrayed as a *troika* careering into an unknown future. The Ukrainian intelligentsia that is captive to these schemes, the writer appears to suggest, is estranged from social realities, in the same way as Komakha is from the Mohyliv cab driver.

The need to construct a totalizing view of the world is natural. It is the five-year-old Irtsia's instinctive desire. Her world-picture relies on an idiosyncratic logic that assimilates any unexpected facts into a complete picture. She believes that Komakha is the father of insects (*komakha* means insect) and constructs a theory that he travels far into the distance to become tiny, then climbs into ant holes. The narrator comments: "The logical structure of the expressed thought was impeccable. Everything unnecessary had been eliminated, leaving a single mental construct that held nothing superfluous or extraneous."⁸⁴ This desire to produce a mental construct that would be fully explanatory leads to the suppression of disconcerting facts. Irtsia's thinking is linked to that of Komakha-Seraphicus, the futurist-constructivists, imperial monologues, and all monistic, totalizing systems. Irtsia, however, is a child who might be expected to learn distinctions between fantasy and fact later in life. Her conceptualizations, however eccentric, are harmless because they remain in the realm of fantasy. In the adult world, fantasies can become dangerous illusions, rigidified dogmas that direct personal behaviour and political practice. Domonovych sensed the frightening consequences that could result when

immature minds move to implement totalizing theories, when a discussion of concepts becomes an “engineering” of people. The author’s novels pose the question of how to prevent potential disasters. He implicitly suggests a solution in the study of the humanities. A knowledge of history and literature, by developing an imaginative identification with another time and mentality, can reduce fanaticism.

For readers in the twenties, the image of a fountain, a source of knowledge, would have conjured up Mykola Zerov’s defence, in *Ad Fontes* (Do dzherel), of the European literary and philosophical heritage. He argued: “let us not avoid ancient or even feudal Europe. Let us not fear that it will contaminate us. (Who knows, perhaps it is better for a proletarian to be infected with the class determinants of the Western European bourgeois than with the pusillanimity of a Russian “repentant nobleman.”) We must get to know the sources of European culture and we must make them our own. We must know them, or else we shall always be provincials. To Khylovy’s ‘Quo vadis?’ let us answer: ad fontes, to the original sources, to the roots.”⁸⁵ The image of a fountain occurs in both the opening lines of *Doctor Seraphicus* and at the end of chapter 2. The play of sunlight on its jets casts endlessly varied kaleidoscopic patterns on the surface of the water. Like all people, Komakha-Seraphicus and Irtzia delight in watching these and searching in them for patterns and reflections. The fountain can be taken as a metaphor for art: a pleasurable relaxation, a contemplation of changing forms, a play of perceptions, and a modeling of the world. By implication, those who are incapable of enjoying the fountain are potentially condemned to a disastrous inflexibility. In rejecting the role of art as purposeful play, in limiting themselves to one rationalist style of thought and simultaneously effacing the boundary between art and life, the radical moderns have shifted the arena of experimentation from art onto life, with dangerous consequences.

Domontovych, an erudite man with catholic interests, felt hostile to nineteenth-century populism and was drawn to the analytical, demystificatory experiments of contemporary cubists, futurists, and constructivists. At the same time, however, his Hobbesian fear of irrationality in human behaviour caused him to adopt a sceptical stance toward the results of violent and radical upheavals. His plots, therefore, reveal an understanding of the fascination exerted by the new but also serve as warnings against its siren-calls. One may discover in this dilemma a paradigm for Domontovych’s implicit personal problem. Varetsky and Komakha, the dry, bookish scholar-thinkers, represent Domontovych the intellectual. Zyna and Elsner represent the attractive radical aesthetic. The hero’s love, seduction, and recoil may have represented Domontovych’s own involuntary fascination and entanglement with

their ideas. The neoclassicist writer Domontovych, who has been described as “the most enigmatic Ukrainian classic of the twentieth century,”⁸⁶ was, perhaps, closer in temperament and taste to the aesthetic of rupture that he mocks than he was prepared to admit. Like the radicals, he was ready to accept the role of history’s midwife in order to usher in the new, but he was aware that in doing so he undermined his neoclassicist scepticism and stoicism. Sensing such a dichotomy, critics have in various ways suggested that the writer exhibits a blend of the incompatible: “neoclassicism” and “expressionism,” in Sherekh’s terms, “abstraction,” and “concretization,” in Iurii Korbut’s, a relativism or “intellectual vagabondage” in Pavlychko’s.⁸⁷ His fictions give evidence simultaneously of an attraction to the new and an apprehension of its dangers. The ultimate message appears to be that neither self-comforting dreams, nor voluntarism, nor the fantastic projects of scientific planners should be unthinkingly embraced. Domontovych’s delicately balanced, evasive texts demonstrate the temptations of the great experiment and gently subvert them.

NATIONAL SELF-CRITIQUE:
IEVHEN MALANIUK

Reflections on the failed struggle for independent statehood dominated the thinking of nationalists in the interwar years and during the years immediately following the Second World War. Dmytro Dontsov and Ievhen Malaniuk, the most prominent intellectuals in the emigré nationalist movement in the twenties and thirties, focused much of their attention on the reasons for the defeat, particularly on the psychological unpreparedness of the people for a national liberation struggle. As Oksana Zabuzhko has observed, the philosophical question “Who are we?” which had dominated the national debate in the nineteenth century, shifted to “What makes us worse than others?” and, finally, to the practical question “What should we do?”⁸⁸ Much of what Zabuzhko calls the “philosophical potential” accumulated in the discourse of the previous century went unused. The interwar nationalist generation was often anti-intellectual and heavily focused on militant action. Dontsov, in his *Foundations of Our Politics* (Pidstavnyashoi polityky, 1921), in the articles he wrote for the *Literary-Scientific Herald* (Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk), and in his revanchist *Nationalism* of 1924, argued that in order to capture the imagination of the broad masses, the national idea had to be presented in simple, glorificatory terms. In the twenties and thirties, overlaid as it was by centuries of imperial propaganda, it existed in social psychology as an obscure, unflattering idea. Dontsov, along with Malaniuk, the leading poet of

the emigration and a brilliant essayist, effected the most enduring reimagining of Ukraine at this time and radically redirected the discourse on empire.

Self-criticism, as we have seen, was not an uncommon feature of the national debate. Franko had described Ukrainians as dominated by “pettiness, narrow egoism, insincerity and pompousness ... a ponderous race, unrefined, sentimental, lacking in calibre and will-power, quite inept at political life on its own rubbish-heap.”⁸⁹ Panteleimon Kulish had famously castigated his people as a “Nation without direction, without, honour or respect,” calling them “barbarians” who boasted of their fierce nature, while neglecting cultural life.⁹⁰ The same tone was adopted by Petro Karmansky and Mykola Khylyovy. The first raged at the disrespect for education among his compatriots and the second at their inertness and timidity. But the image of Ukraine forged by Ievhen Malaniuk, a former officer in the army of the defeated Ukrainian People’s Republic, was a still crueller and more shocking form of national self-analysis. He suggested in some poems that the chimera of Ukraine was a beautiful but lifeless illusion, a witch drinking the blood of her own children:

So you lie in dreamy impotence,
But when night comes, like a witch
You spread your bat-wings ...
And while the owls screech in the orchards,

And frogs croak languidly in marshes,
The darkness whispers and the Dnieper groans in sleep,
You fly, terrible and dishevelled, to the sabbath,
To drink the blood of your bastard children.⁹¹

In other poems he saw Ukraine as a slave girl who “loved oppression” and gave birth to bastards and traitors, as the whore of khans, tsars, and sultans. Sometimes he personified the country as a cowardly male whose revolting character is the product of generations of colonial rule, as in “Fragment” (Uryvok):

And the ages passed, all in the same yoke,
Nourishing the cripple and the slave.

Treacherous, crafty, ignorant and ignoble,
In the putrid rotting of a dead spirit
He lovingly fashioned himself a spider’s heart:
Small, shrivelled, cowardly and angry,

Hating and jealous of greatness,
 Submissive and lowly at the khan's feet.

That's how you left the defenceless land
 And in flight stuck a spear in the earth.

That's how you exchanged the iron order of the state
 For the rapacious whistle of the enemy whip.
 And you sold your prince to be executed
 And went dully with the herd into captivity.⁹²

Malaniuk cursed his country's weakness, lamenting the lack of "bronze" and "iron" in its character – qualities required for military strength and successful state-building.

Remarkable in Malaniuk's poetry is the degree to which it employs the traditional colonial imagery of Ukraine in both Polish and Russian writings, while transforming it into an anticolonial narrative. The poet ascribes the lack of national consciousness and state-building skills among his countrymen to a crippled psyche that has resulted from decades of oppression. He condemns the empire as an artificial creation of a "mad demiurge" that has given birth to a perverted, lifeless culture of "rotten utopias" and has robbed his country of its name, identity, and character.⁹³ However, it is the reworked imagery of Ukraine as an intractable steppe borderland that holds centre stage. Not so much an arena of heroic action or a place of historic memories, it is a space that "drinks one's energy" and then reverts to a will-less flatland that can be trampled by foreign hordes. It is described as the "cossack prairies," which still have to be brought under control by the indigenous nation. In this way Malaniuk makes Ukrainians the agents of the colonizing process, extending to them the rights both of conquest and cultivation, while lamenting their inability to complete either process.

Malaniuk's ideal Ukraine is a "steppe Hellas," a country that has absorbed the influences of ancient Greece and Byzantium and synthesized them into a unique culture. He attributes to her a philosophical calm, an aesthetic of simplicity and grace, and a striving to unite the ethical and aesthetic. What is lacking in this attractive civilization is precisely the warrior ethos that the country once possessed, as the history of Kyivan Rus and the cossack state testify.

The poetic contributions to the discourse of empire were complemented by a series of essays composed over a period of almost fifty years.⁹⁴ They clarify the message that Ukrainian history and the national character are the product of two different mentalities: the Scythian-

Hellenic and the Viking-Roman. In several historiosophical studies, of which "Sketches from the History of Our Culture" (1954) is the most ambitious, Malaniuk urges that the persistent inability to unite the two mentalities into a fully functional civilization has been the country's great tragedy. Like his poetry, Malaniuk's essays examine the incomplete national consciousness of his countrymen and condemn the Russian empire's state-building strategy, which, in his mind, has always aimed consciously at destroying the Ukrainian national identity. The two main issues – the colonized Ukrainian psyche and the colonizing state – come together in his idea of *malorosianstvo* or "Littlerussianness."

In Malaniuk's thought, the concept of Littlerussianness is a form of unwelcome, forced hybridity, a "national hermaphroditism," an identity that has been demanded of his compatriots whenever they have sought acceptance within the empire. Malaniuk makes it clear that this identity was not in the beginning a product of ignorance or restricted to the peasantry and the uneducated but was consciously assumed by the upper classes. The Ukrainians in Peter's court were the first creators of the "political and national renegadism, and the progenitors of the later most fatal and most characteristic product of the empire, the so-called all-Russian intelligentsia."⁹⁵ The later imperial literature and art allowed for the use of Ukrainian ethnographic elements but denied any opportunity for their digestion and structuring by the nationally conscious psyche. As a result they were only allowed to be shown in combination with other elements. They were made available as cultural goods representative of the empire as a whole but never permitted consideration as part of a national narrative. Writers and artists from Ukraine were similarly denied national recognition. Malaniuk lists many figures but pays particular attention to Gogol, whom he treats as paradigmatic. Gogol's "Portrait" is for Malaniuk one of the best studies in literature of the *maloros* mentality. He interpreted the story as describing a transition to an entirely different, hostile civilization, resulting in a "moral death," a "rupturing of an organic whole and simultaneously a mechanical dissolution into an amorphous, contourless 'Russia.'" The story is, in short, a description of the effects of "cultural-national suicide," the most terrible Faustian version of "selling of one's soul to the devil."⁹⁶

At the root of Malaniuk's attitude is a sense of culture as nationally (sometimes he uses the term "racially") and territorially based. Therefore, he considers cosmopolitan phenomena, such as those generated by international modernism, as sterile, excessively intellectual, denationalized forms of art. The paradigmatic figures here are Archipenko and Stravinsky, whose recombination of Ukrainian traditions and elements into accessible international forms were, to his mind, abstract,

cerebral, and unsuccessful experiments. The “loss” of such talents to Ukrainian culture was inevitable as long as the only choice available to writers and artists was provincial obscurity, on the one hand, and imperial, or international, recognition, on the other.

The policy of the empire had deliberately encouraged the artificial mixing of incompatible cultures into a single “all-Russian” one. While imputing superiority to products of this “imperial” culture, it had systematically described “local” ones as second-rate. In time, the *maloros* mentality had acquired additional elements: a sense of inferiority characterized by a loss of historical memory and a feeling of national insecurity and self-doubt. In Malaniuk’s military imagery and highly politicized view of culture, the *maloros* attitude was an “a priori and total capitulation,” a capitulation that “preceded the battle.”⁹⁷ The sickness of Littlerussianness was, in his view, of central importance to Ukrainian political and cultural history. It would be cured eventually by the creation of a “sovereign national spirit” that would accompany statehood.

As the preeminent nationalist poet of the twenties and thirties, Malaniuk put his muse to the task of forging a new national psychology. Rejecting traditional lyricism and vague symbolism, he stressed technique, reason, construction, and will. According to Viktor Petrov, his verse represented the “rejection of the tradition of the village and ethnographism in favour of the modern city, planned by Le Corbusier. Instead of cherry orchards and the homestead – glass, concrete and the steel of the laboratory.”⁹⁸ His disciplined, structured forms were conscious attempts to steel the will and prepare the intellect for the rigours of combat. As a critic, he brought a similar focus and discipline to the analysis of what he considered the crucial problems that had plagued Ukrainian politics and history. Ukraine, in his view, was still to a significant degree composed of “blind, elemental forces” that were moving forward but as yet still did not constitute a “fully formed entity.” His purpose, according to one critic, was to give these forces that were unconsciously groping forward “a head.”⁹⁹ His description of Littlerussianness therefore encapsulates a rejection of the views of Kostomarov and Drahomanov and marks a departure from much of the nineteenth-century discourse of empire.

Some of Malaniuk’s most original essays describe the unnatural and deformed “all-Russian” culture that has been “saturated in the spirit of Russian state doctrine” and that has harmed Russians themselves.¹⁰⁰ In this he anticipates recent comments by both Russian writers and Western historians like Geoffrey Hoskings, who have argued that the Russian empire left Russians themselves with a poorly developed sense of their national (as opposed to imperial) identity.¹⁰¹ In contrast to many Russian commentators, however, the questions Malaniuk poses focus

squarely on the attitude of Russians to non-Russians. They are now familiar questions in colonial discourse: How was such a high degree of violence internalised by the Russian people? How is the struggle with the violent, colonial mentality (which, echoing Khylovy, Malaniuk terms “psychological Russia”) to be conducted? Malaniuk’s answer to these questions recalls Herzen’s comments of 1863. He indicates that the need to maintain dominion over so many nations, races, and cultures and over such a large area necessitated employing an enormous police apparatus, a mass of informers, a huge army, and state terrorism.¹⁰² In the cultural realm, the imperial policy was intrusive in ways that British, French, and other imperial policies were not. “Rome,” he writes, “*never* interfered in matters of the spirit, never trampled with its boots on people’s souls.”¹⁰³ Malaniuk points to the combination of state terrorism (“genocide, mass execution, and destruction of populations”) with the imposition of the empire’s “gods” (“its culture and language”) as features that have defined the empire’s treatment of its borderlands. It is a point of view shared by Ivan Dziuba in his important dissident tract *Internationalism or Russification?* (1965), in which he insists that one of tsarist colonialism’s distinctive features lay in going beyond “the imposition of a colonial administration and ... economic exploitation” to “full assimilation, into a social digestion of the conquered countries.”¹⁰⁴ Malaniuk analyzed the engineering of a new imperial cultural entity (which became in the twentieth century a Soviet Russian cultural identity) in several essays: “The End of Russian Literature” (1923), “Petersburg as a Literary-Historical Theme” (1931), “Creativity and Nationality” (1935), “On the Problem of Bolshevism” (1956), “One-and-Indivisbleness” (1964), and “The South and Russian Literature” (1964).

In “The End of Russian Literature” he describes nineteenth-century Russian messianism and predicts the collapse along national lines of the “all-Russian” literature, which he called “the imperialist Russian esperanto.” This literature and culture, the product of a misguided attempt to produce a composite nation from a variety of peoples and cultures, would, in his view, not withstand the test of history. As various nations, including the Russian nation, emerged from the amalgam, the languages and literatures of each would gradually differentiate themselves. Malaniuk saw the Literary Discussion of 1925–28 in Soviet Ukraine as evidence of the continued struggle against Russian colonialism and the *maloros* mentality, albeit under the guise of Marxist slogans. He welcomed Khylovy’s writings as an attempt to establish the “psychological independence” that was a prerequisite for an anti-colonial politics.¹⁰⁵ Over the next decades he observed with satisfaction

that Khylyovy's was only the first of many expressions of national protest from within the Soviet context.

POET OF DISSENT: VASYL STUS

The literature produced after the Second World War by emigré writers who now found themselves outside the communist bloc frequently depicted the degenerate nature of the Soviet state and its anti-Ukrainian policies. These themes recur in the work of major emigré figures like Ievhen Malaniuk, Teodosii Osmachka, Ulas Samchuk, and Ivan Bahriany, and in Iurii Klen's epic *Ashes of Empire* (*Popil imperii*, 1944–46) and Vasyl Barka's *Yellow Prince* (*Zhovtyi kniaz*, 1962).¹⁰⁶ The latter is a powerful novel devoted to the famine of 1932–33, which the author himself lived through. Barka shows that the famine was not an isolated, tragic accident but a premeditated event made possible by the régime's anti-Ukrainian and anti-peasant attitudes. Troops stationed at the Ukrainian-Russian border prevented the population from leaving and confiscated grain. Barka's depiction of events has been confirmed by others.¹⁰⁷ In the sixties the state's repressive policies and concentration camps also became the theme of a proscribed oppositionist, or "dissident," literature that was written within Soviet Ukraine but published abroad and that radically challenged Soviet political orthodoxy and accepted discursive limits. It is generally much less well recognized that much of the literature that did get printed in Soviet publications in the postwar years was also frequently treated with suspicion and denounced by ideological watchdogs.¹⁰⁸ In the late sixties and early seventies ideological transgressions were increasingly punished with incarceration. Writers frequently conformed, gave up literature, or wrote without hope of publication. By the midseventies scores of oppositionist authors like Mykhailo Osadchy, Ievhen Sverstiuk, and Ivan Svitlychny had been arrested. Their writings from that point on became records of life in prison camps. Many "dissident" writers met with the large numbers of Ukrainians who had been imprisoned in the camps after the Second World War and learned of the experiences of this earlier generation of oppositionists.¹⁰⁹

In mainstream, or "sanctioned," writing the hackneyed message of an indissoluble cultural and political unity of Russia and Ukraine was still ritualistically invoked. In its closing segment one of the best postwar novels, Hryhorii Tiutiunnyk's *Whirlwind* (*Vyr*, 1959–62) invokes a "Rus" fatherland as the supreme object of devotion and self-sacrifice. Roman Ilchenko's *The Cossack Clan Shall Have No End, Or Mamai and Another Woman* (*Kozatskomu rodu nema perevodu, abo zh*

Mamai i chuzha molodytsia, 1958), although stylistically nonconformist and an initiator of magic realism, nonetheless devotes a great deal of space to the historical friendship of the Russian and Ukrainian peoples. Another major achievement of the late Soviet period, Pavlo Zahrebelny's *I, Bohdan* (Ia, Bohdan, 1985), an artistically successful study of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, reworks politically acceptable history by describing the superiority of the Russian state and nation over the Ukrainian and sees the union with Muscovy as an expression of the people's will.¹¹⁰ In these and similar works, writers frequently claimed a dual Ukrainian and Soviet "citizenship" in a way that has been described by Yekelchuk as reminiscent of the period of 1800–40, during which writers made a public identification with both the Russian state and their local *patrie*.¹¹¹ One of the most controversial novels of the post-Stalin era was Oles Honchar's *Cathedral* (Sobor, 1968), which was widely interpreted as a timely plea for ecological sanity and national rights. It stimulated a spirited "dissident" essay by Ievhen Sverstiuk that circulated widely in the underground press.¹¹² The couching of demands for Ukrainian rights within a dual, loyalist framework also characterized the position of the most famous dissident text of the postwar period, Ivan Dziuba's *Internationalism or Russification?* which was written in connection with the arrest of Ukrainian intellectuals in 1965 and, although never allowed publication in the Soviet Union, circulated widely. Dziuba drew on Marxist-Leninist classics and the bolshevik congresses of the early 1920s to demonstrate how current policies had departed from earlier promises to respect national rights. He described the contemporary Soviet historians and theoreticians as heirs of Sergei Solovev, Mikhail Katkov, and Vasilii Shulgin.¹¹³ The confusion, whether intentional or unintentional, of the USSR with "Russia one and indivisible" had, according to him, "been absorbed into the bloodstream of many people."¹¹⁴

Russian dissidents, like the nineteenth-century radical oppositionists, were divided in their attitude toward Ukrainian demands for recognition of their political and cultural identity. Some, like Vladimir Bukovsky, Andrei Amalrik, and Andrei Siniavsky were relatively sympathetic, while Elena Bonner openly welcomed Ukraine's independence. Others, like Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, were hostile. He advocated Russia's retention of Central and Eastern Ukraine, which he considered "Russian provinces" that Ukraine had "grabbed."¹¹⁵ He defined Russia as a "combination of many nations – large, medium-sized and small," who shared a sophisticated Russian cultural-linguistic medium and a "tradition of religious tolerance." The Ukrainian language, he felt, "will have to be raised to international standards and usage," a task that "would require over 100 years."¹¹⁶ Perhaps most revealing of

a traditional colonial viewpoint was Solzhenitsyn's denial of any chauvinism among Russians: "But if we speak about the rampage of militant chauvinism, then it exists – and in bloody form – in several republics of the former USSR, but certainly not in Russia. And if one were to count all the instances of violence perpetrated on nationalist grounds and in local wars – all of them took place outside Russia and were not perpetrated by Russians."¹¹⁷

Leading emigré Russians have also echoed nineteenth-century disparagements of Ukraine's cultural life and political aspirations. Nabokov, in his publication of 1944, was supercilious in his comments on Gogol: "He almost became a writer of Ukrainian folklore tales and 'colourful romances.' We must thank fate (and the author's thirst for universal fame) for his not having turned to the Ukrainian dialect as a medium of expression, because then he would have been lost. When I want a good nightmare I imagine Gogol penning in Little Russian dialect volume after volume of Dikanka and Mirgorod stuff about ghosts haunting the banks of the Dnieper, burlesque Jews and dashing Cossacks."¹¹⁸ Joseph Brodsky reportedly read a scurrilous poem entitled "On the Independence of Ukraine" to students at Queen's College, New York, which ended with the following advice to "khokhols": "only when you die ... will you wheeze lines from Aleksandr [Pushkin], and not the lies of Taras [Shevchenko]."¹¹⁹ The causes of such hostility no doubt have a great deal to do with the trauma of decolonization. Dominant powers, as has frequently been observed, rationalize the practice of keeping smaller countries within their spheres of influence and react negatively to those countries' attempts at escaping this sphere. Sneering at small nations, at "Balkanization" and helpless natives is a common response. One has the distinct impression that these attitudes treat with disdain the early nineteenth-century view of Ukraine as an exotic peasant paradise, while finding nothing to put in its place. The covertly supercilious attitude has a long tradition in literary relations. It recalls, for example, the following *nil admirari* description by Sergei Aksakov in 1850 on the occasion of Gogol's forty-first birthday party:

The three Ukrainians [*troe khokhlov*, meaning Gogol, Maksymovych, and Bodiansky] were delightful. They sang without music and Gogol read to me some dumsy of the Ukrainian [*khokhlatskogo*] Homer. Gogol recited and the others merely gesticulated and whooped, in front of Khomiakov and Sophia [Aksakov's wife], although the presence of the latter obviously annoyed Gogol and, as soon as she left, the earlier grimaces and hand gestures reappeared. I, Khomiakov and Solovev enjoyed this expression of nationality, but without much sympathy. Solovev's smile betrayed contempt, Khomiakov's laughter a

kindhearted mockery, and I was amused to observe them like some Chuvashes or Cheremisses ... and nothing more.¹²⁰

Counterposed to this view stands Maiakovsky's attitude, as expressed in the poem "A Debt to Ukraine" (Dolg Ukraine, 1926), in which the writer laments the fact that Russians know Ukrainian culture only in its kitsch form and, consequently, have little respect for it. Maiakovsky's, however, is a rare expression of self-criticism.¹²¹

Dziuba's book had an enormous effect on many young contemporaries, some of whom were prepared to step outside the loyalist framework and publicly challenge the regime. Vasyl Stus's poetry, which portrayed the USSR as a gigantic concentration camp, is a compelling instance of a literature that refused to come to an accommodation with the authorities and that could exist only in underground circles. Since his death in prison in 1985 he has become a martyr for the national cause. His biography and poetry both give evidence of a powerful personality that resisted manipulation by the dominant ideology. Iurii Pokalchuk recalls that he was uncompromising by nature, and his national commitment was a leading factor in the formation of this intractability.¹²² "I was not prepared," he wrote in his prison notebooks, "to bow my head. Behind me stood Ukraine, my oppressed people, whose honour I must uphold unto my death."¹²³

The regime arrested and imprisoned Stus twice. In an attempt to break his spirit the most difficult conditions were created: he was forced to work in mines, was denied medical aid, and spent an entire year in solitary confinement. The authorities attempted to prevent him from writing, confiscating letters, papers, and a manuscript of over three hundred poems called "Birds of Spirit" (Ptakhy dushi). These events are movingly described in his prison notebook.¹²⁴ Stus' poetry did, however, make its way from prison. It was read on Radio Liberty broadcasts from the West, copied, and distributed illegally. The poet became a symbol of national resistance, and the transfer of his body for reburial in Kyiv in 1989 became, as did the transfer of Shevchenko's body over a century earlier, the occasion for national mourning and cultural self-affirmation.

A key to understanding Stus's identity can be found in a long essay he wrote on Pavlo Tychyna, the greatest Ukrainian poet of the revolutionary years.¹²⁵ Tychyna's biography overshadowed Stus's like a nemesis, a deeply ingrained history lesson, and a parable of the Soviet writer's fate. Stus interpreted Tychyna's evolution as a progressive fall from the brilliance of *Clarinets of the Sun* (Soniashni klarnety, 1918) and *Instead of Sonnets and Octaves* (Zamist sonetiv i oktav, 1920), which were written in an unmistakable personal voice, to the living death

that accompanied his canonization as a state bard. He was rapidly transformed into a lifeless mask, a permanently grinning corpse incapable of uttering a living sound. A pathological, physical fear had frozen Tychyna's spirit in the late twenties, making him into a pathetic marionette. The essay demonstrates that Stus sometimes feared that all his contemporaries were becoming Tychynas and searched for a way of himself avoiding the humiliating destiny that appeared to await most Ukrainian intellectuals. They were compelled, he wrote, to become either Mazepas or Kochubeis, to restrict themselves to a display of local patriotism or to embrace a "Russian internationalism." Both these options Stus condemned as treason to the nation. Deprived of their history, culture, and spirit, Ukrainian writers in the Soviet Union were only allowed to fashion versions of the conformist "younger brother" complex.¹²⁶

Stus, like others of the generation of the sixties, saw poetry's purpose in the search for the individual self, not in recording the collective will or servicing the requirements of state education or propaganda. He foregrounded the tragic fate of the individual consciousness. The role of the poet was to defend and affirm personal experience in the face of the state's overwhelming power to shape thought and feeling. To view the poet as a "voice" or "spokesman" (whether for the people, the nation, or the state) was always a levelling, a temptation to which Tychyna, among others, had succumbed. Stus struggled, therefore, to articulate an authentic consciousness and inner voice, to find and project himself: life, he asserts in one of his poems, is not the "overcoming of distances" (*dolannia mezh*) but the "acquisition of habits" (*navykannia*) and "a filling up with yourself" (*samoïu soboïu/naïovnennia*).¹²⁷

Tychyna's fate, the reduction of one of the great twentieth-century talents to a "court jester," his transformation from a singer of the national revolution in 1917 to a masochistic ridiculer of nationalists, a denier, as Stus saw it, of his own self, was the supreme example of violence's ability to pervert the psyche. For subaltern peoples the articulation of the personal and the national-cultural were inextricably linked. Tychyna was only an intensified version, a vivid illustration, of what happened when one of these identities was denied. Like Malaniuk before him, Stus, in rejecting and protesting against the Tychyna complex, was expressing a desperate anger against the lobotomization of his countrymen, which he detected everywhere around himself. The contemporary Ukrainian *intelligent*, he wrote, is "95 percent official functionary and 5 percent patriot."¹²⁸

The poet's notion of the authentic self drew, in the first place, on the philosophy of existentialism, in which the generation of the late fifties and sixties was steeped. The influence of existentialism is evident

in the obstinate focus on the concrete details of daily existence, often the only things that appear truly knowable and real. The world of Stus's poetry is a microcosm composed of repeated images: walls, bars, pine trees, sunsets. A second element in his struggle for authenticity was the espousal of high modernism. Tamara Hundorova has asserted that in Stus' poetry modernism's rejection of mass civilization fused with a countercultural protest against canonicity. High modernism became a way of opposing socialist realism and its hackneyed, populist forms: "Stus and others in fact created a kind of laboratory of thought and language in which mechanical ideological reductionism, 'object-less' thought, and the deformation of language itself was rooted out of a national and social consciousness forged by a colonial past and the new totalitarianism of socialist dictatorship."¹²⁹

The concept of modernism as a difficult, hermetic, and "unpopular" form provided a way of writing against the devalued clichés and falsehoods of "popular" Soviet culture. The poet felt he had to create in the face of the degenerate mass civilization that surrounded and intruded upon him at every step. In his "Prison Notebooks" he wrote: "It is frightening to feel without a country, without a people." He felt he had to create them himself out of his "own pained heart."¹³⁰ He expresses the feeling that Ukraine's best writers and scholars are not known and, for this reason, the intelligentsia's patriotism is shallow. In the following historiographic excursus, which strongly recalls Malaniuk, he suggests a reason for the national intellectual's quietude:

I am thinking about the millennium of Christianity in Ukraine. The Byzantine-Muscovite rite was, I believe, the first mistake, which attached us, the most Eastern part of Europe, to the East. Our individualistic, Western spirit, constricted by a despotic Byzantine Orthodoxy never succeeded in freeing itself from this duality of spirit, a duality that created in time the complex of hypocrisy. It appears that the passeistic spirit of Orthodoxy fell like a heavy stone on the young, immature national spirit, led to a feminine quality becoming the attribute of our spirituality. The iron discipline of Tatar Mongols impregnated the Russian spirit adding aggressiveness and a pyramidal structure. The Ukrainian spirit never broke out from under the heavy stone of passeistic faith. Perhaps this is one reason for our national tragedy.¹³¹

Stus's relationship to Russian writers and culture was nuanced. He considered Russians, on the one hand, to have been the beneficiaries of passivity among the peoples they colonized, since this passivity had cleared the way for their aggressive designs. On the other hand, when he examined Russian writers, he celebrated evidence of independent thought and spirit. He calls naive a letter of 24 September 1820

written by Pushkin in which the latter says: "Yermolov filled it [the Caucasus] with his name and his beneficent spirit. The savage Circassians are frightened: their ancient boldness is disappearing. The roads are gradually becoming safer, the long convoys unnecessary. One can expect that this conquered land, which has so far brought no substantial benefit to Russia, will soon bring us into a close and safe trading relationship with the Persians and will not present an obstacle in future wars; and, perhaps, Napoleon's whimsical plan to conquer India will be realized by us."¹³² Even so, he admires the fact that Pushkin put his whole complex and contradictory personality into his verse, because the "aristocratic-castish" arrogance and self-confidence can be seen as a positive value: it allowed the development of a code of honour resistant to tyranny.¹³³ Although the Ukrainian poet considers all Russian culture to be deeply marked by the imperial history of "slavery and merciless exploitation," he accepts that the striving for a full and active response to life in such poets as Pushkin was a valuable compensatory influence that "saved human beings from sinking into their time, into the daily grind."¹³⁴

Stus's modernist rejection of mass culture, his intellectualism and countercultural stance, leads him to disappoint readers who come with populist expectations. His writings can, of course, be compared to previous anticolonial protests. There is the familiar acceptance, even expectation, of martyrdom, the same principled posture, the anger directed at the oppressor, the agonizing over the nation's fate – all of which recall Shevchenko, Malaniuk, and other imprisoned writers of the gulag. If, as has been said, Ukrainian literature can be divided into three categories – the published, the proscribed, and the prison writings – Stus's poetry, which frequently paraphrases, sometimes almost quotes directly, from the work of persecuted precursors, brings the "genre" of prison poetry to a culmination.¹³⁵ His work appears to survey and summarize an entire anticolonial struggle, to gather up other biographies, and to communicate with figures from past generations. However, in spite of, or perhaps because of, an awareness of this tradition, Stus shuns expected rhetorical devices, sentiments, and forms. There is no Manichaean universe that counterposes victim to oppressor. There is little in the way of an optimistic, faith-affirming message, of inspiring visions or comforting counternarratives. There are not even many denunciations of the regime's supporters. The poet has few illusions. Whereas previous generations of Soviet writers, particularly Tychyna's postrevolutionary generation, might have been confused by the contradictory masks assumed by Soviet reality, this is not the case for Stus. Clear-sighted, determined, and contemptuous, he dismisses Soviet ideology as a sham so discredited that discussion is

rendered unnecessary. The regime musters no defenders, no believers, no troubadours, and today's Tychyna is not a threatening opponent but a pathetic, haunting ghost of a figure. Hence Stus feels no need to mobilize opinion; the public that reads poetry is already convinced of the degeneracy of the regime.

Stus's narrator holds his conversation with other poets (Shevchenko, Tychyna, Zerov, Svidzinsky), other figures who have in one way or another all passed through similar Golgothas, and with an implied reader who is aware of the national tradition. He constructs a poetic world out of the existential detail that surrounds him (the trees, the evening horizons of the Mordovia and Kolyma concentration camps) and intertextual references. These are, however, only a setting, a microcosm connected to a macrocosm. Marko Pavlyshyn has pointed out how the microcosm of prison interiors draws on the imagery of the square, vertical, or rigid forms like prison bars and candles, while the macrocosm of the universe with its planets in motion is symbolized by the circle or ellipse.¹³⁶ The zone of the gulag is merely a more restricted version of a larger zone, which encompasses the whole Soviet Union and, beyond this, all human experience. Stus's gulag is, in the end, an existential, mythic "zone" of enslavement in which all individuals strive for self-discovery and labour to fill existence with their own authentic selves. In the same way, the "native land" for which the poet pines can also be seen as representing all "homelands." Although the details of concrete experiences are ever-present, there is always in Stus's poetry a sense of this metaphysical dimension.

This hermetic imagery is matched by a difficult, "heavy" diction, something again that distinguishes him from the "popular," "democratic" writer. Shevelov has remarked that the very structure of Stus's verse seems to forbid any surrender to song-like rhythms, as though it "called upon the reader to avoid becoming a sentimental snail."¹³⁷ The poet's verse is close to the intonations of conversational speech, makes use of enjambements, midline pauses, and imperfect and inobtrusive rhymes in order to dispell any regular or easy rhythmic pattern. It searches out unusual verbs and avoids overworking the epithet. The result is an ascetic verse, laconic and clipped, held together by "internal rhyme, thought and sound."¹³⁸ It is a highly condensed, crystallized art that achieves its effects through unexpected metaphors and montage and that asks the reader to make unexpected connections between images. This is not conventional civic poetry. In an early critical article entitled "Let Us Be Sincere" (1965), Stus, in fact, rejected the idea of poetry as the versification of political sentiment. In his opinion only the crystallization of a "synthetic" experience, one that engaged the entire adult mind, deserved the name of poetry: "The

power of poetry lies in its preservation of the undissolved concreteness of surrounding reality, which has its own beauty, wisdom and ethics."¹³⁹

The same article also made explicit Stus's antipopulism. In it he admits to disliking Kotliarevsky's *Eneida* (Aeneid) and Kvitka and other nineteenth-century Ukrainian classics that, to his mind, lacked the intellectual environment to become truly great.¹⁴⁰ Above all he dislikes their timidity, their tendency to glance nervously over their shoulders at the public or at the authorities. He prefers bold, radical, outspoken figures like Marina Tsvetaeva and Olena Teliha who openly express their contempt for philistines and live through tragic circumstances with dignity. In one article he quotes Tsvetaeva's words that all poets are "Jews," that is to say, that they refuse the "common life, common joys, common heaven" in favour of "their own, separate, individual ones."¹⁴¹ It is the strength of countercultural desires and the boldness of thought that he most admires. He also sees these qualities in the early Maiakovsky and Pasternak. All poets, in his opinion, must be cultural – but not necessarily political – revolutionaries. Like Malaniuk, Stus expresses a particularly violent contempt not only for a creolized and cheapened Ukrainian culture but for consumers of this culture who accept its second-rate status as inevitable and who are at the same time prepared to discard it and adopt the "higher" Russian one. The construction of a "difficult" poetry is itself a kind of struggle for self-respect, a break with the internalized inferiority complex that is the result of cultural colonization.

Stus, therefore, summarizes many aspects of Ukraine's anticolonial struggle, even as he looks toward a post-Soviet reality where the individual is not required to fulfil the role of tribune or become immersed in a cause and may accept the lessons and enrichments offered by other cultures – even those of former imperial masters. The imperial culture, after all, provides instructive examples for the poet who must discover an intimate personal voice. Toward the end of his life Stus ironised that he was, in fact, a free man, that no one could make him do what he did not wish to do, because, like Skovoroda, he had found himself.¹⁴² If the realm of personal freedom is located outside narratives designed by others, then it must be found in narratives of one's own making. The integrity with which the poet pursued this insight has won him admirers in the post-Soviet generation who recognize him as a forerunner. His poetry can be read as a reaching beyond the anticolonial paradigm toward a sensibility free of the dependencies and inferiority complexes of opposition.

Inevitably, however, he suffers subjection to the political. Described as anticolonial by necessity and postcolonial by desire, Stus is a writer who projects an identity beyond the framework of the anticolonial

struggle but who must continually identify himself with it.¹⁴³ In his *Internationalism or Russification?* Dziuba had also urged that the path to the universal lay through the national. One “belonged to humanity” only through “one’s own nation,” he wrote, and if that nation was in a critical situation, its existence and future at stake, it would be “shameful to abandon it.”¹⁴⁴ Stus accepts that there is no short-circuiting the national on the way to spiritual salvation. In several ways, therefore, he can be seen as an anticolonial writer on the cusp of the postcolonial.

8 The Postcolonial Perspective

EXORCIZING EMPIRE: IURI ANDRUKHOVYCH'S *MOSCOVIAD*

The collapse of the Soviet Union was accompanied by the publication of Ukrainian works that were intended to shake off the legacy of cultural dependence. Many fall into the category of the anticolonial. Roman Ivanychuk's historical novels *The Horde: A Psalm* (Orda. Psalm, 1990), *Janissaries* (Ianychary. Istorychnyi roman, 1992) and *Renegade* (Renegat, 1996), for example, demonstrate the return of the (national) repressed in literature. The first book describes the armageddon that accompanied the imposition of Russian rule following 1709. The central figure is Father Iepifanii, Mazepa's confessor, who witnesses the massacres and fails to protest or rebel. The novel is a commentary on fear and conformism and a study of the mentality that surrendered to or simply acquiesced in the policies of imperial subjugation. Ivanychuk's main theme is the spirit brutalized by oppression and incapable of rebellion.

Another example of anticolonial writing is Ievhen Hutsalo's collection of essays *The Horde Mentality: Essays* (Mentalnist Ordy. Statti, 1996). The writer deconstructs Dmitrii Likhachev's claim (traditional among nationalists, as we have seen) that "Forces of attraction, acting especially [powerfully] upon weaker, less numerous nations allowed Russia to preserve approximately two hundred nations on its expanses."¹ Hutsalo gives examples, ranging from Russian folklore (including the earliest bylinas and songs about Ermak) to recent

literature and journalism, of a will to power that sanctioned violence against non-Russians and the taking of war bounty. He tries to demonstrate how both nineteenth-century and contemporary writers internalized nationalist mythology and colonialist rhetoric with roots in the past. The rightfulness of Russian expansion and the “naturalness” of its rule, as argued in the works of nineteenth-century apologists of empire like the historian Sergei Solovet and journalists of the day, are counterposed to eyewitness reports of the behaviour of Russian, and later of Soviet, troops in Siberia and Central Asia. Some of these reports were made available for the first time in the 1990s. Hutsalo focuses in particular on the acceptance, even glorification, in Russian literature of looting and of irresponsible, orgiastic violence.

Relaxed censorship allowed the publication of many proscribed works in Russian literature. In 1989, on the eve of the dissolution of the USSR, Vasilii Grossman's *Forever Flowing* (*Vse techet*, 1970), a book the author had completed a year before his death in 1964, was made available to readers in the USSR.² Many Russians found it offensive because, like Hutsalo's text, it surveys centuries of Russian history and reaches the conclusion that the legacy of oppression, fear, and colonial violence has ingrained hypocritical, xenophobic, and submissive attitudes in many Russians. It is worth noting in particular that the book makes explicit the connection between violent conquests of the imperial past and the horrors of Stalinism. The narrator's father, for example, justifies the expulsion of the Circassians from the territory they now inhabit: “When they chop down the forest, the chips will fly! And, for that matter, the Circassians were not driven out of here. They left for Turkey of their own free will. They could have remained and profited from Russian culture. In Turkey they became paupers and many died.”³ Other characters assuage their bad consciences by using the same words to justify forced collectivization, famine, mass arrests and the stifling of dissent. One of the most important examples of “chips flying” in the twentieth century and one that also figures in his *Life and Fate* (*Zhizn i sudba*, 1980) is the famine of 1933. In a central section of *Forever Flowing* it is described as an attack on the Ukrainian “other”: the peasants' un-Russian attachment to private property, it is said, became the scapegoat for the failure of Moscow's policies, resulting in a decree that they be “put to death by starvation.” In an implicit rejection of dehumanizing, stereotypical portrayals of the peasantry that were common in the twenties and thirties, Grossman shows them as helpless victims of yet another attempt at radical social engineering. Grossman, a Jew from Ukraine, frequently shows Jewish characters undergoing a profound radicalization brought on by the discrimination and persecution they faced in the forties and early fifties, as a

consequence of which their entire outlook on life changes, leading not only to a transformation of their political views but also to breakthroughs in their scientific work. Subjected to brutal state pressures, they are forced to reconsider Russian history, and they develop a sympathetic understanding of what the peasantry and the nationalities have endured. Grossman portrays cycles of violence, juxtaposing nearly identical scenes in different decades and in different political situations and shows his characters pondering the reasons for such inhuman behaviour.

The fundamental problem of Russia's historical development, argues the hero of *Forever Flowing*, has created a chasm between Russian and European life. Its origins lie in the fact that "Western development was based on a growth in freedom, while Russia's was based on the intensification of slavery."⁴ Russian leaders sacrificed individual liberties in favour of state aggrandisement, hoping to drive their subjects into paradise through brute force. Peter and Catherine extended serfdom; Lenin laid the foundations for Stalin's régime. Great Russian writers like Dostoevsky tacitly acquiesced to this fact by encouraging imperial expansion and developing a cult of the "Russian soul" that was frequently a smokescreen behind which hid recklessness, philistinism, and brutality. This attack on centuries of tsarist and post-tsarist history and this challenge to the concept of Russia's unique spiritual qualities proved unpalatable to many readers and critics until the late eighties.

The "imperial syndrome" still dominated the thinking of many political and intellectual circles that worked openly for the return of Ukraine to a state structure dominated by Russia. During the nineties, discussions in the press rehearsed many arguments of the colonial discourse. The spiritual unity of the Belarusan, Ukrainian, and Russian people was invoked. Galina Litvinova wrote in *Our Contemporary* (Nash Sovremennik) in 1992 that "the Russian superethnos was formed long before 1917" and that "there was no practical difference between Little, Bela- and Great Russia."⁵ The idea that the Ukrainian "ethnos" wanted to be a nation was questioned, the developments brought to outlying regions by the metropolises were praised, and noble motives were given for imperial conquests (Likhachev attributed the conquest of Siberia to the search for "the ideal of freedom" in a television interview of 12 December 1990).⁶ It was asserted that the use of any political force, including fascism, was permissible in preserving the unity and might of the Russian state. Russian messianism was resurgent: the philosopher Arsenii Guliga wrote that "Russian culture is cosmic, not shut in, but boundless, full of 'world-wide responsiveness' and universal responsibility."⁷ Others, however, found such pretensions ridiculous.

Vitalii Korotych quipped that Russia was most terrified of the fact that the world could get on quite well without it, while the writer Iurii Nagibin declared that “the greatest fault of Russians lies in the fact that they consider themselves faultless.”⁸

The break-up of the Soviet Union was accompanied by the sudden appearance of a new, postmodern literature in which an unexpected detachment from politics, a playful parody and an irreverent humour predominated. These qualities deflated the earnest mythmaking of both imperial and Soviet times. Although “classics” of Russian postmodernism such as Andrei Bitov’s *Pushkin House* (*Pushkinskii dom*, 1971), Venedikt Erofeev’s *Moscow to the End of the Line* (*Moskva-Petushki*, 1977), and Sasha Sokolov’s *A School for Fools* (*Shkola dlia durakov*, 1976) had earlier been published in the West, it was only in the late eighties and early nineties that they were made available to a wide public in their entirety. In Ukrainian literature the postmodern moment had been prepared by alternative and countercultural publications that had circulated in the underground press for years and by the appearance of a strong magic realist trend in novel writing. When, following independence, it burst on the scene with unexpected vigour, Ukrainian postmodernism also proved to have a strong postcolonial component. More than any other literary event, it was the appearance of Iurii Andrukhovych’s first two novels that signalled the arrival of a postcolonial sensibility. *Recreations* (*Rekreatsii*) was published in the first issue of *The Contemporary* (*Suchasnist*) to appear in Ukraine, immediately after the declaration of independence of 24 August 1991. This respected journal had been transferred to Kyiv after being published in emigration and smuggled into the Soviet Union for several decades. Many readers who might have expected a solemn, decorous celebration of the political moment were shocked to discover a travesty and parody not only of imperial but also of national sanctities. Andrukhovych’s book portrays the youth movement living through the moment of political and cultural upheaval. A rock concert brings together individuals who are recognizable as representatives of contemporary youth, but this Woodstock-like event is hardly material for political iconographers. Andrukhovych’s next novel, *Moscoviad: A Horror Novel* (*Moskoviada. Roman zhakiv*, 1993) and his poetry collection “*Lysty v Ukrainu*” (*Letters to Ukraine*), which was written simultaneously,⁹ viewed the moment of transformation from a vantage point within Moscow, summarizing and distancing many notions that had dominated imperial thinking for over two hundred years.

Marko Pavlyshyn has described Andrukhovych’s grouping and juxtaposition of hallowed images as an iconostasis.¹⁰ It is an apt description of the effect produced in the novels by the simultaneous

appearance of symbolic literary and cultural figures who are emblematic both of empire (in *Moscoviad*) and nation (in *Recreations*). The collage-like effect, as always in Andrukhovych's work, treats the sacred ironically, even disrespectfully. The moment of the union's collapse is filtered through an inebriated consciousness. One commentator wrote that "The presentiment of some planetary cataclism, the collapse of a global empire, do not agitate the lyrical subject more than the absence of alcohol in Moscow's shops."¹¹ Andrukhovych's focus is on immediate sensory awareness. Overarching historical schemes and metanarratives, the symbolic patterns that have animated both the imperial and the anti-imperial, are playfully interwoven into the thoughts and feelings of his characters, but their actions are unapologetically grounded in the here-and-now. This leads to one of the writer's characteristic effects – bathos. It is most evident in his linking of moments of spiritual flight to drunkenness. The carnival aesthetic, while celebrating spiritual intoxication, has been seen as keen to suppress its material causes: "Western thought has long expressed a terror of the literal and material conditions of experience."¹² In Andrukhovych's works alcohol's spiritual and physical effects are unavoidable. The "alcoholic awareness" provides an ironic reading of all sententiousness, including the political.

Moscoviad is a personal farewell to the Soviet capital (the author studied for two years in Moscow), but beyond this, and indirectly, it is a coming to terms with an entire imperial era in Ukrainian history. The imperial "icons" who, at the novel's conclusion, meet beneath Moscow in a secret underground conference hall to discuss "saving" the "one and indivisible" Russia are contemporaries who have selected the roles and personalities of historical personae. They appear in the masks and imitate the voices and views of historical figures: Ivan the Terrible, Catherine the Great, General Suvorov, Lenin, and Dzerzhinsky – an indication that imperial behaviour has been assimilated and is being mimicked by the present generation for whom it still serves as the mainspring of thought and action. The group gathers in a secret inner chamber deep beneath Moscow's Lubianka Prison and the Children's World shopping centre. They are the archetypal figures who have developed and continue to reinforce its ideology. The proximity of the Lubianka and Children's World are appropriate. This ideology exploits both terror and infantilization, its exponents in the underground chamber describe how they have manipulated the psychology and conduct of imperial citizens over generations.

In the adjacent main conference hall a large number of Russian nationalists have also gathered. They include black-shirted fascists, tsarist sympathizers, and other contemporaries who profess a violent,

authoritarian creed. All are inheritors of the same imperial ideology. They drink to “a united and indivisible Russia,” to a “new Russia, that will be like the old Russia.” The narrator senses in these reflex reactions “some kind of sacral force, the militant statist substance of Holy Rus, the spirit of Ivan Kalita, Peter I, and perhaps even Marshal Arkhromeev.”¹³ He himself has stumbled into this heart of jingoistic darkness by accident and has been mistakenly welcomed as the representative of a loyal Ukraine. The key to the current disorder in the state, a Russian fellow-poet informs him, is the loss of “Slavic unity” – a reminder that with Ukraine as a cooperative partner the superpower status of Russia remains secure. The communists are blamed for breaking up the empire, something that Batu, Napoleon, and Mazepa failed to do. Their dissatisfaction is not with communism but with its inability to maintain the territorial integrity of the empire bequeathed to it by centuries of tsarism. Andrukhovych’s novel, it is to be remembered, appeared at a time when Russian nationalism and messianism were once more openly displayed and were being actively encouraged in ruling circles – a reaction, one critic claimed, “to the trauma of losing an empire.”¹⁴

This denouement beneath the Lubyanka comes at the end of a day in the life of the narrator-hero, a Ukrainian poet studying in Moscow. The reader follows him through a series of encounters in a café, the apartment of a former lover, and the city’s underground tunnels, before emerging in the conference hall. His experiences reveal the sordid and dismal life of a society in dissolution. They are interspersed with the poet’s reminiscences concerning his sexual relationships with women and contacts with fellow-writers and his musings on the difficulties of surviving in the city. His primary concern is the satisfaction of immediate needs: sex, drink, bathing, catching a pickpocket, escaping arrest. It is in the course of these events that he finds his way into the underground tunnels beneath the city, where he makes the discovery that the regime is secretly breeding giant rats, which it plans to set upon the restive population if the army and police force prove unreliable.

The text undermines key desiderata in colonialism’s ideology. It demythologizes the capital as a brilliant centre of culture and elegance. Andrukhovych displays literary life, and Moscow in general, as an unappetising universe ruled by careerism and hypocrisy. The goods of the dominant culture are defective, or, like the toys in *Children’s World*, simply missing. In fact, the metropolitan culture is narrow and reactionary, full of half-baked street philosophers and alcoholics who recite disconnected fragments of chauvinistic poetry or quote phrases from the Bible. The international stature of the dominant culture and its civilizing role, which is related to the regime’s claims to impose the

Pax Sovieticus in the region, are called into question. The hero's jealous Russian lover ends his relationship with Astrid, an international aid worker from abroad. The Russian woman keeps snakes in her apartment and, it is implied, uses them to poison Astrid. Everywhere the hero witnesses explosions of the state violence that has been internalized by the common people. His relationship with his Russian lover ends in a violent scene when he makes it clear to her that he is leaving for good. He fights with a local pickpocket (who also happens to be an expatriate Ukrainian), observes beatings on the street and in a restaurant, narrowly escapes a bomb explosion, reports on rapes and Mafia killings, and hears a constant stream of abusive language. This is the real metropolis. It is a world far removed from the glamour of high culture. Only once, while in the dark underground, does he hear distant music from a concert hall somewhere above.

The political myth of Ukraine as a junior partner, a willing sharer in the spoils of empire is also queried. The hero, who appears concerned only with sex, sustenance, and survival, unrepentantly does whatever is necessary to make his life easier, and is blackmailed at one point into cooperating with the KGB, does not lack a sense of identity or a conscience. He attempts to dispel clichés concerning Ukrainians that are held by his Russian friends and argues the cause of independence with them. Andrukhovych draws a distinction between Russia and Ukraine by contrasting two dominant architectural styles: the Stalinist "empire" style as contrasted with the baroque style of Ukraine. Finally, he ridicules the view of the Soviet Union as a consortium of contented cultures and nations who have all benefited from absorption into the state. Cultural life is shown as inauthentic and superficial, a *mélange* of clichés culled from various constituent cultures. Like the writers' residence in which the narrator lives, it is an agglomeration, an artificial unity of separate existences "dreamed up by the system for its own justification and self-placation."¹⁵

Andrukhovych also disconcerts Ukrainian nationalists by suggesting, albeit flippantly, that there were moments of communion between the cultures and that Ukrainians were partly responsible for their fate because of their spiritual and political prostitution. His metaphor for this political collaboration is sexual intercourse, in particular between powerful Russian figures and prominent Ukrainians. In his "Letters from Ukraine," a series of poems written at the same time as his *Moscoviad*, he treats this political-sexual relationship with sardonic humour. Feofan Prokopovych, the first Ukrainian collaborator with the empire, he says, was a homosexual who slept with Peter the Great, setting a precedent in this, as in many other things, for a long list of compatriots who sought a route to power and influence. Oleksa

Rozumovsky (Aleksei Razumovsky in Russian) the lover, and later the husband, of the Empress Elizabeth was a good singer. Andrukhovych remarks wryly, that he “did more for Ukraine than any other tenor.”¹⁶ Ukrainians themselves have helped to create Russian culture, even in its kitsch version. It was, he writes, the Ukrainian writer Grebenka (Hrebinka) who wrote the unfadingly popular “Ochi chernye” (Black Eyes), now sung in restaurants around the world and which, along with “Kalinka-malinka” and Dostoevsky’s novels, constitutes “the weightiest contribution of Russia to world culture.”¹⁷ In *Moscoviad* the narrator’s relationship with his Russian lover is a mirroring of the political breakup. In the same way, his meeting with the aristocratically mannered Ukrainian pickpocket is an encounter with his Russified alter ego. It is appropriate that the narrator’s fight with the pickpocket ends with his “countryman” (*zemliak*) disappearing into the open sewers in the basement of the building, to become part of the city’s waste. The hero has refused to heed his countryman’s frantic pleas for help as he hangs helplessly over the sewer in his final moments. This can be interpreted as a symbolic break with the degenerate, collaborationist *maloros* mentality.

The postcolonial moment, however, unlike the anticolonial, does not attempt to produce nationalist countermyths but, in Pavlyshyn’s words, “turns the tables on the colonisers, rather than engaging them in combat.”¹⁸ The postcolonial makes playful use of the stories, beliefs, and rituals that constitute the colonial attitude, reprocessing them in order to generate its own identity. It delights in the use of pastiche and parody. Rejecting overarching metanarratives, it deemphasizes both history and teleology, preferring instead to concentrate on the contemporary individual’s relationship to the surrounding environment. As an attempt to supersede and transcend the narratives of both colonialism and anticolonialism, it refuses Russian or Soviet teleological imperatives (by making fun, for instance, of the widely promoted view that Russians, as guardians of the Third Rome, have a special spiritual power and mission) and rejects widely held nationalist views of Ukraine as an innocent victim of history.

Andrukhovych’s works delight in juxtaposing styles and incongruous levels of language. His uplifting national sentiments are delivered by alcoholics in sordid bars, while his curses are elaborated with the wit and grace of baroque dramas. He loves long enumerations that juxtapose and intermingle the incompatible and combine opposites. The present moment is constructed out of the past, of which the imperial experience is a large part, but the new writing, while acknowledging this fact, reworks all available elements into a new consciousness and identity. Thus the opening sections of the novel portray the bricolage

of the poet-narrator's life: there are pictures of Cossacks and ZUNR politicians on the wall, the Ostankino broadcasting tower is visible in the background, oriental music penetrates from another room, and the voices of neighbouring Jewish, Russian, and other writers can be heard in the background. The old can be recycled into the new, the low-brow can be remodelled into the high-brow, the local can coexist with the universal, and the imaginary with the real. They come together in a shock of discovery to create the new sensibility.

The postcolonial and postmodernist writings of Andrukhovych, Viktor Neborak, and Oleksandr Irvanets, and of the Propala hramota, Luhosad, and other groups have moved the discourse of empire away from binary oppositions. Although the legacy of hegemonic cultural attitudes is still a theme in their works, it is clear that the new writing makes a determined attempt to shift the war of discourses onto a new plane. A fluid and ambiguous cultural situation does not disturb these writers but instead provides the conjunctions and contrasts for their best effects. The succession of backdrops, by allowing the incorporation of various worlds and experiences, underlines the simultaneous presence within reality of many pasts and possibilities. These authors have been prepared to play with the painful marks of their own forced hybridity, the very symbols of their own divided identity. Bohdan Zholdak, for example, uses *surzhyk*, the macaronic mixture of Ukrainian and Russian and a humiliating legacy of colonialism, to hilarious effect.¹⁹ These writers have also introduced forms of proscribed or "aberrant" discourse such as the narratives of the alcoholic, the deranged, and the sexually promiscuous into literature's mainstream.

Andrukhovych's work also provides an example of the trajectory of current postcolonial writing. His first two novels exploded anticolonial and colonial mythologies. His third novel, *Perverziia. Roman* (Perversion: A Novel) shows the difficulty of defining cultural autonomy in the contemporary environment.²⁰ The hero, Stas Perfetsky, is a writer who has emerged into a global environment and must confront the prospect of a "recolonization" by new, unfamiliar processes: global capitalism, the mass media, and Western myopias and obsessions. Perfetsky travels to a conference in Venice entitled "The Postcarnival Absurdity of the World: What is on the Horizon?" The speakers are to discuss inauthenticity, "the total unoriginality of everything," in the present, which is dominated by "quotation, collage and deconstruction."²¹ Participants listen to a talk on carnival as a defence against the decay of "the human" in people.²² Another talk is given by a globe-trotting, fabulously rich feminist who decries patriarchy. A third, by the star of the conference, is translated into many languages but remains incomprehensible in any. It is a confusing, self-reflexive environment where

fantasy and reality are frequently indistinguishable. The hero himself thinks, "In truth no reality exists. There is only an endless number of our versions of it, each of which is false, and all of which, taken together, are mutually contradictory."²³ Perfetsky attempts to give a talk on Ukraine and its place in the world, but it becomes clear that he too has fallen victim to contemporary relativism. His descriptions of the history and geography of Ukraine mix myth and reality: Ukrainians themselves are the product of a "carnival of tribes" who have at various times passed through the land and who have all left their trace in the genes and mentality of the people. The speaker enumerates a long list of cultural myths that have been constructed to describe his homeland, each of which might contain a grain of truth, but each of which is also a distortion. The very possibility of any authentic existence or autonomous culture appears impossible.

At the end of the novel, Perfetsky appears to stage his own suicide, which occurs on the night of 10 March, the anniversary of Shevchenko's death. This symbolic death in Venice allows him to cut all ties with his previous existence, to achieve his ambition of "beginning everything anew."²⁴

The novel deals with Ukraine's interaction with the contemporary West. Intellectuals have displayed two responses toward Western modernity. One has been an optimistic attempt to embrace self-development and self-awareness, to celebrate the possibilities of choice. A second, far more anxiety-ridden response has been to recognize real power relations and the limited potential of irony and carnival to deconstruct cultural narratives generated in distant metropolises. In the light of these attitudes Andrukhovych's book suggests a mixed response to the postcolonial moment. For all the stress on fun and carnival, there are troubled undertones. Whereas the first two novels could be seen as responses to nationalism and colonialism, the last novel deals with the problem of integration with a West that remains unresponsive and obsessed with itself. Having "joined Europe," the author appears to say, Ukrainian writers now find themselves increasingly part of a "European" malaise and have acquired a new set of dilemmas. The project of cultural demythologizing and identity creation must now be conducted in a wide and confusing cultural arena.

Conclusion

but he's smart, and don't you forget it! I was asking round trying to find out where this Ukraine is, and damn if he didn't tell me.

Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street*

Representations of empire in Russian and Ukrainian literature can be viewed as parts of an extended rhetorical argument, a dialectic of the imagination in which one work is frequently answered by another. The discourse of empire and its counterdiscourse operated in the literature written in both languages. Often a work in one language responded to a publication in the other, either directly or indirectly. The high degree of bilingualism in Ukrainian society allowed Ukrainians to exploit a Russian-Ukrainian intertextuality, whether they wrote in one language or the other. By and large, however, in the second half of the nineteenth century Russian and Ukrainian literatures drifted apart and became two dissimilar systems driven by entirely different dynamics. The existence of two dominant and competing discourses (of empire and of national emancipation in the respective literatures) are substantive reasons for the divergence.

Monologic readings of these texts grounded in the reading of either an "imperial" or an "emancipatory" master narrative have been most prevalent. The result has been a limiting of perspectives.¹ The imperial master-narrative emplotted an assimilationist story, presenting cultural loss as comedy and local resistance as tragic fragmentation. The counternarrative reversed this plot by casting assimilation as tragic, elegizing cultural loss, and celebrating local resistance. By the late nineteenth century, with the rise of modernism, narratives of national emancipation were dominant in Ukrainian writing. They were, however, challenged by aestheticist, feminist, multicultural, and other discourses, each of which generated an ironic counternarrative of its own that

complicated and sought to problematize the dominant tradition. In the last decades of the twentieth century these trends have coalesced into a new kind of irreverent, parodic writing.

The analysis of this evolution and its underlying dialectic raises methodological issues, since it requires recognizing several narrative lines and avoiding the restriction or repression of alternative readings. There have been several suggestions for avoiding the imposition of an unwarranted homogeneity and for respecting internal heterogeneity, among them the examination of the simultaneity of discourses, the contrapuntal reading of works, the search for "figural resistance,"² and the study of canonized or "elite" works alongside historically marginalized ones.³ By indicating a multiplicity of discourses and a plurality of voices within texts, these approaches aim to impede or avoid closing off areas of complexity and potential synthetic assessments. Both the focus on internal tensions and the juxtaposition of competing discourses have been employed in this account in order to demonstrate some of the complexity of texts situated at discursive junctures.

The fact of empire left its mark on literature's themes and genres. They range from panegyrics to imperial grandeur, autocratic rule, and Russian messianism to descriptions of wars of conquest and to portrayals of non-Russian identities. Sometimes the empire is a deliberate and significant emphasis in a writer's work. It is then that a concern with the fate of a divided society penetrates the work. Characters become absorbed in issues. They grapple with questions of political loyalty or ideology. In Irving Howe's description of the political in literature, "They now think in terms of supporting or opposing society as such; they rally to one or another embattled segment of society; and they do so in the name of, and under prompting from, an ideology."⁴ When this happens, the political within a text becomes visible in the ideas or ideologies that stir characters into "passionate gestures and sacrifices."⁵ Sometimes the governing ideas themselves become active characters, or politics subtly infiltrates personal lives, the claims of ideology come up against the pressures of private emotions, and "abstraction is confronted with the flux of experience, the monolith of the program with the richness of diversity of motive, the purity of the ideal with the contaminations of action."⁶

This kind of examination remains useful in many texts where a political ideology is nearer to the surface. However, studies of colonial discourse and postcolonial theory have provided convincing examples of approaches that correlate the poetic with the political and the ideological at the level of the subconscious: in the widely observed tendency to construct stories that solve conflicts between the culturally hegemonic and oppositional by eliminating the latter or stories in

which an imperial consciousness transfers its own guilt and anxiety onto the “uncivilized.” When this occurs, the weight of imperial ideology or of an opposing nationalism is embedded in the narrative structures themselves. The imposition of cultural hegemony is detected here not as a conscious idea but as a presence of which the writer may be imperfectly aware, one that broods darkly in the background, invisibly manipulating notions of power and authority and attitudes to nation, class, and gender, and geography and history. It produces images gratifying to empire-builders by, for instance, eroticizing the land and the idea of its conquest or demonizing opponents of empire. These texts carry subliminal information that acts in a far more insidious and effective manner. This is true of some of the most popular and politically most exploited texts: Marlinsky’s *Ammalat-Bek*, Pushkin’s “Poltava,” Lermontov’s “Taman,” Gogol’s *Taras Bulba*, and Bulgakov’s *Days of the Turbins*. Other works have countered their impact by exposing their rhetorical strategies: Shevchenko’s “Caucasus,” Svydnytsky’s *Liuboratskys*, Ukrainka’s dramas, Khyvlovyy’s *Polemical Pamphlets*, Malaniuk’s essays.

The colonial and the anticolonial struggle to enthrone and dethrone not merely political opinions but patterns of imagery, narrative structures, characterizations, and literary tropes. A semantic charge, for example, is given to points of the compass. It produces an imaginative geography in which the opposition of civilization and barbarism, higher and lower, are mapped onto the opposition between West and East, North and South. Anthropological assumptions are encoded in the characterization of Russians and non-Russians, particularly through reference to their aptitude for self-government and moral enlightenment. Similarly, gender relations, particularly portrayals of unions between powerful males and adoring colonial females, serve as ways of conveying power inequalities between empires and their dependencies. The numerous plots involving colonized women (their seduction, ravishment, and captivity and attempts to win their love and to retain their loyalty) and the complicated relationships between males and colonized women are expressions of the desire to control and manipulate native loyalties. In describing Russian literature on Georgia, Susan Layton has drawn attention to “the systematic advancement of a metaphorical proposition about the land as a woman who must be protected and dominated by men stronger than those of her own country. The proposition relies upon a dualistic construct of woman as a good figure (innocent virgin, devoted mother) who can turn evil and reveal herself to be a fiend (murderess, sorceress, temptress).”⁷

Such metaphorical “argumentation” is richly present in the discourse of empire that is reflected in Russian and Ukrainian literature.

Typically, these binary patterns in imagery, characterization, and plot are inverted in anticolonial texts. Arresting critiques of metaphoric and metonymic structures that imperialists found pleasurable occur in Shevchenko's "Great Vault." His portrayals of seduced women are responses to numerous male-identified and self-gratifying accounts of colonized women in Russian literature, while his "Caucasus" explicitly rejects the imperial depiction of colonial war, even the language of tsarist edicts. Similarly, Anatoly Syvdytsky's *Liuboratskys* is an answering picture of the tragic effects of denationalization and the methods employed to instil a cultural inferiority complex.

Both colonial and anticolonial discourses have generally viewed the issue of imperial/national identity formation in terms of binary oppositions. The desire not to merge identities but to assert them, to draw boundaries and make radical cultural-political separations is characteristic of both. Postcolonial theory, by contrast, has focused on ambivalences, often suggesting not just the inevitability of some degree of cultural transference but also its positive effects. Terms like cultural migrancy, hybridity, and syncretism, which have been made available by postcolonial theory, have facilitated a more sympathetic examination of marginal, liminal, or multicultural conditions. If, therefore, colonial discourse has challenged views of colonial hegemony and of the imperial voice in literature, postcolonial theory has often suggested how the polarity of imperialism and nationalism might be transcended. Postcolonial theory appears particularly appropriate for the illumination of cultural realities in postcommunist Eastern Europe, where the playful tensions between autonomy and dependence, rejection and acceptance, originality and imitation are much in evidence.

The marginal situation and hybrid cultural forms have always held a particular interest for both Russian and Ukrainian literatures. Russian writers have often viewed their culture as spanning, confronting, and combining two civilizations, particularly the European and the Asian, both culturally and geographically. Ukrainians have focused strongly on their culture's relationship with its neighbours and on the exploration of taboos.⁸ Their writings have frequently refused the metaphors and myths not only of empire but of their own "essentialists" (above all, the nineteenth-century populists), as the works of Khyvylov, Domontovych, and Andrukhovych testify. Throughout history the literature written by Ukrainians has shown a high degree of sensitivity to hybridity's attractions, dangers, and inevitabilities.

The cocktail of competing political and cultural attitudes on the territory of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Ukraine produced or inspired writers who achieved fame far beyond its boundaries: Joseph

Conrad in English literature, Henryk Sienkiewicz and Bruno Schultz in Polish, Sacher-Masoch in German, Jan Potocki in French, and Sholom Aleichem in Yiddish. Their writings constitute an uninvestigated crosslinguistic and crosscultural phenomenon and exhibit many aspects of what is now referred to as the postcolonial. These writers from the Ukrainian borderland situation often had to face challenges to their identity and political-cultural sympathies and frequently were forced to negotiate compromises. A myopic dismissiveness has led scholars to overlook the fact that the literature written out of this Ukrainian situation and sensibility in fact has a presence within the “Western” tradition. Conrad is a particular good example. Like him, many writers from Ukrainian territories have exhibited a fascination with the ways in which race, nation, gender, or class interact with power. They have explored the psychology of marginality, the dangers accompanying the sleep of reason, and the temptations of cultural transgression.

A similar delight in confronting the exotic and exploring hybridity, was prominent among early nineteenth-century Russian-language writers like Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, Pushkin, Lermontov, and Grebenka (Hrebinka). Russian writers exhibited what John Bayley has described as a “curious purity,” a freshness of perceptions and earnestness in opinions that he attributed to the literature’s “awakening into self-consciousness.”⁹ The imperial project itself, by postulating a “tripartite” Russian-Ukrainian-Belarusan culture (*triedinaia Rossiia*, or Rus) and a multilingual literary production that would serve different social spheres (Russian for the intelligentsia, Ukrainian for the peasantry) alerted theorists of imperial culture to both the attractions and the dangers of mixed or combined cultural initiatives and forms. Although these experiments are today described as failures, it should not be forgotten that they drew many prominent intellectuals into a vigorous debate. A monolingual and monological view of Russian literature came to dominate Russian literature in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was enforced by banning the publication of books published in Ukrainian and pushed many Ukrainian intellectuals into breaking entirely with Russian language and culture.

Western thinking concerning Eastern Europe, long captive to eighteenth-century Enlightenment views of the enigmatic “Orient” and exotic East, has often shown little awareness of these complexities. Many contemporary works, in fact, unconsciously repeat fantasies and biases that Larry Wolff has shown can be traced to eighteenth-century Enlightenment Europe.¹⁰ Ukraine, perhaps even more than Russia, has been fair game for myth-creation and fanciful depiction. Naturally, the less audible the subject’s own voice, the less inhibited the fantasizing. Furthermore, the image of Ukraine has more often than not

been filtered through hegemonic patterns of thought assimilated from Russian, Polish, or other writers. Ukraine's subordinate political status has ensured that its presentation to the outside has most frequently been through the eyes and in the voice of others.

The Ukrainian counterdiscourse has attempted over the course of its evolution to present alternative images, to "represent" consciousness in both senses of the verb: politically by "speaking for" the nation (Kulish, Drahomanov, Franko, Khylovy, and others addressed Russian, Polish, or Western audiences) and artistically by "showing" or "voicing" its point of view in literature. The same individuals sometimes played major roles in both political and artistic forms of representation.

There were many nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers who represented aspects of the imperial viewpoint in literature: Khomiakov, Grebenka (Hrebinka), Gogol, and Bulgakov among them. Their creative writings, for the most part, yielded nuanced, textured articulations of the colonial viewpoint. The bluntest and most uncompromising statements came from political journalists like Belinsky, Struve, and Shulgin. These views, of course, were related to those of the government figures who controlled censorship, education, and the military and police and who were in a position to affect the fates of individual authors and literatures. There were large areas of agreement between Russian writers, journalists, and politicians on the issue of Ukraine's cultural and political rights. Literary, journalistic, and administrative figures all contributed to a unified discourse of empire and the dissemination of hegemonic views. As this study has tried to demonstrate, literary works frequently draw their meaning and allow a richness of interpretation when viewed within the context of these cultural and political discussions.

There is, no doubt, a danger that the literature's concern with politics will distract it from other aspects of the human experience. The need to promote imperial or national narratives has weighed heavily on both Russian and Ukrainian literatures. The image of the turncoat and traitor, of the guilt-ridden intellectual made impotent by ideology, of the colonizer-conqueror, or the patriot recur again and again. A culture that sees itself as selected by God to fulfill a mission or that sees itself as embattled will necessarily decry any falling away from cultural solidarity. The more relaxed, "postcolonial" attitude can take root only when the threat of engulfment or apostasy has receded. Culturally enforced assimilation or brutally enforced hybridity entail very different relations to ambiguity than the playful artistic use of ambiguity. As Anne McClintock has pointed out, "The lyrical glamor cast by postcolonial theorists over ambivalence and hybridity is not always historically warranted."¹¹ This having been said, however, endlessly rehearsing the narrative of national liberation or victimization is also stultifying.

At the present time many East European writers have begun interrogating their own nationalisms and monologic narratives, reaching beyond them for the kind of intercultural hermeneutics that postcolonial theory has encouraged. If colonial discourse has improved our awareness of how hegemony becomes inscribed in literature and if anticolonial discourse has shown us how aesthetic strategies disintegrate this hegemony, postcolonial theory, on the other hand, has illuminated the perplexing and often ignored contradictions, ambivalences, and ambiguities in literary texts that try to shake themselves free of the colonized past.

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Notes

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, xxii.
- 2 Hart, "Traces," 85.
- 3 Many studies and reference tools assume that imperialism refers exclusively to states with overseas dependencies. See, for example, Olson, *Historical Dictionary of European Imperialism*, which makes no mention of Russia or Austro-Hungary. For explorations of colonial/postcolonial discourse in the East European contexts, see Tötösy de Zepetnek and Gunew, *Postcolonial Literatures*.
- 4 Arguments against using the term "colonialism" in the Ukrainian political and economic context include the country's territorial contiguity, its relative affluence, the integration of its elite into the imperial fold and the absence of racial discrimination. For these reasons, it has been claimed, the term cannot be applied in its "classical" sense. Andreas Kappeler, for instance, has written: "Ukraine also was not a classical colony of the Russian Empire. A spacial, cultural and racial distance was lacking, and a legal discrimination of Ukrainians compared to Russians." See his "Mazepintsy, malorossy, khokhly," 140.
- 5 George Grabowicz has suggested that the continuous marginalization and repression of Ukrainian culture has its closest analogy – particularly in the cultural sphere – in colonialism and that "the colonial paradigm is much more pertinent than has generally been assumed." "Ukrainian Studies," 677–8. On the importance of postcolonial theory for Ukrainian writing, see Pavlyshyn, "Post-Colonial features"; Pavlyshyn

and Clarke, *Ukraine in the 1990s*; and Yekelchuk, “Nationalism ukrainien, biélorusse et slovaque,” in Delsol and Maslowski, *Histoire des Idées Politiques*.

- 6 “Colonialism” is the term generally used to describe the invasion and settlement of one country by representatives of another, with the imposition of an alien government, legal system, and institutions. “Imperialism” is used to signify a wider range of exploitative relations that are political, economic, and cultural (such as unfair trade practices and interference in the legal system and religious life) but that take place in the absence of mass settlement by civilians. The large variety of imperial and colonial relations does not allow any simple distinction between the two terms, and colonial/postcolonial discourse studies have sometimes used them interchangeably. “Colonial discourse” refers here to texts that are about both imperial and colonial contexts. The pattern of Ukraine’s domination by Russia includes both an imperial context (particularly evident in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, when the country’s autonomous rights, legal system, and institutions were gradually limited and then abrogated) and a colonial one (the disbursement of lands by the tsars and the movement of populations). The term postcolonial generally refers to the socioeconomic and cultural crises that have been caused by generations of imperialism and colonialism.
- 7 Terdiman, *Discourse/Counter-Discourse*.
- 8 See, especially, Dragomanov and Antonovich, *Istoricheskiia pesni*, and Drahomanov, *Politychni pisni*.
- 9 Sypovskiy, *Ukraina v rosiiskomu pismenstvi*.
- 10 Among several good anthologies of postcolonial literary criticism are Williams and Chrisman, *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory*; Barker, *Colonial Discourse/Postcolonial Theory*; and McClintock, *Dangerous Liaisons*. They build upon Said’s *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*. The Russian imperial context has been the focus of several works, among them Thompson, *Imperial Knowledge*; Hokanson, “Literary Imperialism”; Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire*, “Eros and Empire,” and “Marlinsky’s ‘Ammalat-Bek’”; and Scotto, “Prisoners of the Caucasus.”
- 11 See, in particular, Hrabovych, *Do istorii*; Pavlychko, *Dyskurs modernizmu*; Hundorova, *Proiavlennia slova*; and Zabuzhko, *Filosofia ukrainskoi idei*, and *Shevchenkiiv mif*.
- 12 For an introduction to discourse theory, see Mills, *Discourse*, also useful is Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. On counterdiscourse see Terdiman, *Discourse/Counter-Discourse*.
- 13 I have found the following particularly useful: Agursky, *The Third Rome*; Hosking, *Russia*; Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe*; Wolff,

Inventing Eastern Europe, Bassin, *Imperial Visions*; Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors*; and Burbank and Rausel, *Imperial Russia*.

- 14 Layton, "Nineteenth-Century Russian Mythologies," 82.
- 15 Austin, "The Exotic Prisoner," 218.
- 16 Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, 13.
- 17 See Arendt, *Totalitarianism*, 126; Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, 13.
- 18 The influence of Austrian rule on Western Ukrainian literature is an important area of investigation that has also recently attracted attention. See Instytut, *Ukrainska literatura v Avstrii*.

CHAPTER ONE

- 1 *Vossoedinenie Ukrainy s Rossiei. Dokumenty i materialy*, vol. 3 (Moscow, 1954), 468, quoted in Floria, "O nekotorykh osobennostiakh," 19.
- 2 Segel, *Eighteenth Century Russia*, vol. 1, 53.
- 3 The president of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, described the reconfiguration of the Soviet Union into the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1991 as a "civilized divorce." See Brzezinski, "Ukraine's Critical Role," 3.
- 4 A Polish historian has written: "It is difficult to overestimate the contribution made by the Zaporozhians in the Russian-Turkish war. They played a prominent role in the conquest of the Crimea, as has been recognized many times, and the highest praise was given them in the numerous reports. Over a dozen tsarist administrators and officers accepted the honorary title of friend of the Zaporozhian army, among them the president of the College of Foreign Affairs Nikita Panin, Major-General Prozorovsky and Mikhail Kutuzov." Serczyk, *Historia Ukrainy*, 195.
- 5 Serczyk, *Historia Ukrainy*, 198.
- 6 For the political and social life of Galicia, see Himka, *Socialism in Galicia*, and *Galician Villagers*.
- 7 See Knysh, *Rus and Ukraine*, 26–7.
- 8 Sydorenko, "Ukrainian," 675.
- 9 For a discussion of later expressions of these stereotypes see Radziejowski, "Ukrainians and Poles."
- 10 For the early expression of these stereotypes see Kępiński, *Lach i Moskal*. The book unfortunately reduces the issue to Polish and Russian stereotypes without taking into account Ruthenian (Ukrainian and Belarusian) influences on their formation. This obscures the reality that only after the partitions did large numbers of Poles come into direct contact with Russians, that many Russians found Ruthenians quite alien, and that Poles made distinctions between Ruthenians and

Russians. For a critique see Sysyn, “There is no Rus.” For the way Polish attitudes led to self-hatred among Ukrainians, see Frick, “Foolish Rus.”

- 11 Sysyn, “The Khmelnytsky Uprising,” 166.
- 12 Viswanathan, “Currying Favor,” 115.
- 13 See his “Encomium on the Battle of Poltava” (*Slovo pokhvalnoe o batalii Poltavskoi ...*, 1709), which together with his “Epinikion ...” appeared as a publication entitled *Panegirikos, ili slovo pokhvalnoe o preslavnoi nad voiskami sveiskimi pobidi ...* (Kyiv: Druk. Kyievo-pecherskoi lavry, 1709). It has been argued that Ukrainian scholars and church leaders created the myth of two Russias in order to draw Moscow into a struggle against the Turks. See Sherekh, “Moskva, Marosieika,” 37.
- 14 Mickiewicz, *Les Slaves*, 246, 247–8: “le fidèle représentant de l’idée des conquêtes. Il encourage les Russes; il applaudit à leurs triomphes; il maudit et insulte leurs ennemis ... Dans l’ode sur la chute de Varsovie, on voit clairement l’idée prétentieuse de l’Empire Russe de se dresser en face de l’Univers entier avec son omnipotence. Dierzhavin dit positivement: Nous n’avons pas besoin d’alliés. A quoi bon des alliances? Fais un pas, ô Russe, un pas encore, et l’univers est à toi!”
- 15 Thompson, *Imperial Knowledge*, 7.
- 16 See, for example, his “To a Fine Fellow” (K krasavtsu, 1794), “On the Subjugation of the Derbent” (Na pokorenie Derbenta, 1796), and “On the Return of Count Zubov From Persia” (Na vozvrashchenie grafa Zubova iz Persii, 1804).
- 17 Rozanov, *Izbrannoe*, 206; Fedotov, *Novyi grad*, 31.
- 18 Mirsky, *History of Russian Literature*, 63.
- 19 Pipes, *Karamzin’s Memoir*, 139.
- 20 Quoted in Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire*, 75.
- 21 Hokanson, “Literary Imperialism,” 340.
- 22 Hill, *Lenin*, 21.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 77.
- 24 Vladislav Ozerov, for example, spoke of the “Russian God” in his tragedy *Dimitrii Donskoi* (1807), which is devoted to the victory of 1380 over the Mongol Horde at Kulikovo Field, one of the most celebrated victories in Russian history. The idea of a saintly Russia under divine protection perhaps has its roots in a deeper past. Halperin has argued that the medieval chronicles provide evidence that Russians, unlike their counterparts elsewhere who “took military losses as evidence of their god’s displeasure,” implicitly denied that the Mongol conquest had occurred: “Through an adept and remarkably consistent use of language, in which they eschewed the terminology of conquest and even liberation, the bookmen avoided coming to grips with the

- ideological conundrum of their own defeat.” Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*, 62–3.
- 25 Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe*, xi–xii. The idea of Moscow as the “third Rome” (Constantinople was the Eastern, or second, Roman Empire) was first formulated by the monk Filofei in the sixteenth century. The concept was reinterpreted by Russian thinkers in the nineteenth century. Solovev saw it as Russia’s mission to “set on earth the correct image of the Holy Trinity.” See his *Ruskaia ideia*, 20–1.
- 26 Odoevsky, *Russian Nights*, 209.
- 27 Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I*, 137–8.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 131.
- 29 Grech, *Sochineniia*, vol. 3, 290.
- 30 Bulgarin, *Sochineniia*, vol. 6, 130.
- 31 Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe*, 196.
- 32 K. Aksakov, *Estetika i literaturnaia kritika* (Moscow, 1995), 84, quoted in Hrabovych, *Do istorii*, 126.
- 33 Pogodin, “Parallel russkoi istorii,” 74.
- 34 Danilevskii, *Rossii i Evropa*, 24.
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 Slavinskii, “Ruskaia intelligentsiia,” 233–4.
- 37 Savitskii, “Geograficheskie i geopoliticheskie osnovy,” 117, 118.
- 38 See Tillett, *The Great Friendship*, 26.
- 39 M.N. Pokrovskii, *Ruskaia istoriia s drevneishikh vremen*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1933), 249, quoted in Tillett, *The Great Friendship*, 27.
- 40 Said, “Yeats and Decolonization,” 72.
- 41 See Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, 27.
- 42 Tiutchev, *Sochineniia*, 305:
 Moskva i grad Petrov, i Konstantinov grad –
 Vot tsarstva russkogo zavetnye stolitsy ...
 No gde predel emu? i gde ego granitsy –
 Na sever, na vostok, na iug i na zapad?
 Sem vnutrennykh morei i sem velikikh rek ...
 Ot Nila do Nevy, ot Elby do Kitaia,
 Ot Volgi do Evfrata, ot Ganga do Dunaia ...
 Vot tsarstvo russkoe... i ne preynet vovek,
 Kak to providel Dykh i Daniil predrek.
- 43 Dostoevsky, *Diary*, 1207–8.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 1202, 1209.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 906.
- 46 *La Republica*, 27 January 1990, quoted in Neumann, *Russia*, 197.
- 47 Dostoevsky, *Diary*, 1292.
- 48 Hokanson, “Literary Imperialism,” 343.
- 49 See Dowler, *Dostoevsky*, 24–5, 30–1, 57.

- 50 Ibid., 155.
- 51 [A.A. Grigorev], “Vopros o natsionalnostiakh,” *Iakor* 5 (1863), 81; see Dowler, *Dostoevsky*, 155.
- 52 See Rosdolsky, *Engels*.
- 53 Dostoevsky, *Diary*, 1372–3, 1376.
- 54 Rieber, “Russian Imperialism,” 334.
- 55 Iskander, “Rossiia i Polsha,” 274. For a translation of the article, see Herzen, “Alexander Herzen, Russia and Poland.”
- 56 Fedotov, “Sudba imperii,” *Novyi zhurnal* 16 (1947), reprinted in his *Novyi grad*, 187.
- 57 Ibid., 188.
- 58 V, “Osvobozhdenie krestian v Rossii i Polskoe vostannie,” *Kolokol* 195 (1 March 1865): 1602.
- 59 Ir [Herzen], “*Kolokol i Den*,” 1375.
- 60 See Miller, “Rossiia i rusifikatsiia Ukrainy,” 146, 154.
- 61 The German historian J. Ch. Engel makes this comment in his *Geschichte der Ukraine und der ukrainischen Kosaken* (Halle, 1796), 194, quoted in Nalyvaiko, *Ochyma Zakhodu*, 244.
- 62 Nikolai Polevoi, *Ermak Timofeich, ili Volga i Sibir* (St Petersburg: K. Krai, 1845), 144, quoted in Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, 53. The stage directions for the ending of the play have the dying hero deliver this speech and “fall silent in ecstasy.”
- 63 “Rassuzhdenie o polzakh i nevygodakh priobreteniiia Gruzii, Imeritii i Odishi, so vsemi prilezhashchimi narodami,” *Chteniia*, 1862, 2, section 5, 87, quoted in Dzyuba, *Internationalism*, 75.
- 64 Dzyuba, *Internationalism*, 25, 79.
- 65 Pokrovskii, *Russia*, 75.
- 66 Ibid., 121.
- 67 Ibid., 122.
- 68 Kappeler, “Mazepinty,” 125–44. See also his *Rusland als Vielvölkerreich*.
- 69 For a discussion of the distinction, see Himka, *Socialism in Galicia*, 4–7. On the use of the term in Engels and Marxism generally, see Rosdolsky, *Engels*.
- 70 Thompson, *Imperial Knowledge*, 6.
- 71 Leela Ghandi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), quoted in Thompson, *Imperial Knowledge*, 11.
- 72 The Minister of Internal Affairs, Petr Valuev, issued a secret instruction on 30 July 1863 closing all Ukrainian Sunday schools and forbidding all Ukrainian-language publications, with the exception of belles lettres. He stated that “No separate Little Russian language ever existed, exists now, or can exist and the dialect used by the common people” in Ukraine was “nothing but the Russian language that had been distorted by Polish influences,” that Ukrainian peasants

understood Russian better than Ukrainian, and that beneath the drive for language rights lay a desire for separatism. See Savchenko, *Zaborona ukrainstva*, xvi. The secret Ems edict signed by Alexander II on 30 May 1876 extended the ban by prohibiting all teaching in Ukrainian, removing all Ukrainian books and pamphlets from school libraries, transferring teachers with Ukrainian sympathies to Russian school districts, and directing Ukrainian districts to appoint Russians. The composer N.V. Lysenko was prevented from publishing a collection of Ukrainian songs, and his musical score for the opera *Chornomorets* could only be published without the libretto or the title. Alexander II lifted some of these restrictions in 1881 by allowing dictionaries, stage performances, and musical compositions to appear. Savchenko, *Zaborona ukrainstva*, xxiv.

- 73 See Riasanovsky, *Nicholas*, and Whittaker, *Origins*.
- 74 Luckyj, *Between Gogol and Sevcenko*, 36–7.
- 75 See Sysyn, “Concepts of Nationhood,” and “The Khmelnytsky Uprising”; and Chynczewska-Hennel, “National Consciousness.”
- 76 Hrabianka’s *Diistviia prezilnoi i ot nachala poliakov krvavshoi nebuvaloi brani Bohdana Khmelnytskoho ... Roku 1710* was first published in full in Kyiv in 1854. Velychko appeared as *Letopis sobytii v Iugo-Zapadnoi Rossii v XVII veke. Sostavil Samoil Velichko byushii kantseliarist Voiska Zaporozhskogo, 1720*, 4 vols. (Kyiv, 1848–64). A translation into modern Ukrainian was made by Valerii Shevchuk in Samiilo Velychko, *Litopys*, 2 vols. (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1991).
- 77 See “Rech ‘O popravlenii sostoianiiia’ Malorossii”; and “Proshenie malorosiiskago shliakhetstva i starshin, vmeste s getmanom.”
- 78 The protonational counterdiscourse has been detected in the oppositional strategy of Stefan Yavorsky in Peter the Great’s time. See Serekh, “Stefan Yavorsky.” It can also be seen in Pylip Orlyk’s “Bendery Constitution” of 1710 and Hryhorii Poletyka’s submission to Catherine the Great’s Legislative Commission in 1768. Excerpts from both these documents can be found in Lindheim and Luckyj, *Toward an Intellectual History*, 53–64, 71–3. Poletyka also wrote “Historical Information on what basis Little Russia was under the Polish Republic, and by what treaties it came under Russian rule, and a Patriotic Opinion as to how it could be ordered so that it would be useful to the Russian State without violations of its rights and freedoms.” See Poletyka, “Istoricheskoe izvestie.” Vasilii Kapnist’s “Ode on Slavery” (1783) has also been interpreted as a political protest.
- 79 See [Divovych], “Razgovor Velikorossii s Malorossiei” and “Dopolnenia Razgovora Velikorossii s Malorossiei” (an abridged version was published in Biletskyi, *Khrestomatiia*, 465–83). See also *Istoriia Rusov* and Pavlyshyn, “Kotliarevsky’s *Eneida*,” 24.

- 80 Hrabovych, “Teoriia ta literatura,” 80–1.
- 81 See, for example, Sverstiuk, “Ivan Kotliarevs’kyi is Laughing,” in his *Clandestine Essays*, 69–96, and Shevchuk, “*Eneida*.”
- 82 Skovoroda, *Tvory*, vol. 1, 59.
- 83 *Ibid.*, 72.
- 84 *Ibid.*, 84.
- 85 Bagalei and Miller, *Istoriia goroda Kharkova*, 467.
- 86 Chyzhevskiy, *Filosofia*, 174–9.
- 87 See Olena Dziuba, “Ukraintsi,” in Miller, *Rossia*, 115–24.
- 88 Statistics on the social and national origins of the university’s student body in the early decades indicate that “virtually all its Ukrainian students were either nobles from the Hetmanate ... or sons of priests primarily from the Right-Bank Ukraine.” Kohut, “Problems,” 115.
- 89 Sypovskiy, *Ukraina*, 10–12. The same point was made earlier by N. Dashkevich. See his “Otzyv,” 109.
- 90 Mirsky, *Russia*, 232–3.
- 91 Bahalii, *Istoriia*, 192–3.
- 92 See Drahomanov, *Politychni pisni ukrainskoho narodu* (1883–85), “Malorossiiia v ee slovesnosti,” (1869), (with Antonovych) *Istoricheskiia pesni malorusskogo naroda* (1874), and *Novi ukrainski pisni pro hromadski spravy* (1881). These are all reprinted in his *Vybrane*, 5–45, 46–59, 456–61. See also Kostomarov’s “Istoricheskoe znachenie iuzhno-russkago navodnago tvorchestva” (1872) and “Istoriia kazachestva v pamiatnikakh iuzhno-russkago pesennago tvorchestva” (1880).
- 93 See, for example, Marchenko, *Kozaky-Mamai*, 16, 40.
- 94 Drahomanov, *Politychni pisni*, iv.
- 95 Démidoff, *Voyage*, 253.
- 96 Dzyuba, *Internationalism*, 82.
- 97 *Ibid.*, 83–4.
- 98 *Ibid.*, 96, 66, 84.
- 99 See Hrabovych, *Do istorii*, 21.
- 100 See Hrabovych, “Teoriia ta istoriia,” 46–137.
- 101 *Ibid.*, 84.
- 102 Quoted *ibid.*, 108.
- 103 “Road to Russia” was the first of six poems that followed act 1 of *Forefathers’ Eve*. Weintraub has described its “basic notion” as follows: “life in Russia lacks organic qualities. It is not an unhampered growth of free human beings. There is something subhuman, animal or mechanical.” *Poetry of Adam Mickiewicz*, 183.
- 104 On the “Slaveno-Russian” high culture (*Slaveno-rossiiska kultura*), based on Ukrainian Orthodoxy and the Ukrainian version of Church Slavonic, see Kohut, “The Question of Russo-Ukrainian Unity,” forthcoming.

- 105 On a particular language not being the ultimate determinant of the national in a literature, see Hrabovych, “Ukrainsko-rosiiski literaturni vziaimyny,” in his *Do istorii*, 189–236.
- 106 Luckyj, *Between Gogol’ and Sevchenko*, 7.
- 107 On the concept of Little Russia see Kohut, “Little Russian Identity.” The evolution of the term “Rus” into “Russia” and “Little Russia” is described in Maksimovich, “Ob upotreblenii nazvanii.” See also Hrushevskiy, “Velyka, Mala i Bila Rus,” and Solovev, “Velikaia, Malaia i Belaia Rus.”
- 108 Hrabovych, “Ukrainsko-rosiiski literaturni vziaimyne,” 222.
- 109 On Vahylevych’s identity problem see Brock, “Gente Ruthenus.”
- 110 On Kapnist’s mission see Kohut, *Russian Centralism*, 264–6. The relevant documents have been published in Dashkevych, “Berlin.” Oppositionist attitudes survived in the family. Drahomanov reported that in the late 1850s he was able to read copies of Shevchenko’s banned poems in the collections of V. Kapnist’s children. See *Narod* (Lviv) 18 (1893), 15 September, 195, quoted in Priima, *Shevchenko*, 62.
- 111 Frick, “‘Foolish Rus’.”
- 112 See Kulish, “Zazyvnyi lyst.”
- 113 Franko, “Ivan Vyshenskyi i ioho tvory” (Lviv, 1895), reprinted in his *Zibrannia tvoriv*, 127.
- 114 Mills, *Discourse*, 97.
- 115 Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 4.

CHAPTER TWO

- 1 See Halbach, “Bergvolker,” 53. For a fuller account of the war see Gammer, *Muslim Resistance*.
- 2 See Kazemzadeh, “Penetration,” 262.
- 3 R. Fadeev, *Pisma z Kavkaza k redaktoru Moskovskikh Vedomosti* (St Petersburg, 1865) 154, quoted in Kazemzadeh, “Russian Penetration,” 262.
- 4 See Halbach, “Bergvolker,” 53–4.
- 5 Quoted *ibid.*, 63.
- 6 Walicki, *Philosophy*, 92.
- 7 Scotto, “Prisoners,” 247.
- 8 S.S. Uvarov, *Projet d’une académie asiatique* (St Petersburg, 1810), reprinted in his *Etudes de philologie et de critique* (Saint Petersburg, 1842) 1–45. The work met with remarkable success. Uvarov, who later became minister of education (1818–55) under Nicholas I, gave copies to Mme de Staël and the brothers Schlegel. The work was praised by Napoleon and Goethe.
- 9 Marlinsky, “On Romanticism,” 150.

- 10 Christoff, *Third Heart*, 19.
- 11 Manuilov, *Letopis*, 78.
- 12 Mirsky, for example, uses the term in *History*, 132.
- 13 Hugo, *Œuvres*, 305.
- 14 During his interrogation Bestuzhev portrayed himself as a contrite and loyal servant led astray by fanatics: “He appealed to patriotism; loyalty to the homeland, the tsar, and the Romanov family; devotion to the Church, to God, and to the people. He asserted that he was a misled patriot who had attempted to serve his homeland through a revolutionary zeal that proved callow.” Bagby, *Bestuzhev-Marlinsky*, 184.
- 15 About sixty-five officers and three thousand soldiers were banned to the Caucasian army. See Fadeev, “Dekabristy,” 100.
- 16 Under this title *Biblioteka dlia chteniia* published the following sketches in these years: *Proshchanie s Kaspiem, Put do goroda Kuby, Gornaia doroga iz Dagestana v Shirvan cherez Kunakenty, Poslediaia stantsiia k Staroi Shamakhe, Pereezd ot S. Topchi v Kutkashi*, and *Doroga ot stantsii Almaly do posta Mugansy*.
- 17 I.S. Turgenev’s words from 1836 are quoted in Brodsky, *Literaturnye salony*, 201.
- 18 Layton, “Ammalat-Bek,” 39.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 41–3. See also Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire*, 110–32.
- 20 Marlinskii, *Izbrannye povesti*, 14.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 222.
- 22 Layton, “Ammalat-Bek,” 44.
- 23 Marlinskii, *Izbrannye povesti*, 232.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 264–5.
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 *Ibid.*, 271.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 235.
- 28 Curtis has written that in many ways Yermolov’s “views on military matters were close to those of the Decembrists, although he apparently had no ties with them and, indeed, was too loyal to his oath to approve their revolt.” *The Russian Army*, 22.
- 29 On the Europe-Asia boundary see Bassin, “Russia.”
- 30 Barrett, “Lines of Uncertainty,” 600–1.
- 31 On Yermolov’s wives, see Berzhe, “Yermolov.”
- 32 Marlinskii, *Izbrannye povesti*, 172–3.
- 33 A tirade by Ammalat-Bek against the cruelty of tsarist policy, the portrait of Yermolov as a conquering hero, and several other passages were censored. See Marlinskii, *Izbrannye povesti*, 404. For a discussion of the censorship see Bagby, *Bestuzhev-Marlinsky*, 313–16.
- 34 Layton, “Ammalat-Bek,” 46.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 51.

- 36 It has been suggested that different attitudes coexisted in the author's mind and that he constructed several persona that served discrete functions and different audiences. Bagby, *Bestuzhev-Marlinsky*, 14–15.
- 37 Semen Esadze, *Istoricheskaia zapiska ob upravlenii Kavkazom* (Tiflis, 1907) 35, quoted in Gammer, *Muslim Resistance*, 30. Baddeley held the same view: "Yermoloff's central idea was that the whole of the Caucasus must, and should, become an integral part of the Russian Empire, that the existence of independent or semi-independent states of communities of any description, whether Christian, Mussulman, or Pagan, in the mountains or on the plains was incompatible with the dignity and honour of his master, the safety and welfare of his subjects." *Russian Conquest*, 99.
- 38 Quoted *ibid.*, 65.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 99.
- 40 For a discussion of the implications of Marlinsky's death for the interpretation of his work, see Bagby, *Bestuzhev-Marlinsky*, 279.
- 41 Bagby, *Bestuzhev-Marlinsky*, 64.
- 42 The letter was written in November/December 1937. See Manuilov, *Letopis*, 89, quoted in Kelly, *Tragedy*, 83.
- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 General Vladimir Volkhovsky, another former Decembrist, suggested that "two or three months with an expedition against the mountaineers might be the best way for Lermontov to efface all memories of his faux pas." Manuilov, *Letopis*, 82–3, quoted in Kelly, *Tragedy*, 67.
- 45 In a letter of 19 June 1833 to his confidante Maria Lopukhina the young writer explained: "Until now I had lived for a literary career, and now I am to become a warrior. Perhaps this is the shortest way. If it does not lead me to achieve my first aim, perhaps it will be the final solution."
- 46 Tillett, *Friendship*, 28.
- 47 Sollogub, *Povesti*, 490.
- 48 Manuilov, *Letopis*, 96, quoted in Kelly, *Tragedy*, 107.
- 49 Letter, 19 June 1833, to Lopukhina.
- 50 Lermontov had witnessed boxing matches from his childhood. See his *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3, 595.
- 51 Letter to S. Raevsky, 16 January 1830.
- 52 Eikhenbaum's resolutely formalist discussion of Lermontov asks readers to treat the Hussar poems, like his civic themes, simply as ineffective art. The Hussar poems are described as more pornographic than erotic: "Eroticism is distinguished from pornography in that it finds witty allegories and puns for the most candid situations and it is this which lends it literary value. Since poetry in general is almost wholly the art of speaking allegorically, in order to make palpable the very

matter of the word in all its attributes, it is thus perfectly understandable that an erotic theme, as a forbidden theme possessing no canonized poetic *topoi* for its expression, interests the poet as a purely literary, stylistic problem. Such is the case with Voltaire's "Pucelle" or Pushkin's "Gavriiliada." This is not at all the case in Lermontov: instead of allegories and puns in his verse we see simply scabrous terminology whose coarseness produces no impression because it is not an artistic device." Eikhnenbaum, *Lermontov*, 119.

53 Baddeley, *Russian Conquest*, 145.

54 Gammer, *Muslim Resistance*, 311.

55 McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 364.

56 Lermontov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3, 311:

Teper ostalos mne odno;
Idu! – kuda? ne vse l ravno,
Ta il drugaia storona?

57 The denial of hybridity has a history. Halperin, speaking of medieval Russian writings, has written: "Russian audiences developed a taste for tales with "oriental" settings, but the real thing was, for religious reasons, unacceptable." *Russia*, 124. In his *Poetika* (11–13) Likhachev has also discussed the paradox that oriental literatures failed to penetrate Old Rus literature.

58 Gammer, *Muslim Resistance*, 114.

59 Lermontov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3, 235:

Smiris, cherkes! i zapad i vostok,
Byt mozhet, skoro tvoi razdeliat rok,
Nastanet chas – i novyi groznyi Rym
Ukrasit Sever Avgustom drugim!

60 *Ibid.*, 227:

Za chto zavistlivoi rukoi
Vy vozmutili nashu doliu?
Za chto, bedny my, i voliu
I step svoiu ne otdadim
Za zlato roskoshi nariadnoi;
Za to, chto my bogotvorim,
Chto presiraete vy khladno!
Ne boisia, govori smelei;
Zachem ty nas voznenavidel,
Kakoiu grubostiu svoei
Prostoi narod tebia obidel?

61 *Ibid.*, 235:

Goriat auly; net u nikh zashchity,
Vragom syny otechestva razbity...
Kak khishchnyi zver, v smirennuiu obitel

- Vryvaetsia shtykami pobeditel,
 On ubivaet startsev i detei,
 Nevinykh dev i iunykh materei...
- 62 Ivan Dziuba, "Zastukaly," 3: 93.
- 63 "Ia k vam pishu: sluchaino! pravo ..." (1840), in Lermontov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 2, 95:
 I s grustiu tainoi i serdechnoi
 Ia dumal: zhalkii chelovok,
 Chego on khochet! ... Nebo iasno,
 Pod nebom mesta mnogo vsem,
 No besprestanno i naprasno
 Odin vrazhduet on – zachem?
- 64 Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire*, 225.
- 65 Quoted in Troyat, *L'Etrange destin*, 141.
- 66 N. I. Lorer, *Zapiski dekabrista* (Moscow: Gos. ekonomicheskoe izd., 1931) 214, quoted in Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire*, 108.
- 67 Troyat, *L'Etrange destin*, 211.
- 68 Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 79, quoted in McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 25.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Kelly, *Tragedy*, 136.
- 71 Eikhenbaum, *Statti*, 123.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid., 121.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 P.A. Viskovatov, *M.Iu. Lermontov: Zhizn i tvorchestvo* (Moscow: Izd. V.F. Rikhtera, 1891) 368, quoted in Eikhenbaum, *Statti*, 123.
- 76 Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, 48.
- 77 The German Romantic had written that the essence of a thing was in the concatenation of forces that it was – not in something else beyond this. He postulated a conflict within nature that, by inhibiting its productivity, continually led to the emergence of life and thought. Moreover, Schelling's philosophy saw an identity between mind in us and nature outside us: "the system of nature is at the same time the system of our mind." Bowie, *Schelling*, 39.
- 78 Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 4, 505, 517, qtd. in Eikhenbaum, *Stati*, 84–5.
- 79 Howe, *Novels*, 27.
- 80 Quoted in Bowie, *Schelling*, 114.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Clarke, *Travels*, 331. Sumarokov also refers to them as "the privileged possessors of the local land." *Dosugi*, vol. 2, 136. Izmailov describes the Taman island as "given over to their rule" by Catherine. *Puteshestvie*,

- vol. 4, 12. Shostak describes the Black Sea Cossacks as “all Little Russians” who keep the “customs of their native land” and confirms that the island of Taman “is under their authority.” “Vzgliad,” 82–3.
- 83 Clarke, *Travels*, 167, 282–5. Sumarokov is also clear about their identity: “the Black Sea cossacks do not differ in any way from Little Russians. They have the same shaven heads, the same clothes, the same hems on women, the same language [narechie], the same neat houses, the same sluggishness, and the same customs; in a word, they are the very same Little Russians, except with swords.” (*Dosugi*, 139).
- 84 Sumarokov refers to crossing from Kerch to Taman as a five and a half hour journey from Europe to Asia. *Dosugi*, 124. Izmailov also describes this point as the link between Europe and Asia. *Puteshestvie*, vol. 3, 261.
- 85 Izmailov, with whose account Lermontov may have been familiar, also records it as a mysterious place in which oil bubbled up from the earth and caught fire, a Mount Etna or Vesuvius constantly shrouded in fog. *Puteshestvie*, vol. 4, 6–11.
- 86 Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire*, 229–30.
- 87 Mirsky, introduction to *The Demon*, 12–13.
- 88 *Ibid.*, 14.
- 89 Mirsky, *History*, 136.
- 90 Lermontov was drawing on historical and legendary associations when giving his heroine this name. The reign of Queen Tamara, which began in 1184, was Georgia’s most glorious era, marked by prosperity and a flowering of the arts, and it was a central point in its history. The most serious crisis of the reign was the attempt of her Russian husband, George Bogoliubskoi, whom she divorced in 1188, to seize power.
- 91 Lermontov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3, 472:
 Ostav ee, ona moia!
 Iavilsia ty, zashchitnyk, pozdno,
 I ei, ty ne sudia.
 Na serdtse, polnoe gordyni,
 Ia nalozhil pechat moiu;
 Zdes bolshe net tvoei sviatyni,
 Zdes ia vladeiu i liubliu!
- 92 Layton, “Eros and Empire,” 205.
- 93 A.P. Shan-Girei, “M.Iu. Lermontov,” quoted in Lermontov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3, 648.
- 94 Garrard, *Lermontov*, 100–1.
- 95 Reshetar, “Perceptions,” 152.
- 96 See de Custine, *Empire*, 121.
- 97 Lermontov, *Hero*, 100, 127.

- 98 For a discussion of this construct of Eastern Europe, see Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*.
- 99 de Custine, 85.
- 100 *Ibid.*, 347.
- 101 Dostoevsky, like Danilevsky, saw the assimilation of non-Orthodox European nations as justifiable on religious grounds. He wrote that the reason for Europe's degeneracy lay in the fact that "Roman Catholicism long ago sold out Christ for the sake of earthly dominion, forcing humanity to turn away from it and so being the principal cause of Europe's materialism and atheism; quite naturally this Catholicism also engendered socialism in Europe." Dostoevsky, *Diary*, 1210.
- 102 Carter, *Russian Nationalism*, 16.
- 103 Walicki, *Slavophile Controversy*, 186.
- 104 Shcheglov, *Rannie slavianofily*, 14–15.
- 105 Christoff, *Russian Slavophilism*, 34.
- 106 Dziuba, *U vsiakoho*, 117–18.
- 107 See Konstantin Aksakov, "Russian Eagle," and Ivan Aksakov, "To the Danube! where a new glory's / a pure glory's star shines for us" ("Na Dunai! tuda gde novoi slavy ..., 1854).
- 108 Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy*, 186.
- 109 Arsenev, "Khomiakov," 14.
- 110 Khomiakov, "Tritsats let tsarstvovaniia Ivana Vasilevicha," *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 3, 49.
- 111 *Ibid.*, vol. 8, 206; emphasis in original.
- 112 Khomiakov, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 267.
- 113 *Ibid.*, 277.
- 114 Khomiakov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 1, 425.
- 115 *Ibid.*, 499; emphasis in original.
- 116 *Ibid.*, 243. The argument that Russia grew "naturally," without conquest, was to be made later by Danilevsky in his *Rossia i Evropa*. He used the metaphor of organic growth and spoke of the Eastern Slavs as parts of a single organism (21–4). Dostoevsky, too, assumed the unity of consciousness and spirit of the Russians, by whom he too meant all the Eastern Slavs (*Diary*, 933–4). Both follow Khomiakov in combining professions of Russia's peaceable nature with the call to military action.
- 117 Dziuba, *U vsiakoho*, 57–8.
- 118 *Russkii arkhiv*, 1879, kn. 3, 327–8, quoted in Dziuba, *U vsiakoho*, 36–7.
- 119 Christoff, *Russian Slavophilism*, 91–2.
- 120 Egorov, "Poeziia," 13.
- 121 Dziuba, *U vsiakoho*, 269.
- 122 Iekelchik, *Probudzhennia natsii*, 55.
- 123 Berdiaev, *Khomiakov*, 220.

- 124 Ibid.
- 125 Walicki, *Slavophile Controversy*, 181.
- 126 Shevchenko met S. Shevyrev, the Aksakovs, Khomiakov, Pogodin, and others at a dinner given in his honour by Maksymovych on 25 March 1858. He refused to write for their journal *Russkaia beseda*. Frantsev has argued that Shevchenko and the Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood were strongly influenced by Khomiakov, using as evidence a pro-tsarist poem that he attributes to Shevchenko, and he attempts to prove that Khomiakov's idea of a union of the Slavs under Russian leadership was attractive to the brotherhood and to all the Slavs. See V. Frantsev, "A.S. Khomiakov." Ivan Dziuba's *U vsiakoho* is the fullest treatment of Shevchenko and Khomiakov as antipodes.

CHAPTER THREE

- 1 Hooper, "Stranger," 35.
- 2 Said, *Orientalism*, 99.
- 3 Lednicki, *Przyjaciele Moskale*, x.
- 4 See Orłowski, *Z dziejów antypolskich obsesji*, 49.
- 5 Derzhavin's "Na vziatie Varshavy" (1794) celebrated the crushing of Polish resistance by calling General Suvorov a "Hercules" who left "the corpses of enemies and laurels in his trail." It described Warsaw as a "traitor," where the "eagle was now sitting on the evil hydra." For a discussion of Russian literary attitudes to Poland among the above writers, see Orłowski, *Z dziejów antypolskich obsesji*, 39–49.
- 6 Ibid., 9.
- 7 See Pipes, *Memoir*, 145.
- 8 Karamzin, *Izbrannye sochineniia*, vol. 1, 65–6.
- 9 Quoted in Kępiński, *Lach*, 203.
- 10 *Na vziatie Varshavy. Tri stikhotvoreniia V. Zhukovskogo i A. Pushkina* (St Petersburg: Voen. tip., 1831).
- 11 The best-known works are A. Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* (1825), F. Bulgarin's *Dimitrii Samozvanets. Istoricheskii roman* (1830), and A. Khomiakov's *Dimitrii Samozvanets* (1831–32), but the theme was used frequently after the first partition of Poland. See also A. Sumarokov, "Dimitrii Samozvanets" (1771), V. Narezhnyi, "Dimitrii Samozvanets" (1804), M. Pogodin, "Istoriia v litsakh o Dimitrii Samozvantse" (1835), M. Zagoskin, *Miloslavskii, ili russkie v 1612 godu* (1829), and A. Bestuzhev-Marlinskii, "Naездy, Povest 1613 goda" (1831).
- 12 See Dworski, *Puszkin*, 93, 121, Lednicki, *Aleksander Puszkin*; and Kushakov, *Pushkin i Polsha*.
- 13 Dolgorukii's *Slavny bubny*, although written in 1811, appeared in full only in 1870.

- 14 Sumarokov, *Dosugi*, vol. 1, 45.
- 15 [Sbitnev], "Poezdka," 222.
- 16 Prince Dolgoruky could find little that reminded him of Russian gentry and city life (*Slavny bubny*, 64). Levshin describes the enormous difference between Russians and Ukrainians in his "Otryvki iz pisem o Malorossii," 35. These comments are supported by the observations of numerous foreign travellers. The German J.H. Blasius commented that "In nearly all spiritual qualities Ukrainians are the very opposite of the Russians." Blasius, *Reise*, 326. Another German, J.G. Kohl, wrote: "Should the colossal empire of Russia one day fall to pieces, there is little doubt but the Malorussians will form a separate state. They have their own language, their own historical recollections, seldom mingle or intermarry with their Muscovite rulers, and are in number already more than 10,000,000. Their national sinews may be said to lie among the rural nobility living in the villages, from among whom every great political movement has hitherto emanated." Kohl, *Russia*, 528. The Englishman E.D. Clarke commented that Little Russians "differ altogether from the inhabitants of the rest of Russia ... They are a much more noble race, and stouter and better looking people than the Russians, and superior to them in everything that can exalt one set of men above another. They are cleaner, more industrious, more honest, more polite, more courageous, more hospitable, more truly pious, and, of course, less superstitious." Clarke, *Travels*, 170. Clarke describes the mutual sense of cultural difference between Russians and Ukrainians in several places (*Travels*, 167, 282–5). Another English traveller, R. Lyall, describes crossing the border into Ukraine as being "transported into a new country." In his opinion "the superior state of civilisation of the Malo-Russians can only be attributed to their not being adscripti glebae [attached to the soil, serfs], and their other peculiar immunities, which generate and cherish independence of spirit." *Travels*, 62–3.
- 17 Dragomanov, "Istoricheskaia Polsha," 171.
- 18 The very choice of terminology indicates this. "Little Russia" becomes the preferred term; "Ukraine" is still used in Kondratii Ryleev's "Voinarovskiy" (1825) to indicate an autonomous political entity.
- 19 Somov, "O romanticheskoi poezii," *Trudy vysochaishie utverzhennogo Volnogo obshchestva liubitelei rossiiskoi slovesnosti*, 24 (1823): 135–6, quoted in Kiriliuk, "Na puti k realizmu," 8–9.
- 20 Dolgorukii, *Slavny bubny*, 64.
- 21 See Izmailov, *Puteshestvie*, vol. 1, 85–6, and Levshin, *Otryvki*, 41, for comments that the peasants had preserved an ardent love of their fatherland.
- 22 Levshin, *Otryvki*, 47.
- 23 [Sbitnev], "Poezdka," 244.

- 24 Vadim [Passek], *Putevye zapiski*, 131.
- 25 Dolgorukii, *Slavny bubny*, 242, 264.
- 26 He wrote: “I did not like the Uniate service. To put it simply it was neither one thing, nor another – a bit from us and a bit from the Papacy. Let us agree, that everything can have a dual appearance in the world, and even in Nature, except Faith, which everywhere, in all cases, is the same for everyone, and the composition of its rituals ought to correspond to its original.” Dolgorukii, *Slavny bubny*, 216.
- 27 Nikolai Grech wrote, “The Little Russian dialect [*narechie*] emerged and developed under the long Polish rule in South-Western Russia and can even be called a regional version of Polish.” See his *Opyt*, 12.
- 28 *Severnaia pchela* 17 (1835), quoted in Volynskiy, *Teoretychna borotba*, 208.
- 29 McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 37.
- 30 For the debates on the language and literature, see Volynskiy, *Teoretychna borotba*, and Luckyj, *Between Gogol’ and Sevchenko*.
- 31 The comparison was apparently first made in Markovich, *Zapiski*, 59. The Black Sea coastal region is called “Russia’s Italy” in Vsevolozhskii, *Puteshestvie*, 81.
- 32 Shostak, “Vzgliad,” 33.
- 33 This pattern was established by Izmailov’s *Puteshestvie* of 1800, which was strongly influenced by Rousseau. See especially 51–4, 59, 87–91. Bantysh-Kamensky rehearses many of these stereotypes in a chapter devoted to the ethnography of Ukraine. He describes a land so rich that it did not require fertilizing, a fact that allowed the Little Russian to work less than his northern counterpart. “Good-naturedness and simplicity” are the “defining features of his [the Little Russian’s] character,” although he can be cunning and proud. He is courageous and self-sacrificing in battle: “Little Russians are passionate lovers of music.” Bantysh-Kamenskii, *Istoriia Maloi Rosii*, 464.
- 34 Karamzin, *Izbrannye sochineniia*, vol. 2, 164. Klymovsky became a household name after he was portrayed as the hero of O. Shakhovskiy’s play *Kozak-stikhotorets* (1812).
- 35 Pushkin, “Vechera na khutore bliz Dikanki,” *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 7, 345.
- 36 See McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 40–2.
- 37 The term is used several times, for example, in S.N., “Rusalki do dobra ne dovedut: Malorossiiskaia byl,” *Damskii zhurnal* 23.16 (1828): 134.
- 38 Vadim [Passek], *Putevye zapiski*, 113.
- 39 Shalikov, *Puteshestvie*, 144. Shalikov’s book begins with the words: “Changeons de lieu pour nous défaire du temps.”
- 40 This duality is clearly expressed in Vadim, *Putevye zapiski*, where the first part dwells on the greatness of Russia and the inevitability of

empire, while the second focuses on the glorious history of Ukraine and its national distinctiveness.

- 41 Voltaire, *Essai sur les mœurs*, in *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, vol. 3 (Paris: Chez Furne, 1835), 583, quoted in Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 298.
- 42 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, 6.
- 43 Izmailov, *Puteshestvie*, vol. 1, 200–2.
- 44 S.N., *Rusalki*, 134–5.
- 45 Ibid., 136.
- 46 It proved an enduring stereotype. Anton Chekhov, in a letter to Maksim Gorky of 18 January 1899, wrote: “I am a *khokhol* and therefore terribly lazy.”
- 47 McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 253.
- 48 Izmailov, for example, on crossing the border, asks a Ukrainian peasant why, “although you are not richer than other people, you live so cleanly, so well, so much better than our peasants?” (*Puteshestvie*, vol. 1, 55). He receives the answer that they are frugal and help one another (56–7).
- 49 Vadim [Passek], *Putevye zapiski*, 144.
- 50 [Sbitnev], “Poezdka,” 216.
- 51 Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, vol. 2, 591.
- 52 Sumarokov, *Dosugi*, vol. 1, 64.
- 53 Dolgorukii, *Slavny bubny*, 59.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Kovalevskii, “Pismo,” 48.
- 56 P. Svinin, *Otechestvennye zapiski* 120 (April 1830), quoted in Zviniatskovskii, *Nikolai Gogol*, 172.
- 57 Dolgorukii, *Slavny bubny*, 242–3.
- 58 Quoted in Gould, *Mismeasure*, 21.
- 59 Pokrovskii, *Russia*, 99.
- 60 Izmailov, *Puteshestvie*, vol. 1, 251–2, 280.
- 61 Dolgorukii, *Slavny bubny*, 184.
- 62 Kovalevskii, “Pismo,” 48.
- 63 See, for example, Izmailov, *Puteshestvie*, 68–73, 234–53; Shalikov, *Puteshestvie*, 97–100.
- 64 Dolgorukii, *Slavny bubny*, 73.
- 65 Kulzhinskii, *Sochineniia* (St Petersburg, 1850), 207, quoted in Sypovskiy, *Ukraine*, 24.
- 66 Izmailov also says, “No Russian should die without once in his life seeing the site of the battle of Poltava.” *Puteshestvie*, 237.
- 67 Kovalevskii, “Pismo,” 49.
- 68 Ibid., 52.
- 69 Ibid., 49–50.
- 70 Beauplan, *La Description d’Ukraine*, 35.

- 71 “Sekretneishee nastavlenie Imperatritsy Ekateriny II kniaziiu Aleksandru Viazemskomu (1764),” *Istoriia pravitelstvuiushchego senata za dvesti let, 1711–1911 gg.*, vol. 2 (St Petersburg, 1911), 795. The passage reads: “Little Russia, Liflandia and Finland are provinces which are governed according to privileges that have been conferred on them; it would be offensive to cancel all these at once, but at the same time it would be more than a mistake to call them foreign and treat them as such, it would be quite foolish. These provinces, and also Smolensk, have to be treated in the gentlest manner, with the aim of Russifying them and putting an end to their looking like wolves to the woods.” Quoted in Strukevych, *Ukraina-Hetmanshchyna*, 26. See also her “Nastavlenie, dannoe gr. P. Rumiantsevu pri naznachenii ego Malorossiiskim general-gubernatorom, s sobstvenymi pribavkami Ekateriny II,” *Sbornik RIO*, vol. 7 (St Petersburg, 1871) 376–91. These documents are discussed in Strukevych, *Ukraine-Hetmanshchyna*, 17–28.
- 72 This argument is explicit in a memorandum to Catherine the Great on Little Russia that was probably written by Teplov, Catherine’s State Secretary: “Sekretneishie primechaniia,” 29.
- 73 “Sekretneishie nastavleniia,” quoted in Strukevych, *Ukraina-Hetmanshchyna*, 19.
- 74 “Sekretneishie primechaniia,” quoted in Strukevych, *Ukraina-Hetmanshchyna*, 24.
- 75 Strukevych, *Ukraina-Hetmanshchyna*, 24.
- 76 “Nastavlenie,” quoted in Strukevych, *Ukraina-Hetmanshchyna*, 25.
- 77 Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi istorichnyi arkhiv Ukrainy, fond 54, or. 3, syr. 8658, ark. 2, quoted in Strukevych, *Ukraina-Hetmanshchyna*, 71.
- 78 Strukevych, *Ukraina-Hetmanshchyna*, 71.
- 79 Dragomanov, “Istoricheskaia Polsha i velikoruskaia demokratiia,” *Volnoe slovo* (1881); reprinted Geneva 1882, and in *Sobranie politicheskikh sochinenii M.P. Dragomanova* (Paris, 1905–6). Here quoted from “Ukrainskii vopros v ego istoricheskom osveshchenii” (M.P. Dragomanov, Istoricheskaia Polsha i velikoruskaia demokratiia) *Kievskaiia starina* 91 (November–December 1905): 160.
- 80 Bushkovitch, “The Ukraine in Russian Culture,” 340.
- 81 Saunders, *Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture*, 148.
- 82 Izmailov, *Puteshestvie*, vol. 1, 210–12.
- 83 *Ibid.*, 269.
- 84 [Sbitnev], “Poezdka,” 216.
- 85 Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 80–1.
- 86 Bhabha, “The Other Question,” 66.
- 87 Karamzin, “O sluchaiakh i kharakterakh v Rossiiskoi Istorii, kotorye mogut byt predmetom khudozhestv,” *Vestnik Evropy* 6.24 (1802): 289, quoted from Segel, *Eighteenth-Century Russia*, vol. 1, 464–5.

- 88 Forced marriage and the husband's murder at the hands of his wife is a recurring motif in folklore and medieval literature. It occurs in the Byzantine tradition (the *Strategemata* of Polyaeus) and Norway (the Saga of Olaf and Gudrun). Walter Scott used it in *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819). As we have seen, it is also the theme of Lermontov's "Lithuanian Woman."
- 89 Izmailov, *Puteshestvie*, 148–51.
- 90 See N. Artsibashev, *Rogneda* (St Petersburg: Tip. Departamenta Narodnogo prosveshcheniia, 1818). For other versions of the story see O. Veltman, *Sviatoslavich, vrazhii pitomets, divo vremen Krasnago Solntsa Vladimira* (Moscow, 1835); F. Solovev, "Razrushenie polotskago kniazhestva (Istoricheskaia povest iz vremen Vladimira I)," *Severnoe Siianie* (1831): 7–32; M. Zagoskin, *Askoldova mogila* (Moscow, 1833).
- 91 For the Khmelnytsky theme, see F. Glinka, "Zinobii Bogdan Khmelnitskii, ili osvobozhdeniia Malorossii," in his *Pisma k drugu*, vol. 3 (St Petersburg, 1816); E. Grebenka, *Bogdan, poema. Stseny iz zhizni malorossiiskago Getmana Zinovii Khmelnitskago* (St Petersburg, 1843), and "Chaikovskii, roman," *Otechestvennye zapiski* 27 (1843): 185–227 and 28 (1843): 5–79; and A. Kuzmich, *Zinovii Bogdan Khmelnitskii, roman* (St Petersburg, 1846). The haidamak rebellions are depicted in Ryleev, "Gaidamak" (1825); Orest Somov, "Gaidamak: Malorossiiskaia byl" (1826), and "Gaidamak: Otryvok iz malorossiiskoi povesti" (1827); N. Kostomarov, *Sava Chalii* (1838); and G. Kvitka, "Predanie o Garkushe" (1841). Aspects of this historical literature have been discussed in Grabowicz, "History and Myth," 369–416.
- 92 For some better-known treatments of the Mazepa story see E. Aladin, *Kochubei: Istoricheskaia povest* (1827); A. Pushkin, "Poltava" (1828); I. Kulzhinskii, "Kazatskii shapki," *Damskii zhurnal* 27 (1829): 81–7; F. Bulgarin, *Mazepa* (1833–34); I. Borozdna, "Zolotaia gora, ili ia tebia vyruchu. Malorossiiskoe predanie," *Utrennaia zaria* (1840): 99–115; and N. Sementkovskii, *Kochubei, generalnyi sudia. Istoricheskaia povest* (1845). The Mazepa theme is discussed in Grabowicz, "History and Myth," 417–57.
- 93 Bulgarin, *Sochineniia*, 369.
- 94 *Ibid.*, 439.
- 95 *Ibid.*, 484.
- 96 *Ibid.*, 560.
- 97 In chapter 13 the poem is the subject of a strategic discussion between Mazepa and Polubotok. Bulgarin informs the reader that it was published in Bantysh-Kamenskii, *Istoriia*. See Bulgarin, *Sochineniia*, 560.
- 98 As, for example, portrayed in Kulzhinskii, *Fediusha Molitovskii* (1833) and *Emerit* (1836); G. Kvitka, *Pan Khaliavskii* (1839); N. Gogol,

Mirgorod (1835); and P. Kulish, *Mikhailo Charnyshenko, ili Malorossiiia vosemdesiat let nazad* (1843).

- 99 Franko, *Narys*, 94.
- 100 Grebenka, *Chaikovskii*, 160.
- 101 *Ibid.*, 165.
- 102 For a translation, see Segel, *Eighteenth Century Russia*, vol. 2, 106–22.
- 103 Kapnist's poem appeared in censored form in 1801, but it was not allowed publication in his collected works of 1849. He contacted Prussian authorities with a mission to find support for Ukraine's secession from Russia in the event of a European war (see chap. 1, n110). Georg Sacke has argued that the ode was about the liquidation of Ukrainian autonomy. See Sacke, "Kapnist." Luckyj has argued that it is "quite clear from the poem that serfdom is not the only subject. Kapnist refers several times to the oppression of his native land ... and leaves no doubt that not only Ukrainian villages but the cities and the entire people have been enslaved by the power of the state." Luckyj, *Between Gogol' and Sevchenko*, 79.
- 104 Sysyn has written: "Those who have argued that nineteenth-century Ukrainian historians first tried to give the [1648–49] revolt national overtones and portray Khmelnytsky as a national leader have not given careful reading to Hrabianka (1709), Velychko (1720) or the play 'The Liberation of Ukraine from Polish Servitude by the Lord Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky' (1728)." See his "Khmelnysky Uprising," 166. For a discussion of elements of national consciousness in earlier historical writings, see his "Concepts of Nationhood."
- 105 The impact of Ukraine on Ryleev is discussed in Maslov, 251–322.
- 106 Kotliarevskii, *Ryleev*, 125.
- 107 O'Meara, *Ryleev*, 327.
- 108 Ryleev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 412.
- 109 The area was so predominantly and consciously Ukrainian that after the Revolution of 1917 the Central Rada considered a project to create from it a Ukrainian province that would be named Podon. See Zhyvotko, *Podon*, 10.
- 110 Bantysh-Kamenskii, *Istoriia*.
- 111 See Maslov, *Literaturnaia deiatel'nost*, 260.
- 112 For an account of the imperial portrayal of Peter and the battle of Poltava see Riasanovsky, *Peter the Great*, 3–85, and Pauls, *Poltava*. On Ryleev's Mazepa see Khodorov, "Ukrainskie siuzhety," 121–41.
- 113 It is difficult to agree with Luckyj's contention that the poem "does not raise the issue that would interest Ukrainians most: the problem of a national war of liberation led by Mazepa against Peter" (Luckyj, *Between Gogol' and Sevchenko*, 83). The poem was read precisely in this way by tsarist censors and general readers. The Ukrainian historian and poet

M. Markevych (N. Markevich) wrote an enthusiastic letter to Ryleev thanking him for the poem and adding, “You will still find among us the spirit of Polubotok.” See Iakushkin, “K literaturnoi,” 599.

Polubotok succeeded Mazepa as hetman and was a firm autonomist.

- 114 See O’Meara, *Ryleev*, 187.
- 115 For Mazepa’s letters see Bantysh-Kamenskii, *Istoriia*, 574–7. The author also included in footnotes Mazepa’s patriotic poem, the terms of the Pereiaslav treaty of 1654, correspondence of Ukraine’s leaders with foreign kings and diplomats, and other materials.
- 116 Maslov, *Literaturnaia deiatel’nost*, 300–2.
- 117 *Ibid.*, 261–5, 296, 302–4.
- 118 Ryleev, *Polnoe sobranie stikhotvoreniĭ*, 208:
 I Petr i ia – my oba pravy:
 Kak on, i ia zhivu dlia slavy,
 Dlia polzy rodiny moei.
- 119 Pauls, *Poltava*, 28.
- 120 See Subtelny, *Mazepists*, 1–36.
- 121 Tseitlin, “Tvorchestvo Ryleeva,” 68.
- 122 Ryleev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 189.
- 123 *Ibid.*, 616.
- 124 Kotliarevskii, *Ryleev*, 112.
- 125 *Ibid.*, 96, 113.
- 126 Ryleev, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 616–17.
- 127 To the canonical imperial position belong, for example, Feofan Prokopovich, “Epinikion,” “Slovo pokhvalnoe o preslavnoi nad voiskami sveiskimi pobede” (1709), and “Slovo pokhvalnoe o batalii Poltavskoi ...” (1717); R. Sladkovsky, “Petr Velikii, geroicheskaia poema v VI pesniakh” (1803); and S. Shikhmatov, “Petr Velikii, liricheskoe pesnopenie v 8 pesniakh” (1810).
- 128 Hokanson, “Literary Imperialism,” 341.
- 129 The words are of Turkish origin.
- 130 Iakov Polonskii’s “Imeretin” claims Russia has given the people security and “full freedom.” It ends as follows:
 We [now] have rubles in our pockets,
 Locks hanging on our coffers,
 And with songs to Kutais,
 We carry the Russians in kaiuks [*kaiukakh*].
 The same message is presented in his “Nad razvalinami v Imeritii” (1850), “V Imeretii” (1850), and “V Imeretii” (1848). In the last poem he sees the “evil demon” of the mountains calling Rus to build roads through the cliffs, dam rivers, build cities, and harvest fruit. He calls it a “terrible spirit ready to demand gigantic labour from every pigmy.” Rus, in his opinion, is unfortunately still too busy with conquest to

occupy itself with the development of “life and thought” on the site of graves and to assuage the spirit of the mountains. Polonskii, *Sochine-niia*, 64-5.

- 131 The folk-song about Mazepa says:
 In Kyiv, on the Podol
 The pear-trees have been cut down.
 The dog Mazepa has caused the death of
 Innocent souls.
 Maksymovych wrongfully attributes “Oi, bida, bida ...” to Bohdan Khmelnytsky. For a discussion see Priima, *Shevchenko*, 25-6. For Maksymovych’s description of how in 1829 he gave the song about Mazepa to Pushkin and how the latter memorized the above segment see Zaslavskiy, *Pushkin i Ukraina*, 60-1.
- 132 The authenticity of these songs is an issue, as is the motivation of Palii’s supporters. Drahomanov felt that the lower classes sympathized with Palii, who remained loyal to Peter, but points out that most songs attribute the victory of Poltava to Palii, not Peter, and indicate that Palii helped the tsar because he had been assured that Ukrainians would be freed from taxation and conscription. See Drahomanov, *Politychni pisni*, xi-xii.
- 133 The consequences of the revolt are described by Hrushevskiy, “Shvedsko-ukrainskyi soiuz.”
- 134 Pushkin wrote: “What a repugnant object for an artist is the person of Mazepa. Not one fine or noble emotion. Not a single consoling feature. Seduction, hostility, treason, slyness, pusillanimity, violence ... I wrote Poltava in a few days; I could not occupy myself with it any longer, I would have had to give it up.” Pushkin, “Vozrazhenie kritikam ‘Poltavy,’” 409. This letter was omitted from subsequent editions of Pushkin’s “complete” or “collected” works. Where it did appear, the final paragraph containing the above comments was cut.
- 135 He criticized American mistreatment of Indians and black slaves but defended the savage pacification of Algeria in the 1830s and 1840s. Said writes: “All of a sudden, as one reads Tocqueville on Algeria, the very norms with which he had humanely demurred at American malfeasance are suspended for the French actions. Not that he does not cite reasons: he does, but they are lame extenuations whose purpose is to license French colonialism in the name of what he calls national pride. Massacre leaves him unmoved; Muslims, he says, belong to an inferior religion and must be disciplined.” Said, *Representations*, 92. Said also points out that John Stuart Mill’s “commendable ideas about democratic freedoms in England,” according to the latter, “did not apply to India” (93).
- 136 Subtelny, *Domination of Eastern Europe*, 133.

- 137 See Vintoniak, "Anatema," 69.
- 138 See in particular Luckyj, *Between Gogol' and Sevchenko*, 88–127; Grabowicz, "History and Myth," 1; Mandelshtam, *O kharaktere*, 70–125; and Zviniatskovskii, *Gogol*. The most uncompromising expression of this view is in Malaniuk, "Hohol-Gogol."
- 139 Quoted in Zviniatskovskii, *Gogol*, 80.
- 140 Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 6, 661.
- 141 Layton, *Russian Literature*, 87.
- 142 Gogol, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 2, 349, 166.
- 143 Zviniatskovskii, *Gogol*, 204.
- 144 Gogol, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 2, 283, 46.
- 145 *Ibid.*, 146.
- 146 *Ibid.*, 46.
- 147 *Ibid.*, 172.
- 148 Hrabovych, *Do istorii*, 106.
- 149 One of them, "Bisavriuk, ili Vecher nakanune Ivana Kupala," appeared in *Otechestvennye zapiski* in the early issues of 1830. After Svinin's portrayal of Ukrainians in the April issue, Gogol made a point of not publishing in the journal any more, and in *Vechera* he mocked Svinin's portrayal. See Zviniatskovskii, *Gogol*, 169–72.
- 150 Pushkin, *Sovremennik* 1 (1836), reprinted *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 7, 345.
- 151 I am indebted in the comments that follow to George Grabowicz's discussion of these stories in his "History and Myth."
- 152 Gogol, *Sobranie sochinenii v shesti tomakh*, vol. 1, 104.
- 153 A Ukrainian opera, "Cherevyky" (Shoes), was, in fact, produced at this time. Khrapovitsky, the Empress' personal secretary and a Ukrainian, noted in his diary on 12 June 1786 that during a reading for Catherine of Moscow newspapers, an announcement for the opera "Cherevyky" had elicited a question about the meaning of the word. See Zviniatskovskii, *Gogol*, 28.
- 154 Irigaray, *This Sex*, 76. See also Bhabha, "Of Mimicry."
- 155 The Black Sea Cossacks were in fact created in 1787 (initially they were named the Army of Faithful Cossacks) out of Sich remnants, with the destroyer of the Sich, Prince Potemkin, as their honorary commander-in-chief. He was given the Zaporozhian name Hrytsko Nechesa. His sudden death put the army's existence in doubt. Anton Holovaty was sent by the army to St Petersburg to plead for its formal registration and assignment of quarters. After being sent from ministry to ministry, he suddenly appeared before the Empress in the Summer Garden in full Cossack regalia, fell on his knees, cried "Stii Maty!" (Stop, Mother!) and asked for her patronage for the Black Sea Cossacks. The Empress signed the relevant documents, assigning the army to the

defence of the Black Sea coast. This incident was the source of Gogol's scene in St Petersburg. Holovaty was described by Kvitka-Osnovianenko in a memoir ("Holovaty," 1839) that so impressed Shevchenko that he responded enthusiastically with his "Do Osnovianenka." The Black Sea Cossacks were transferred to the Kuban in 1792.

- 156 See Zviniatkovskii, *Gogol*, 164.
- 157 An often quoted witness of the level of education in Ukraine is Paul of Aleppo, who travelled with Patriarch Macarius of Antioch through Ukraine and Russia in 1652–60, recording not only the high level of literacy but also the enormous cultural difference between the two countries. Describing Ukraine, he wrote: "throughout the whole land, we remarked on one amazing, wonderful characteristic: with rare exceptions, they all, even their women and children, know how to read and know the order of the liturgy and church songs. Besides this, the priests teach the orphans and do not allow them to roam around the streets as illiterates." Hrushevskiy, *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusi*, vol. 9, part 2: 977. For an analysis of Paul of Aleppo's text, see 966–1010. English translations have omitted this and other information pertaining to Ukraine. See Aleppo, *The travels of Macarius*, and Ridding, *The Travels of Macarius*.
- 158 Gogol, *Sobranie*, vol. 1, 169.
- 159 Bantysh-Kamenskii, *Istoriia*, 81–3. This account also tells the tale of Peter VI of Moldavia and Ivan Pidkova and his brother Shakh. It may also have influenced Gogol. Another potential source for Gogol's story is a popular poem from the early eighteenth century describing Poland as the mother of three children: Liach, Rus, and Lytva. Liach and Lytva kill their brother Rus, causing their mother, Poland, grief. The poem can be found in Dzeverin, *Ukrainska literatura XVII stolittia*, 248, 564–65.
- 160 Gogol, *Sobranie*, vol. 1, 186.
- 161 Shevchenko in his "Great Vault" ("Velykyi liokh") answered it by portraying two "Ivans" and described the emasculated society as a defenceless womanhood. Panteleimon Kulish's *Black Council* (Chorna Rada, 1863) provided a counter-portrayal of Cossack history.
- 162 Said, *World*, 19.
- 163 Maksimovich, "Predislovie," iv–v.
- 164 For a study of baroque influences on Gogol, see Shapiro, *Gogol*. Shapiro points out (16, 40–105) that throughout his life Gogol avidly read Ukrainian ecclesiastical Baroque literature and traces Gogol's characterization of Cossacks, Jews, and Poles to a play with the stereotypes of the *vertep* (Ukrainian puppet theatre) and *lubok* (popular broadsheet).
- 165 Quoted in Mandelshtam, *O kharaktere*, 198.

- 166 Gogol's family origins are rarely discussed. On both sides of his family he could trace a line of descent from Mykhailo and Petro Doroshenko and Ivan Skoropadsky, who were all hetmans. One member of his family had been executed by the tsarist regime, others had died in prison or had been exiled to Moscow. Locally he had close family ties with several prominent Poltava families, like the Troshchynskys and Lukashkevychs, who showed autonomist sympathies. See O. Ohloblyn, "Problema predkiv," 3–4 (1967): 15–16; 1–4 (1968): 19–31.
- 167 Mandelshtam, *O kharaktere*, 202.
- 168 Ibid., 203.
- 169 Bushkovitch, "Ukraine in Russian Culture," 359, 361.
- 170 See, in particular, Rutherford, "Vissarion Belinskii," and Swoboda, "Shevchenko."
- 171 See Rutherford, "Vissarion Belinsky," 500.
- 172 Grigorev, "Belinskii." The comment on Shevchenko occurs on page 574.
- 173 Belinskii, *Izbrannye*, vol. 1, 114.
- 174 Ibid., 239–40.
- 175 Ibid., vol. 5, 103.
- 176 Ibid.
- 177 Ibid., 131.
- 178 Ibid., 124.
- 179 Belinskii, *Izbrannye*, vol. 1, 241.
- 180 Ibid., 141.
- 181 Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 5, 142.
- 182 Terras, *Belinskij*, 61.
- 183 Ibid., 62.
- 184 Belinsky asserts that Maksim Maksimich's view provides "the most accurate understanding of the morals and customs of the savage Cherkessians." See Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 4, 208. On the helpless Bela's refusal of Pechorin's attempts to embrace her, he exclaims: "What a graceful (*gratsioznaia*) trait of character and, simultaneously, how true to nature! Nature never contradicts itself." *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 4, 213. He proceeds to argue that her falling in love with Pechorin and the cooling of his love for her are equally inevitable due to the "naturalness" of the unequal colonial relationship.
- 185 The phrase is omitted from Rutherford's translation of this passage. See Rutherford, "Vissarion Belinskii," 505–6.
- 186 Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 5, 129.
- 187 Ibid., 125.
- 188 Markevich, *Istoriia*.
- 189 Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 7, 64–5.
- 190 Bushkovitch, "Ukraine in Russian Culture," 340.

- 191 Rutherford, "Vissarion Belinskii," 512.
- 192 Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 5, 330–1.
- 193 *Ibid.*, vol. 12, 440. Shevchenko was arrested on 5 April 1847 and sentenced to service as a private in Orenburg. Nicholas I placed him under the strictest supervision, denying him the ability to write or draw. The "lampoon" referred to was "Son" (The Dream), one of Shevchenko's greatest anti-imperialist works.
- 194 Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 7, 61.
- 195 *Ibid.*, 62.
- 196 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, 399.
- 197 *Ibid.*, 62, 63. Iurii Lypa has, on the contrary, interpreted this work as a cry of despair at the degeneration of the Ukrainian Cossack élite and their loss of a national political consciousness. See Lypa, "Selianskyi korol," 121.
- 198 Habermas, *Philosophical Discourse*, 44.
- 199 Drahomanov develops this argument most fully in "Istoricheskaia Polsha," in his *Sobranie*, vol. 1, 215–20.
- 200 Berlin, *Russian Thinkers*, 179.

CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 See Zerov, *Nove ukrainske pysmenstvo*, 172–201; *Lektsii*, 54–66; and Cyzhevsky, *History*, 420–31.
- 2 Zerov, *Nove ukrainske pysmenstvo*, 179.
- 3 Zerov, *Lektsii*, 65.
- 4 Zerov, *Nove ukrainske pysmenstvo*, 199, 217.
- 5 Shamrai, "Shliakhy," and *Ukrainska literatura*, 61–4; Plevako, "Hryhory Kvitka-Osnovianenko"; Petrenko, *Hryhoriï Kvitka*; Syvokin, *Odvichnyi*, 76–114.
- 6 Shamrai, "Shliakhy," 66.
- 7 Kvitka-Osnovianenko, *Zibrannia tvoriv*, 421, 431.
- 8 See *Maiak*, 1840, no. 2, section 4, 19–21.
- 9 The glorification of the military in Kotliarevsky was linked to the creation of Ukrainian regiments in the war with Napoleon. See Serbyn, "Ukrainian Participation," 59–72. Hulak-Artemovsky's condemnation of the Polish revolt of 1830–31 has been described as an "official declaration of loyalty" by Kozak in "Ukraincy," 176.
- 10 Petrov, *Ocherki*, 107.
- 11 See, for example, his letter to Pletnev of 8 February 1839.
- 12 See Kostomarov, "Obzor."
- 13 Letter to P.O. Pletnev, 15 March 1839, in Kvitka-Osnovianenko, *Zibrannia*, vol. 7, 216.
- 14 Zerov, "Literaturna postat," 38.

- 15 Letter of 3 October 1839. See Kvitka-Osnovianenko, *Zibrannia*, vol. 7, 228.
- 16 Letter of 28 December 1841. See Kvitka-Osnovianenko, *Zibrannia*, vol. 7, 338.
- 17 Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv u 50 tomakh*, vol. 41, 181.
- 18 See Volynskyi, *Teoretychna borotba*, 150–1, 234.
- 19 “Golovaty (Material dlia istorii Malorossii),” first appeared in *Otechestvennye zapiski* 4.2 (1839): 1–29. “Konotopska vidma” was first published in *Malorossiiskie povesti, rasskazyvaemy Grytskom Osnovianenom*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1836), 107–347.
- 20 See Muzychka, “Do pochatkiv,” 15.
- 21 Letter to P. O. Pletnev of 8 February 1839. Kvitka-Osnovianenko, *Zibrannia*, vol. 7, 214.
- 22 Syvokin, *Odvichnyi dialoh*, 91, 97.
- 23 Kulish, “Hryhorii Kvitka,” 490.
- 24 Danilevskii, *Sochineniia*, vol. 21, 153, 158.
- 25 Syvokin, *Odvichnyi dialoh*, 100.
- 26 The phrase “Ukrainian dualism” is Zabuzhko’s. See her Shevchenkov mif, 42.
- 27 Dziuba, “Zastukaly,” 3, 93.
- 28 Among them are some of his greatest poems: “Stoit v seli Subotovi,” “Velyky liokh,” “Naimychka,” “Ieretyk,” “Shararykovi,” “I mertvym i zhyvym,” “Kholodnyi iar,” “Davydovi psalmy,” and “Try lita.” English translations of several are available in Shevchenko, *Song*.
- 29 Dziuba, “Zastukaly,” 4, 108.
- 30 De Balmen illustrated “Wirszy T. Szewczenka,” a manuscript of 1844.
- 31 Ivakin, *Satyra*, 120.
- 32 Shevchenko, *Povne zibrannia*, vol. 1, 326:
 Od moldavanyna do fina
 Na vsikh iazykakh vse movchyt,
 Bo blahodenstvuiet!
- 33 Shevchenko, *Povne zibrannia*, vol. 5, 130.
- 34 The words of the celebratory hymn are “God is with us! Understand, O Nations [literally, “tongues”], understand and submit, for God is with us!” Jeffrey Brooks points out that in popular literature during the Crimean War this was rendered as “Understand heathens, understand and submit, for God is with us!” See Brooks, *When Russia Learned*, 218.
- 35 Shevchenko, *Povne zibrannia*, vol. 1, 327:
 U nas! choho to my ne vmiem?
 I zori lichym, hrechku siem,
 Frantsuziv laiem. Prodaiem
 Abo u karty prohraiem
 Liudei ... ne nehriv ... a takykh
 Taky khreshenykh ... no *prostykh*

- 36 Ibid.: “Suieslovy, lytsemiry, / Hospodom prokliati!”
- 37 Danilevsky’s statements on this appear to be the clearest. Smaller nationalities, he claimed, “lack a consciousness [of independence], they feel no need for it, and are even incapable of feeling it.” They are “ethnographic material” that has never assumed the form of political individuality. It is impossible to end the life of someone who has never lived; it is impossible to disfigure a body that has no individual unity. Consequently, there can be no question here of a national murder, of a national mutilation, and hence of conquest.” See Danilevskii, *Rossiiia*, 24.
- 38 Allen, *Ukraine*, 240.
- 39 Grabowicz, *Poet*, 134–5, 137.
- 40 Lysiak-Rudnytsky, *Essays*, 195.
- 41 Dziuba, “Zastukaly,” 4, 111.
- 42 See in particular Ivakin, *Satyra*, 119–54; Dziuba, *U vsiakoho*, 237–89.
- 43 This is the ending to Pushkin’s “Captive of the Caucasus” (1820–21). See his *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 4, 130–1:
- Podobno plemeni Batyia,
Izmenit pradedam Kavkaz,
Zabudet alchnoi brani glas,
Ostavit strely boevye,
K ushcheliam, gde gnezdilis vy,
I vozvestiat o vashei kazni
Predania temnye moly.
- 44 Dukes, *History*, 133–4.
- 45 See, for example Iekelchyk, *Probudzhennia*, 55–8.
- 46 Belinskii, *Polnoe sobranie*, vol. 5, 330.
- 47 F.K., “Sochinieniia Gritski Osnovianenka,” *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 118 (1841), 18 October, quoted in Priima, *Shevchenko*, 80.
- 48 *Russkii vestnik*, 8 (1841): 463.
- 49 See Priima, *Shevchenko*, 80–1.
- 50 *Maiak* 13.25.4 (1844): 8, quoted in Priima, *Shevchenko*, 104.
- 51 See Borodin, *Nad tekstamy*, 175.
- 52 Zabuzhko, *Shevchenkiv mif*, 27. Zabuzhko rejects Grabowicz’s more psychoanalytical explanation of Shevchenko’s anti-imperialist writings and stance by interpreting the typical dualism of Ukrainian writers as a phenomenon produced by colonialism. See her *Shevchenkiv mif*, 41–2.
- 53 Charles-Joseph, prince de Ligne, *Correspondance et pensées du prince de Ligne*, in *Bibliothèque des mémoires: relatif a l’histoire de France pendant le 18e siècle*, vol. 20, ed. M. Fs. Barriere (Paris: Librairie de Firmin Didot Freres, 1859) 72, quoted in Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 139.
- 54 Gertsen, *Sobranie*, vol. 12, 111.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Smal-Stotskyi, “Velykyi liokh,” 275.

- 57 Shevchenko, *Povne zibrannia*, vol. 1, 307:
 Tak mali lokh v Subotovi
 Moskva rozkopala!
 Velykoho zh toho lokhu
 Shche y ne doshukalys.
- 58 See Franko, “Anatolii Patrikiovych Svydnytskyi (Uvahy do ioho Liuboratskykh),” *Zoria* 1 (1886) 5, reprinted in his *Zibrannia*, vol. 27, 7–8.
- 59 M. Bernshtein has described how, when Prince Vasilchikov became governor-general in Kyiv in 1862, the attacks on *Osnova* inspired by magnates increased. It was accused of radicalism and separatism, and the censorship took exception to much of its material. See Bernshtein, *Zhurnal*, 191–208.
- 60 Ivan Franko published Volodymyr Antonovych’s remembered version as “Pisni Anatolia Svydnytskoho,” in *Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk* 4 (1901): 43–4. Panas Myrny transcribed a fuller version, discussed in Syvachenko, *Svydnytskyi*, 43–50, that he never published. It criticizes Khmelnytsky for selling Ukraine into “Muscovite captivity” and calls upon Ukrainians to rise in armed revolt. For the full version see Klid, “Vzhe bilshe.”
- 61 See Belliustin, *Opisanie selskogo dukhovenstva*.
- 62 See M. Nomys, “Otryvki iz avtobiografii Vasilia Petrovicha Belokopytenka,” *Osnova* (1861) March, 50–77, May, 24–45, June, 1–18; D. Mordovets, “Dzvonar,” *Osnova* (March, 1861) 11–17; M. Tulov, “Gimnazicheskaia perepiska, izdannaia byvshim inspektorem tatarovskoi gimnazii Lineikinym,” *Osnova* (April 1861) 108–27 and (May 1861) 34–65; “Pismo seminarista,” *Osnova* (July 1862) 24–31.
- 63 See Bernshtein, *Zhurnal*, 65–70. These articles and Svydnytsky’s own works belie Tadeusz Bobrowski’s assertion that national antagonisms between Ukrainians and Poles became evident only after 1863 and were “not at all” present in 1831 and after 1838. See his *Pamietnik*, vol. 1, 77. Bobrowski is candid about his own prejudices against “Little Russians,” whom he considers unsophisticated and insincere, attributing this to their subjection first to Polish, then Russian, rule. See his *Pamietnik*, vol. 1, 212.
- 64 See Syvachenko, *Anatolii Svydnytskyi*, 205.
- 65 Svydnytskyi, *Liuboratski*.
- 66 Syvachenko, *Anatolii Svydnytskyi*, 209–10.
- 67 Klebanovsky, who in the 1850s and 1860s studied in the Bohuslav Spiritual School, has described how the *ihumen*, who was himself “of Little Russian origin,” would place ass’s ears made of paper on the head and a blackboard with the word “donkey” round the neck of any boy caught using Ukrainian. See Klebanovskii, “Boguslavskoe dukhovnoe

- uchilishche,” 430–1. A similar punishment is described in Ivan Nechui-Levytskyi, “Zhyttiepys Ivana Levytskoho (Nechuia) napysana nym samym,” *Svit* 7 (1881): 127.
- 68 Pisarev, *Sochineniia*, vol. 4, 112–13.
- 69 Syvachenko, *Anatolii Svydnytskyi*, 257.
- 70 Svydnytskyi, *Liuboratsky*, 74.
- 71 It is interesting that Svydnytsky was known by his friends as “Natalka” (a woman’s name) both for his feminine appearance and delicacy of manners. See Antonovych [V], “Do biohrafii,” 195.

CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 N.I. Kostomarov, “Mysli o federativnom nachale v drevnei Rusi,” *Osnova* 1 (March, 1861): 121–58, quoted in Petrov, *Ocherki*, 243, 244.
- 2 Kostomarov, “Dve russkie narodnosti.”
- 3 Chernyshevskii, “Natsionalnaia beztaktnost.”
- 4 Chernyshevskii, “Novye periodicheskoe izdaniia.”
- 5 Dobroliubov, “Kobzar,” 147.
- 6 Dobroliubov, *Sobranie*, vol. 6, 141.
- 7 N.A. Polevoi, *Biblioteka dlia chteniia* (1838), quoted in Dashkevich, “Otzyv,” 38–9.
- 8 Pypin and Spasovich, *Istoriia*, 306.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 351.
- 10 Pypin, *Istoriia*, 126.
- 11 Petrov, *Ocherki*, 176.
- 12 See Dashkevich, “Otzyv,” 109.
- 13 Miliukov, “Vopros o malorossiiskoi literature,” 163.
- 14 The episode is discussed in Holubenko, *Ukraina i Rosiia* (1993), 355–9.
- 15 *Ob otmene stesnenii*, 29–30.
- 16 Fedotov spoke cuttingly of how liberals and even revolutionaries accepted the results of the empire’s assimilatory policies. See his *Novyi grad*, 187–8.
- 17 See Iekelchik, “Malorosiia.”
- 18 Baranov and Gorelov, *Geografiia Rossiiskoi imperii*, 131.
- 19 P. Belokha, *Uchebnik geografii Rossiiskoi imperii*, 3d ed. (St Petersburg, 1864), 80–1, quoted in Iekelchik, “Malorosiia.”
- 20 Belokha, *Uchebnik*, 81, quoted in Iekelchik, “Malorosiia.”
- 21 D. Ilovaiskii, *Kratkie ocherki russkoi istorii. Kurs starshego vozrasta*. 36th ed. (Moscow, 1912) 4, quoted in Iekelchik, “Malorosiia.”
- 22 N[di] Zuev, *Geografiia Rossiiskoi imperii (Kurs srednikh uchebnykh zavedeniia)*, (St Petersburg, 1887) 105, quoted in Iekelchik, “Malorosiia.”
- 23 Baranov and Gorelov, *Geografiia Rossiiskoi imperii*, 133, quoted in Iekelchik, “Malorosiia.”

- 24 Ilovaiskii, *Sokrashchennoe*, 248.
- 25 S. Solovev, *Istoriia Rossii*, vol. 16, 376, quoted in Drahomanov, *Politychni pisni*, vol. 1, xvii.
- 26 Zuev, *Geografiia Rossiiskoi imperii*, 106, quoted in Iekelchik, “Mal-orossia.”
- 27 Magocsi, *History*, 15. For a summary of the attitudes of Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian historians to the Kyivan period, see Magocsi, *History*, 12–24.
- 28 Grebenka, *Nezhinskii polkovnik*, 4.
- 29 *Prikuucheniiia kazatskogo atamana Urvana* (Kyiv: Gubanov, 1901) 3, quoted in Brooks, *When Russia Learned*, 242.
- 30 Brooks, *When Russia Learned*, 228.
- 31 Edelman, *Gentry Politics*, 94–5.
- 32 Struve, “Velikaia Rossii.”
- 33 Struve, *Patriotica*, 300–1, 303.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 301.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 78–9.
- 36 *Russkaia mysl* 1 (1912): 65–86.
- 37 Quoted in Dziuba, “Ta, shcho pylnuvala,” 126.
- 38 Miliukov, “Intelligentsiia,” 162.
- 39 Andriewsky, “Politics,” 365n97.
- 40 *Gosudarstvennaia дума: Stenograficheskie otchety*, sess. 117 (May 22, 1910), cols. 2072–3.
- 41 Elena Stakenshneider, *F.M. Dostoevsky v vospominaniakh sovremennikov* (Moscow, 1964), vol. 2, 307, quoted in Frank, *Russian Prism*, 153.
- 42 Shulgin, editorial, *Kievlianin*, 6 April 1917.
- 43 Shulgin, “Oselok,” *Kievlianin*, 1 December 1917.
- 44 The book was republished in 1915 and in 1917 as *Ukrainskii vopros*, 3d ed. (Moscow: Tip. Za Druga, 1917). For a recent translation into Ukrainian see Tymoshko, *Ukrainske pytannia*.
- 45 Dzyuba, *Internationalism*, 66.
- 46 Hrabovych, *Do istorii*, 87.
- 47 Bunin, *Life of Arsenin*, 212.
- 48 From his *Istoriia moego sovremennika*, quoted in *Literaturna Ukraina*, 14 September 1989.
- 49 Illia Erenburg, “Ob ukrainskom iskusstve,” *Kievskaiia zhizn*, 16 November 1919, quoted in Stus, *Fenomen doby*, 20.
- 50 Bely’s characterization of his villain reads: “That crafty Ukrainian type resembled more a cross between a Semite and a Mongol, although he passed for pure Russian.” (43) The two Soviet editions (1928 and 1935) cut the word Semite from Bely’s text and replaced it with *khokhol*, the pejorative word for a Ukrainian.
- 51 Fedotov, “Budet.”

- 52 Ibid., 457, 459.
 53 Danilevskii, *Sochineniia*, vol. 1, 62.
 54 Ibid., vol. 1, 118.
 55 Ibid., 147.
 56 Ibid., vol. 2, 7.
 57 Ibid., 11.
 58 Ibid., 58.
 59 Ibid., 62.
 60 Ibid., 55.
 61 Ibid., vol. 4, 83.
 62 Ibid., vol. 17, 27.
 63 Ibid., 83.
 64 Sergei Trubachev, “G.P. Danilevskii: Biograficheski ocherk,” in Danilevskii, *Sochineniia*, vol. 1, 72–3.
 65 Ibid., vol. 10, 52.
 66 Ibid., vol. 12, 131.
 67 Ibid., 184.
 68 Ibid., 202.
 69 “Zazyvnyi lyst do ukrainskoi intelligentsii” and *Krashanka Rusynam i Poliakam*.
 70 *Russkii arkhiv* 2 (1877): 229, quoted in Petrov, *Ocherki*, 270.
 71 [Kulish], “Lipovye pushchi,” 22–4.
 72 Kulish, *Povesti*, 197.
 73 Ibid., 136–7.
 74 Ibid., 235.
 75 Ibid., 153–4.
 76 Ibid., 246.
 77 See, in particular, his poem “Do ridnoho narodu,” in the collection *Khutorna poeziia*.
 78 Kulish, “Zazyvnyi lyst,” 571.
 79 Ibid., 575.
 80 Ibid., 609.
 81 Ibid., 610.
 82 Ibid., 610–11.
 83 Ibid., 625–6.
 84 For a description of the episode, see Luckyj, *Panteleimon Kulish*, 160–5.
 85 Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought*, 2.
 86 Ibid., 23.
 87 For a discussion of the novel, which was published in issues 1, 2, and 3 of *Kyivska starovyna* for 1998, see Nakhlik, “Roman ‘Vladimiriia.’”
 88 Dragomanov, “Istoricheskaia Polsha.” A chapter from this work has been translated into English as Drahomanov, “A Geographic and Historical Survey of Eastern Europe.”

- 89 Dragomanov, “Ukrainskii vopros,” 150.
- 90 Ibid., 154.
- 91 Ibid.
- 92 Ibid., 156.
- 93 Ibid., 159.
- 94 Ibid., 166.
- 95 Terdiman, *Discourse/Counter-Discourse*, 14.
- 96 See Dragomanov and Antonovich, *Istoricheskia pesni malorusskogo naroda* (1974–75); Dragomanov, *Malorusskia narodnyia predania i rasskazy* (1876), *Novi ukrainski pisni pro hromadski spravy* (1881), and *Politychni pisni ukrainskoho narodu, XVIII–XIX st.* (1883–85).
- 97 Foucault, *Language*, 199.
- 98 Bashtoyi, *Ukrainstvo na literaturnykh pozvakh*.
- 99 His *Lysty z Ukrainy Naddnyprianskoi* were republished in Kyiv, 1917, under his pseudonym P. Vartovy. Drahomanov’s *Lysty na Naddnypriansku Ukrainu* were republished in Kolomyia in 1894, in Vienna in 1915, and in Kyiv in 1917. Both works have recently been published together in Hrinchenko and Drahomanov, *Dialohy*.
- 100 Władysław Loziński, *Patrycyat i mieszczaństwo lwówskie w XVI i XVII wieku*, 225, quoted in Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv*, vol. 30, 126–7.
- 101 Franko, *Ivan Vyshehsky i ioho tvory* (Lviv, 1895) 536, reprinted in his *Zibrannia tvoriv*, vol. 30, 127.
- 102 Hrinchenko and Drahomanov, *Dialohy*, 168, 166.
- 103 Ibid., 176.
- 104 Ibid., 217.
- 105 Hrinchenko, “Profession de foi.”
- 106 Kostomarov, “Dve russkie narodnosti.”
- 107 Miroslav Hroch’s three stages are 1 the academic stage, which is led by intellectuals who study the nation’s folklore and history, 2 the cultural stage, characterized by greater use of the vernacular, the spread of educational and literary activities, and the emergence of a press; and 3 the political stage, characterized by the establishment of national parties and mass mobilization. See Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival*, “National Self-Determination,” 284, and “From National Movement,” 3.
- 108 Pavlyshyn has written that in the East European context the terms can be employed to establish a typology of cultural phenomena. In this scheme “colonial” represents those cultural manifestations that may be seen to promote and maintain the structures and myths of colonial power relations; “anti-colonial” represents those that directly challenge or seek to invert such relations; and “post-colonial” represents those that signal an awareness of the relativity of colonialism and anticolonialism and, in seeking to transcend them, take advantage of the

- availability of the historical heritage of both. See Pavlyshyn, “Post-Colonial Features.”
- 109 Yekelchuk, “Nationalism,” 387.
- 110 Franko, “Suspilno-politychni pohliady M. Drahomanova.”
- 111 M.P. Drahomanov, “Literatura rosiiska, velykoruska, ukrainska i halytska,” 80–220.
- 112 Franko, *Pro sotsiializm*, 245.
- 113 *Ibid.*, 242.
- 114 *Ibid.*, 245.
- 115 *Ibid.*, 256.
- 116 Zabuzhko, *Filosofia*, 57.
- 117 This argument was made by Skrypnyk in his *Do teorii borotby dvoikh kultur*, and by Chyzhevsky in his *History*.
- 118 Zabuzhko, *Filosofia ukrainskoi idei*, 17.
- 119 See Franko, “Ein Dichter des Verrates.” The article appeared in Russian as Franko, *Poet izmeny*. For the Ukrainian version see his “Poet zrazy.” Franko simultaneously criticized Ukrainians for their political ineptness and disloyalty in far stronger terms in his “Deshcho pro sebe samoho” and “Poliaky i rusyny.”
- 120 It was not the first time Mickiewicz had faced this criticism. It had been raised in 1828 by Kayetan Kozmian and more recently by Georg Brandes, a fact that Franko indicates at the beginning of his article. Franko’s interpretation was disputed in Spasovich and Pilz, *Adam Mitskevich*.
- 121 This episode is discussed in Hrytsak, *Dukh shcho tile roe*, 147–8.

CHAPTER SIX

- 1 The play has been republished abroad as *Ukrainka*, *Boiarynia*. For an English translation see *Ukrainka*, *Spirit of Flame*, 11–68.
- 2 See Kostomarov, *Ruina*.
- 3 A. Krymskyi, *Rozvidky, statyi ta zamitky* (Kyiv, 1928) 326, quoted in Pavlychko, “Ahatanhel Krymsky,” 110.
- 4 See Pavlychko, “Ahatanhel Krymsky,” 111.
- 5 *Ukrainka*, *Spirit*, 66.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 66.
- 7 See Weretelnik, “A Feminist Reading,” 163.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 216.
- 9 *Ukrainka*, *Selected Works*, 114. The play is here translated as “The Stone Host,” 85–143.
- 10 See her letter to A. Krymskyi, 24 May 1912.
- 11 See Hrabovych, “Kobzar,” 18.
- 12 Gellner has defined this as “high culture or great tradition, a style of conduct and communication endorsed by the speaker as superior, as

- setting a norm which should be, but alas often is not, satisfied in real life, and the rules of which are usually codified by a set of respected, norm-giving specialists within society.” Gellner, *Nations*, 92, 8.
- 13 For modernism as a critique of the patriarchal myth, see Hundorova, *Proiavlennia slova*, 54–70.
- 14 Said, *Joseph Conrad*, 73.
- 15 See Karmanskyi, “Lyst po adresi.”
- 16 See Rudnytskyi, “Karmanskyi.” For selections from the first three chapters see Karmanskyi, “Kiltsia rozhi.” The full text of the novel was in the archive of the Ukrainian Catholic University in Rome until 1985 and was recovered by Professor Leonid Rudnytsky (See Rudnytskyi, “Karmanskyi,” 16). Quotations in this text are from a photocopy of the original manuscript in the possession of Stepan Yarema, Lviv. They list part (1 or 2) and chapter.
- 17 Rudnytskyi, *Vid Myrnoho*, 296–7.
- 18 For two recent scholarly accounts of these events see Procyk, *Russian Nationalism*, and Palij, *The Ukrainian-Polish Defensive Alliance*.
- 19 This view is echoed by Procyk, who writes that both Ukraine and Poland “lost much because of their failure to develop a solid and durable alliance. While Russia’s power was diminished during the early stages of the revolution, it would have been in Poland’s interest to aid Ukraine and thereby strengthen its own future security vis-à-vis both Germany and Russia. Poland was politically shortsighted to come to terms with the Bolsheviks at Ukraine’s expense” (201).
- 20 Said, *Joseph Conrad*, 26.

CHAPTER SEVEN

- 1 Sinyavsky, *Soviet Civilization*, 6. See also Berdiaev, *Istoki i smysl russkogo kommunizma*, in which the author describes communism as an irrational faith but one grounded in Russian history.
- 2 Agursky, *Third Rome*, xv.
- 3 Neumann, *Russia*, 170. These various groups are discussed in both Neumann and Agursky.
- 4 Neumann, *Russia*, 173.
- 5 Agursky, *Third Rome*, 305.
- 6 Zabuzhko, *Filosofia*, 34–5.
- 7 See Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy*.
- 8 O. Hrycenko, “Svoia mudrist.” *Natsionalni mifolohii ta “hromadianska relihiiia” v Ukraini* (Kyiv, 1998) 153–4, quoted in Kulyk, *Ukrainskyi natsionalizm*, 8.
- 9 On the “struggle of two cultures,” see Mace, *Communism*, 88–9, and Shkandrij, *Modernism*, 14–16.

- 10 For the different versions and variants and a history of the texts see Bulgakov, *Pesy*, 35–160, 351–62, 514–36.
- 11 Bulgakov, *Pesy*, 106.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 126.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 50.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 351.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 352.
- 16 Benjamin, “Moscow Diary,” 25.
- 17 Bulgakov, *Sobranie*, vol. 1, 336.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 333.
- 19 For Gorky’s letter see Drai-Khmara, *Z literaturno-naukovoi spadshchyny*, 342, also reprinted in Kostiuk, *Zustrichi*, 281.
- 20 Burevii, *Pavlo Polubotok*.
- 21 For a discussion of the play as a response to Bulgakov, see Popovich-Semeniuk.
- 22 See *Ukrainskyi zasiv* (1942), reprinted in Kosynka, *Favst iz Podillia*.
- 23 This is the conclusion of Robert Conquest, in his *Harvest of Sorrow*, 306. It should be pointed out that Conquest estimates the entire death toll from the famine at seven million. Eighty per cent of the mortality was in Ukraine and the largely Ukrainian areas of the North Caucasus: “the five million constitutes about 18.8% of the total population of the Ukraine (and about a quarter of the rural population). In World War I less than 1% of the population of the countries at war died” (306).
- 24 See Shteppa, “Lesser Evil.”
- 25 *Pravda*, 25 May 1945, quoted in Shteppa, “Lesser Evil,” 108.
- 26 See Rylskyi, “Slava.”
- 27 See Braichevskyi, *Pryiednannia chy vozziednannia?* 18. An English translation of the essay appeared as Braichevskyi, *Annexation*.
- 28 They were published in Khvylovyi, *Tvory v dvokh tomakh* (1991). The fourth and final cycle was first published as Khvylovyi, “Ukraina chy Malorosiiia?” (1990). Until then, the fullest edition of the pamphlets had been in volume four of Khvylovy, *Tvory v piatokh tomakh*. For an English translation see Khvylovy, *Cultural Renaissance*.
- 29 For a critic who takes quite the opposite view, see Stepanenko, “Khvylovyi bez nimby.” He argues that Khvylovy “in national spirit was not a Ukrainian writer” (72) but a thoroughly loyal Communist whose writing was entirely shaped by his reading of Russian literary classics.
- 30 On Khvylovy’s irony see Shkandrij, “Irony.”
- 31 See Sulyma, “Frazeolohiia”; Koshelivets, *Rozmova*, 70–2.
- 32 Khvylovyi, *Tvory v dvokh tomakh*, vol. 2, 600. This translation is from Khvylovy, *Cultural Renaissance*, 228–9.
- 33 Khvylovyi, *Tvory v piatokh tomakh*, vol. 4, 417. Another revealing mistake occurs at the beginning of the 1991 edition. Here the word *kompaniia*

- (company) is substituted for what in the original was *kompartiiia* (Communist Party). Khvylovy's literary grouping which was called "Hart," we learn, has, the author informs us, "taken for its ideology the postulates of the Communist Party." Khvylovyi, *Tvory v dvokh tomakh*, 395.
- 34 Rudnytskyi, *Vid Myrnoho*, 360; Lysiak-Rudnytskyi, "Mykola Khvylovy"; Koshelivets, *Rozмова*, 70–85.
- 35 Mace, "Buremnyi dukh."
- 36 Khvylovy, *Cultural Renaissance*, 220.
- 37 For Dontsov's comments on Khvylovy, see Dontsov, "Do staroho sporu," and "Krok vpered."
- 38 Khvylovy, *Cultural Renaissance*, 222.
- 39 These references are to A.N. Ostrovskii, *Groza* (Storm, 1860); V. Belinskii, "Literaturnye mectaniia. Elegiia v proze" (Literary Musings. Elegy in Prose, 1834), M. Gorkii, "Malva."
- 40 Khvylovyi, *Tvory v dvokh tomakh*, 606.
- 41 Khvylovy's Dmytro Karamazov resembles the Russian liberal intelligentsia whom he criticized in his *Pamphlets* and whose hypocrisy and lack of will-power was ridiculed in remarkably similar terms by Vynnychenko in *Vidrodzhennia natsii*, vol. 1, 99–100.
- 42 Masaryk, *Spirit of Russia*, vol. 3, 111.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 114.
- 44 For a discussion see Frank, Dostoevsky, 252–5.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 254.
- 46 Bhabha, "Remembering Fanon," 117.
- 47 See especially Khvylovyi, *Tvory v dvokh tomakh*, 608.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 595–610.
- 49 Khvylovy, *Cultural Renaissance*, 229.
- 50 Iu. Sherekh, "Viktor Petrov iak ia ioho bachyv." *Ukraina* (Paris) 6 (1951), quoted in Donchyk, *Istoriia*, 643.
- 51 He also published an excavation diary of Khvoika in Zarubyntsiia. His most important works are *Skify. Mova i etnos* (Scythians. Language and Ethnos. Kiev, 1968) and *Etnohenez slovia. Dzherela, etapy rozvytku i problematyka* (Ethnogenesis of the Slavs. Sources, Stages of Development and Issues. Kiev, 1972).
- 52 Shevelov, "Shostyi," 549–50. This assessment is disputed by Chaplenko, whose novel *Ioho taiemytsia* portrays Petrov as a Soviet spy being blackmailed by the secret police.
- 53 Sherekh, "Ne dlia ditei"; Lavrinenko, "Pro grunt."
- 54 Petrov, "Vstup," 3.
- 55 Petrov, "Problemy," 44.
- 56 *Ibid.*, 46.
- 57 On the connection between *Ukrainska khata's* modernism and nationalism see Ihnytzyk, "Ukrainska khata," and Pavlychko, *Dyskurs*, 127–62.

- 58 For an analysis of Petrov's writings on culture in this period see Pavlychko, "Na zvorotnomu botsi," and her *Dyskurs*, 279–301. Pavlychko's insightful account draws on Domontovych's writings of the forties, in particular his novel *Bez gruntu*, which she feels was written as well as published in German-occupied Kharkiv in 1941–42. Pavlychko emphasizes Petrov's polemic with an earlier, prerevolutionary Ukrainian modernism, which he saw as superficially influenced by Western Europe and incapable of breaking decisively with populism.
- 59 The collaboration of the avant-garde with bolshevik power has been described as following "from the very essence of the avant-gardist artistic project," which is the total mastery of nature: "Since the world itself is regarded as material, the demand underlying the modern conception of art for power over the materials implicitly contains the demand for power over the world. This power does not recognize any limitations and cannot be challenged by any other, nonartistic authority, since humanity and all human thought, science, traditions, institutions, and so on, are declared to be subconsciously (or, to put it differently, materially) determined and therefore subject to restructuring according to a unitary artistic plan." Groys, *Total Art*, 20–1. Groys adds that "Although the design of the avant-garde artistic project was rationalistic, utilitarian, constructive, and in that sense 'enlightenist,' the source of both the project and the will to destroy the world as we know it to pave the way for the new was in the mystical, transcendental, 'sacred' sphere, and in that sense completely 'irrational'" (64).
- 60 See Pavlychko, *Dyskurs*, 168–230, especially 192–3.
- 61 On futurism see Ilnytzkyj, *Ukrainian Futurism*.
- 62 Domontovych, *Tvoiry*, vol. 1, 169.
- 63 Shevelov, "Shostyi," 518.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Pavlychko, *Dyskurs*, 219.
- 66 Domontovych, *Tvoiry*, vol. 1, 88.
- 67 Ibid., 132.
- 68 Ibid., 70.
- 69 Ibid., 76.
- 70 Ibid., 131.
- 71 Ibid., 181.
- 72 Ibid., 379.
- 73 Ibid., 367.
- 74 Ibid., 425–7.
- 75 Ibid., 426.
- 76 Ber, "Zasady poetyky," 18.
- 77 He wrote a long introduction to the mimeographed edition of Chyzhevsky's history in which he attempted a periodization of literary-cultural history. See Petrov, "Vstup."

- 78 Sherekh, “Ne dlia ditei,” 367. One such section is chapter 6, which was perhaps revised for publication in 1947. In it the author seems to be retrospectively strengthening his theoretical argument concerning the necessity of period revolutions. This was also the year in which Petrov was composing his introduction for Chyzhevsky’s history, which deals with style as the sole criterion for periodization.
- 79 Pavlychko, *Dyskurs*, 215.
- 80 He may have become familiar with *Dialectic of Enlightenment* by Adorno and Horkheimer, which appeared in 1944. The authors saw in knowledge an urge to control and manipulate that was abstract and utilitarian and focused on the need to master nature: “Enlightenment behaves toward things as a dictator toward man. He knows them in so far as he can make them.” Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic*, 6. Some of these ideas may have found their way into his *Doctor Seraphicus* during its rewriting in Germany. In any case, the writer was already concerned with this issue in the twenties, and in the forties, as Viktor Ber, he put forward a critique of modernity that was phrased as a contrast between the Middle Ages and post-Renaissance, post-Enlightenment Europe. This last question is discussed in Pavlychko, *Dyskurs*, 280–3.
- 81 Domontovych, *Tvory*, vol. 1, 437.
- 82 See Pavlychko, *Dyskurs*, 286–7.
- 83 Domontovych, *Tvory*, vol. 1, 56.
- 84 *Ibid.*, 370.
- 85 Zerov, *Do dzherel*, 118. Zerov’s exposition of the neoclassicists’ position began on 24 May 1925 at a public debate in Kyiv whose record was published as *Shliakhy rozvytku*. For a discussion see Shkandrij, *Modernists*, 71–90.
- 86 Pavlychko, “Na zvorotnomu,” 124.
- 87 Shevelov, “Shostyi,” 529; Korybut, “Doktor Serafikus,” 162–4; Pavlychko, “Na zvorotnomu,” 123.
- 88 Zabuzhko, *Filosofia*, 9.
- 89 Franko, “Deshcho pro sebe samoho,” 30–1.
- 90 See Kulish, “Do ridnoho narodu,” in his *Khutorna poeziiia*.
- 91 “Variazka baliada” (1925), quoted from Malaniuk, *Poezii v odnomu tom*, 41:
- Otak lezhysh – zamriiano-bezsyla,
A skhodyt nich i vidmoiu vnochi
Ty rozhortaiesh kazhanovi kryla ...
I poky po haiakh krychat sychi,
- Po bolotakh skrehochut mlosni zhaby,
Shepoche tma i stohne v snakh Dniipro, –
Letysh strashna y rozkhrystana na shabash –
Svoikh ditei baistriuchu pyty krov – –

92 “Variazka baliada” (1925), quoted from Malaniuk, *Poezii v odnomu tomi*, 228:

I yshly viky, odnym iarmom zakuti,
Plekaiuchy kaliku i raba.

Zradlyvyi, khytryi, temnyi i ledachyi,
V hnylosnim tlinni mertvoi dushi
Vin vykokhav sobi pavuche sertse:
Male, skotsiurblene, truslyvo-liute,
Nenavysne i zazdre na velychnist,
Pokirlyve na nyzkist khanskykh stil.

I tak lyshav bezzakhysnuiu zemliu
Y, tikaiuchy, vstromliav u niu sviy spys.

I tak miniav zaliznyi lad derzhav
Na khyzhyi svyst chuzhoho batoha
I tupo yshov otaroiu v iasyr.
I prodavav na stratu svoho kniazia.

93 See “Ubiinykam” (1926), in Malaniuk, *Poezii v odnomu tomi*, 75–6.

94 For a partial collection see Malaniuk, *Knyha*.

95 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 185.

96 *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 205.

97 *Ibid.*, 234.

98 Ber, “Zasady,” 9.

99 Hordynskyi, “Ievhen Malaniuk,” 68.

100 Malaniuk, *Knyha*, vol. 2, 27.

101 Geoffrey Hosking, in his *Russia*, argues that the “building of empire impeded the formation of a nation” (xix) and that a “fractured and underdeveloped nationhood has been their [the Russians’] principal historical burden in the last two centuries or so, continuing through the period of the Soviet Union and persisting beyond its fall” (xx). Compare this, for example, with Ia. Gordin’s comments in “Chto pozadi” that Russian literature appeared simultaneously with Peter’s state and civilization and became integrated “more than any other European literature” with the state, and that from Peter to Lenin the state viewed culture in purely pragmatic terms, without attributing to it any “independent value.” Dziuba has argued that a threat has hung over the Russian language and Russian culture ever since it was “diluted by heterogeneous and chaotic admixtures.” See his *Internationalism*, 179.

102 *Ibid.*, 196.

103 *Ibid.*, 248.

- 104 Ibid., 82.
- 105 Malaniuk, *Knyha*, vol. 1, 31. For Malaniuk's contribution to the Literary Discussion see Shkandrij, *Modernists*, 145–8.
- 106 *Popil imperii* was published in full in Klen, *Tvory*, vol. 2, 11–327, reprinted in Klen, *Vybrane*, 132–356. In Ukraine, Barka's novel was made into the film *Holod 33* in 1990. The novel was republished in 1999 as *Zhovtyi kniaz: Povist*.
- 107 See Conquest, *Harvest of Sorrow*, 326–8.
- 108 Intensified campaigns of denunciation recurred in 1946 and 1951 and in the 1970s. For attacks in the seventies see Shkandrij, "Literary Politics and Literary Debates."
- 109 Ukrainians probably formed a majority and certainly a plurality in many penal institutions after World War II, a fact noted in many memoirs. They played a leading role in the labour camp strikes that began after Stalin's death. See Jaworsky, "Dissent," 115–43.
- 110 Zahrebelnyi, *Ia, Bohdan*. For an analysis see Pavlyshyn, "Ia, Bohdan." Orthodox interpretations of political history are expressed in other works that appeared during the three hundredth anniversary of the treaty of Pereiaslav of 1654, such as Natan Rybak, *Pereiaslavska rada*, 2 vols. (1948, 1954), Petro Panch, *Homonila Ukraina* (1954), and Ivan Le, *Khmelnytskyi*, 3 vols. (1957–65).
- 111 See Yekelchuk, "Nationalism," 388.
- 112 The essay "Sobor u ryshtuvanni" has been translated as "A Cathedral in Scaffolding," in Sverstiuk, *Clandestine Essays*, 17–68.
- 113 Dzyuba, *Internationalism*, 65–6, 166.
- 114 Ibid., 165.
- 115 Klebnikov, "Zhirinovskiy," 119.
- 116 Ibid.
- 117 Ibid., 121–2.
- 118 Nabokov, Nikolai Gogol, 31–2.
- 119 Reprinted, with an editorial comment, in the Kyiv newspaper *Stolytsia* for June 1996. See Luckyj, *Anguish of Mykola Hohol*, 23.
- 120 Gippius, *Gogol*, 217.
- 121 See Maiakovskiy, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 5, 134–6.
- 122 Pokalchuk, "Dovha doroha," 6, 7.
- 123 Stus, *Vikna*, 214.
- 124 Ibid., 208–26.
- 125 "Fenomen doby."
- 126 Stus, *Vikna*, 219.
- 127 Ibid., 102.
- 128 Stus, *Tvory*, vol. 4, 498.
- 129 Hundorova, "Fenomen," 3.
- 130 Stus, *Tvory*, vol. 4, 499.

- 131 Ibid., 498–9.
 132 Stus, *Vikna*, 189.
 133 Ibid., 191.
 134 Ibid., 195.
 135 Shevelov, “Trunok,” 55–6.
 136 Pavlyshyn, “Kvadratura kruha,” 39.
 137 Shevelov, “Trunok,” 43.
 138 Pokalchuk, “Dovha doroha,” 8.
 139 Stus “Nai budem shchryi” (1965), reprinted in *Tvory*, vol. 4, 176.
 140 Stus, *Vikna*, 179.
 141 Ibid., 186.
 142 Stus, “Perednie slovo,” 3.
 143 This is the argument of Marko Pavlyshyn, “Kvadratura kruha.”
 144 Dzyuba, *Internationalism*, 49–50.

CHAPTER EIGHT

- 1 D.S. Likhachev, “Nelzia uiti ot samikh sebia ... (Istoricheskoe samosoznanie i kultura Rossii),” *Novyi mir* 6 (1994), quoted in Hutsalo, *Mentalnist ordy*, 3.
 2 First published by Possev-Verlag: Frankfurt am Main, 1970, it was republished in *Oktiabr* 6 (1989).
 3 Grossman, *Forever Flowing*, 56.
 4 Ibid., 211.
 5 Litvinova, “Revoliutsiia,” 6.
 6 Quoted in Kis, *Final Tretoho Rymu*, 25.
 7 *Nash sovremennik* 1 (1990): 172; quoted in Kis, *Final Tretoho Rymu*, 196.
 8 Korotych and Nagibin are quoted in Kis, *Final Tretoho Rymu*, 231 and 680, respectively.
 9 Excerpts appeared in Andrukhvych, “Lysty v Ukrainu,” reprinted in *Chetver* (1993). The editorial note on page 55 of the latter edition identifies the poems as having been written in the late autumn of 1990 in the same writers’ residence in Moscow that figures in *Moskoviada*.
 10 Pavlyshyn, “Post-Colonial Features,” 44.
 11 Editorial note to Andrukhovych, “Lysty,” *Chetver*, 55.
 12 Roth, “Carnival,” 2–3.
 13 *Moskoviada* 2 (1993): 38–9.
 14 Kis, “Rosiiska mesianska ideia,” 67.
 15 Andrukhovych, *Moskoviada*, 1, 49.
 16 Andrukhovych, “Lysty,” *Chetver*, 63.
 17 Ibid.
 18 Pavlyshyn, “Post-Colonial Features,” 45.
 19 See, for example, Zholdak, *Ialovychyna*.

- 20 Andrukhovych, *Perverzija*.
- 21 Ibid., 37.
- 22 Ibid., 68.
- 23 Ibid., 227.
- 24 Ibid., 317.

CONCLUSION

- 1 For a discussion of this issue see Klein, "In Search of Narrative Mastery."
- 2 Said proposed a contrapuntal analysis in his *Culture and Imperialism*, 18. On figural resistance see Slemon, "Reading for Resistance."
- 3 Easthope, *Literary into Cultural Studies*, 60.
- 4 Howe, *Politics and the Novel*, 19.
- 5 Ibid., 21.
- 6 Ibid., 23.
- 7 Layton, "Eros," 196.
- 8 It has been suggested that "Ukraine represents a case of a national culture with extremely permeable frontiers, but a case that perhaps corresponds to postmodern political developments ... In other words, what has been perceived as the 'weakness' of Ukrainian history or its 'defects' when measured against the putative standards of Western European states such as France and Britain ought to be turned into 'strengths' for a new historiography. Precisely the fluidity of frontiers, the permeability of cultures, the historic multi-ethnic society is what could make Ukrainian history a very 'modern' field of inquiry." Von Hagen, "Does Ukraine have a history?" 670.
- 9 Bayley, *Tolstoy*, 14.
- 10 Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*.
- 11 McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 67-8.

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Index

- Agursky, Mikhail: on national bolshevism and Romantic nationalism, 213–14
- Aheeva, Vira, xiii, 204
- Aksakov, Ivan, 71
- Aksakov, Konstantin, 60
- Aksakov, Sergei: on Gogol and Ukrainians, 251–2
- Alexander II (tsar), 71, 154
- Allen, W.E.D., 138
- Anchor* (Iakor), 15
- Ancillon, Friedrich, 36
- Andreev, Leonid, 205
- Andrukhovych, Iurii, 262–8
- antipopulism, 197–8, 204; in Khylovy, 230–1; in Stus, 257
- antisemitism, 91, 94; depiction in literature, 24, 89, 162–6, 217–18
- Antonenko-Davydovych, Borys, 221
- Antonovych, Volodymyr, xiii, 147; identity change, 33
- Arakcheev, Aleksei, 90
- Arendt, Hanna: on imperialism, xiv
- Austin, Paul: on Russian Romanticism as unnationalistic, xiv
- avant-garde: collaboration with bolshevik power, 316n59; Domontovych's critique of, 238–42
- Babel, Isaak, 205
- Bahaly: on schools, 27. *See also* Paul of Aleppo
- Balmen, Iakiv de, 135, 140
- Bantysh-Kamensky: history of creation of cosacks, 113; stereotypes of Ukrainians, 294n33
- Barka, Vasyl, 249
- baroque, 4; and Gogol, 114, 302n164
- Bassin, Mark: on the fusion of the imperial impulse with Russian nationalism, xiv
- Batory, Stefan, 113
- Baturyn, 85
- Bayley, John: on freshness of perception in Russian literature, 273
- Beacon* (Maiak), 74, 128, 141
- Beauplan, Guillaume de, 82
- Beecher-Stowe, Harriet, 171
- Belinsky, Vissarion, 16, 116–25; on Kvitka, 128; on Lermontov, 52, 303n184; and textbooks, 160; view of Shevchenko, 63, 66, 141
- Bely, Andrei, 167, 309n50
- Benjamin, Walter: in Moscow, 218
- Berdiaev, Nikolai, 64–5; on communism, 213
- Berlin, Isaiah, 124
- Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, Aleksandr, 35–43, 100; attitude to Poland, censored passages, 286n33; death, 43
- Bezborodko, Aleksandr, 25

- Bhabha, Homi: on Fanon, 229
- Bilozersky, Mykhailo, 154
- Black Sea Cossacks, 5, 90, 140; creation, 301n155; island of Taman, 289n82; Ukrainian identity of, 290n83
- Blok, Aleksandr, 65
- Bobrowski, Tadeusz: on antagonism between Ukrainians and Poles, 307n63
- Bodiansky, Osyp, 78–9
- Bonner, Elena: and Ukrainian independence, 250
- Borovykovsky, Levko, 86
- Bowie, Andrew: on Romanticism's dark side, 52
- Braichevsky, Mykhailo: critique of Soviet ideology, 222
- Brodsky, Joseph: hostility to Ukrainian independence and culture, 251
- Brotherhood of Taras, 189
- Bukharin, Nikolai, 217
Bukovyna, 187
- Bulgakov, Mikhail, 167; answered by M. Kulish, 22; writings on Ukraine, 215–19
- Bulgarin, Faddei, 11, 105, 141; depiction of Mazepa, 88–9; on Mazepa's poem, 103, 297n97
- Bunin, Ivan: view of Ukraine, 166–7
- Burachok, Stepan, 128, 141
- Burevy, Kost, 220
- Byron, Lord, 100
- Catherine II (Russian empress): Dnieper voyage, 142–3; Draho-manov's view of, 188; policy toward Ukraine, 82–4, 296n71; Southern campaign, 3; writings, 95. *See also* Teplov
- Chekhov, Anton, 166
- Chernyshevsky, Nikolai, 155
- Christoff, Peter, 63
- Chyzhevsky, Dmytro, 25, 126
- Clarke, Edward Daniel, 53
- colonial discourse: xii, 191, 269–74; colonized woman in, 86–7, 145, 271–2; narrative structures and tropes, 6–20; use of term, 278n6. *See also* Pavlyshyn
- colonialism, Russian, 28–9; Dziuba on, 248; Malaniuk on, 248–9; transcending imagery of, 226–7; use of term, 277n4–5, 278n6. *See also* Ukraine
- Conquest, Robert: on famine of 1933, 314n23
- Conrad, Joseph, 205, 211–12, 272–3
- Constantinople-Istanbul, 61
- Contemporary* (Sovremennik), 155
- Cossack Mamai paintings, 17
- cossack *starshyna*, 26, 88–9; in Solovev, 160
- counterdiscourse, Ukrainian, 20, 29, 66; counternarratives, 269–72; protonational expression of, 283n78
- Custine, Astolphe, marquis de, 43, 59
- Cyrillo-Methodian Brotherhood, 63–4, 122, 154; influence of Slavophiles on, 292n126; program, 140
- Dal, Vladimir: praise of Kvitka, 128; on Ukrainian language as pristine Russian, 74
- Danilevsky, Grigorii (Hryhorii Danylevsky), 168–76
- Danilevsky, Nikolai: on capturing Constantinople, 14; justification for assimilating non-Orthodox, 291n101; on Russia's organic growth, 12, 291n116; smaller nations as ethnographic material, 306n37
- Dashkevich, Nikolai (Mykola), 157
- Day* (Den), 155
- Decembrists: 13, 36, 104; and Ryleev, 97; as soldiers in the Caucasus, 286n15; view of literature, 40; and Yermolov, 49, 286n28
- denationalization, 45–6; as government policy, 12, 17–18
- Denikin, General, 211
- Derzhavin, Gavril, 9; on crushing Polish resistance, 135, 292n11
- Dimitrii Samozvanets: as literary theme, 70, 87, 107, 292n11
- discourse of idleness, 77–9, 294n33; Chekhov on himself as idle khokhol, 295n46
- discourse: definition, xiii–xiv
- Divovych, Semen, 25
- Dobroliubov, Nikolai, 155–6
- Dolgoruky, Prince I.M., 70, 73–4, 78–80; on battle of Poltava, 82; on Catherine and Potemkin, 80–1

- Domontovych, Viktor, 231–43. *See also* Viktor Petrov
- Dontsov, Dmytro, 243; on Khvylovy, 226, 229
- Dostoevsky, Fedor, 65; *Diary*, 14, 164–5; on expansionism, 14, 16–17; influence on Khvylovy, 227–9; justification for assimilating non-Orthodox, 291n101; on Orthodoxy, 16; Russia's universal responsiveness, 15
- Douglas, Mary: forbidden attractions of violence, 49
- Drahomanov, Mykhailo, xiii, 71, 183–9; Catherine I, 83; contested authenticity and interpretation of folk-songs, 300n132; debate with Hrinchenko, 187–9
- dual identity, 23–4, 30–4, 115, 189; in Soviet period, 250
- Dziuba, Ivan, 28, 48; and dissent movement, 250, 252, 257; on Russian colonialism, 248; Shevchenko, 134, 139; and Shulgin, 166
- Eikhenbaum, Boris: on Lermontov's erotic verse, 50, 287n52
- Ems edict, 23, 158; definition, 283n72
- Erenburg, Illia: on amateurish character of Ukrainian cultural revival, 167
- Eurasianists: idea of organic nation, 12; and Soviet patriotism, 222
- Fanon, Franz, 22, 229
- Fedotov, Georgii, 9, 17, 168; on acceptance of empire's assimilatory policies, 308n16
- feminism, 197–8, 203–4; contemporary, 204–5
- First Wreath* (Pershyi vinok), 197
- Forsh, Olga, 167
- Foundation* (Osnova), 146–7, 154–5, 177; accusations of radicalism and separatism, 307n59
- Franko, Ivan, 92, 192–6; critique of Ukrainians, 244, 312n119; on Kvitka, 131; on Ruthenian duplicity, 33; on Svydnytsky, 146; on Vyshensky's Ruthenian separatism, 187–8
- Frick, David, 33
- Galicia, 15, 61, 179; Kulish on Polish rule in, 181; representatives at 1899 congress in Kyiv, 158; Shulgin on Ukrainian identity in, 165; as Ukrainian Piedmont, 183; writers branded apostates, 32
- Gandhi, Leela: on anti-nationalist phobias, 22–3
- Gellner, Ernst, 204, 312n12
- Gibbon, Edward: on fertility of Ukraine's soil, 78; on Ukraine's state of nature, 76
- Gogol, Nikolai (Mykola Hohol), 32, 90, 161; writings on Ukraine, 105–116. *See also* baroque
- Gorky, Maksim: on objection to translation into Ukrainian, 219
- Government Herald* (Pravitelstvennyi vestnik), 169
- Grabbe, Pavel (general), 42
- Grabowicz, George: xiii, 32; on horizon of expectation, 166; view of Shevchenko, 138, 306n52
- Grebenka, Evgenii. *See* Hrebinka
- Grech, Nikolai: on superiority of Russian language, 11; on Ukrainian as regional version of Polish, 294n27
- Grigorev, Apollon, 15; Shevchenko and Belinsky, 117
- Grigorii (Hryhorii) Poletyka, 25
- Grossman, Valerii, 260–1
- Guliga, Arsenii: on cosmic Russian culture, 261
- Gzhytsky, Volodymyr, 221
- haidamak* rebellions, 90; as literary theme, 87, 91, 123
- Harkusha, Semen, 90, 132
- Hegelianism, 23; and Belinsky, 116, 120
- Herzen: on Ukraine, 17, 143–4
- Hetmanate, 3, 24, 85. *See also* Kharkiv University, Paul of Aleppo
- high culture: absence in nineteenth century, 77; in eighteenth century Russia, 31–2, 284n104; and modernists, 204
- Hill, Christopher: on famine of 1921, 10
- History of the Rus People* (Istoriia Rusiv), 83, 96, 98–9, 123; in Drahomanov, 187
- Hokanson, Katya: critique of claim of universal responsiveness,

- 15; on Pushkin as imperial poet, 102
 Holovaty, Anton, 131
 holy Russia, 11, 15, 24, 61; in Dostoevsky, 228; idea of saintly Russia in medieval times, 280n24
 Honchar, Oles, 250
 Hosking, Geoffrey: on poorly developed Russian national identity, 247, 318n101
 Howe, Susan: on imposing abstractions and the imperial project, 52
 Hrabianka, Hryhorii, 24
 Hrebinka, Ievhen, 124, 161; writings, 91–5
 Hrinchenko, Borys, 158, 176, 189–92
 Hroch, Miroslav: view of national movements 190, 311n107
 Hrushevsky, Mykhailo, 158
 Hugo, Victor: on the Orient, 37–8, 51
 Hulak-Artemovsky, Petro, 128
 Hundorova, Tamara, xiii, 204
 Hutsalo, Ievhen: on Russian will to power and violence, 259–60
 Ilchenko, Roman, 249–50
 Imperial Archaeological Society, 158
 India: British rule in, 8
 Irchan, Myroslav, 205
 Ivan Poletyka, 25
 Ivan the Terrible: in Belinsky, 117, 120
 Ivanychuk, Roman, 259
 Izmailov, Vladimir, 70, 73, 80, 85; on Rogneda theme, 87; on superior life of Ukrainian peasants, 295n48
 Jews: in Bulgakov 215–18; depiction in nineteenth-century literature, 91–4, 123, 161; in Grossman, 260–1
 Kaganovich, Lazar, 215
 Kalnyshevsky, Petro, 90
 Kapnist, Vasilii (Vasyl), 25, 32–3, 187; mission to Prussia, 33, 285n110; ode on slavery, 96, 298n103
 Kappeler, Andreas, 19–20
 Karamzin, Nikolai: as historian, 10, 72, 161; historical fiction, 96; Klymovsky, 75; Poland, 68–9; on suitable literary themes, 86–7
 Karmansky, Petro, 205–12
 Katkov, Mikhail, 28
 Kharkiv University, 26, 133, 158, 186; student body as Hetmanate nobles, 284n88
 Kharkiv, 129, 133
 Kheraskov, Mikhail, 95
 Khmelnytsky, Bohdan, 72, 87, 104–5; Belinsky's view of, 121; depiction in literature, 94–5, 250; as a national leader, 298n104
khokhols: depiction in literature, 78–9, 161–2, 309n50; nomenclature, 20
 Khomiakov, Aleksei, 59–66, 107, 136; on imperial expansion, 62; messianism, 63–5; view of Orthodoxy, 64–5; on *smirenie*, 50, 64–5
 Khylovy, Mykola, 221, 223–31
 Kireevsky, Ivan, 60
 Klen, Iurii, 249
 Kliuchevky, Vasilii, 161
 Klymovsky, Semen: portrayal in Karamzin, 75
 Kniazhnin, Iakov, 96
 Kobylanska, Olha: and Ukrainka, 197–8, 204
 Koni, Fedor, 141
 Korbut, Iurii: on Domontovych, 243
 Kornilovich, A.: on Ryleev's portrayal of Mazepa, 100
 Korolenko, Vladimir, 167
 Korotych, Vitalii, 262
 Kostyuk, Hryhorii: on Khylovy, 224
 Kostomarov, Mykola, 147; identity change, 33; influence on Ukrainka, 199; and Kvitka, 129; on Rus, 154
 Kosynka, Hryhorii: portrayal of nationally conscious Ukrainian peasant, 220–1
 Kotliarevsky, Ivan, 25, 85–6, 90; glorification of military, 304n9; Polevoi's view of, 156
 Kotliarevsky, N.: on Ryleev, 96–7, 101
 Kovalevsky, Ie., 81, 128
 Kraievsky, Andrii, 50, 130–1
 Krymsky, Agatanhel: on Russian hostility toward Ukrainians, 199–200
 Kulish, Mykola, 220
 Kulish, Panteleimon, 176–83; on Ukrainian and Russian civilizations as complementary, 154; criticism of Ukrainian lack of self-respect, 33; reassessment of cos-sackophilia, 189–90
 Kulzhynsky, 81, 90; image of Ukraine as natural paradise, 108
 Kuniaev, Stanislav, 14
 Kvitka-Osnovianenko, Hryhorii, 86, 126–34; and Belinsky, 123–4
Kyiv Telegraph (Kievskii telegraf), 155

- Kyiv, 71–2, 120–1, 165–6, 194; and Bulgakov, 219; modernists in, 197
 Kyiv University, 24, 158, 186
Kyivite (Kievlainin), 165
- Layton, Susan: on Bestuzhev-Marlinsky, 38, 40, 42; on Lermontov, 48–9, 55; on study of empire, xiv
- Lednicki, Waclaw, 68
- Left Bank Ukraine, 4; in Danilevsky, 169–76
- Leonov, Leonid, 221
- Leopardi, Giacomo, 140
- Lermontov, Mikhail, 43–59: announced closure on war in the Caucasus, 139; attitude to East, 37; in Belinsky, 120
- Levshin, A.: on dislike of Russians by Ukrainians, 73
- Library for Reading* (Biblioteka dlia chtenia), 131
- Likhachev: on conquest of Siberia, 261; on Russia's force of attraction, 259
- Literary Discussion of 1920s, 219–20, 223
- Literary Gazette* (Literaturnaia gazeta), 141
- Literary-Scientific Herald* (Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk), 243
- Little Russia: nomenclature, 7, 20
- Litvinova, Galina: on Russian superethnos, 261
- Lomonosov, Mikhail, 13
- Luckyj, George: on national consciousness in early nineteenth century, 24; on Ukrainian writers in nineteenth century, 32
- Lviv Courier* (Kurier Lwowski), 195
- Lviv, 158, 188, 194–6; modernists in, 204
- McClintock, Anne, 45, 74; discourse of idleness, 78; on postcolonial theory, 274
- Mace, James: on Khvylovy, 225
- Magoci, Paul, 161
- Maiakovsky, Vladimir: on Russian unawareness of Ukrainian culture, 252
- Maksymovych, Mykhailo, 24; folk-song collection, 103, 114; and Kvitka, 130; Mazepa's poem and poem about Mazepa, 300n131
- Malaniuk, Ievhen, 243–9; concept of *maloros*, 246–8; on Gogol, 246; on Khvylovy, 229
- Markevich, Nikolai (Mykola Markevych), 121, 123
- Marlinsky. *See* Bestuzhev-Marlinsky
- Masaryk, Thomas: on Dostoevsky, 228–9
- Mazepa, Ivan (hetman): anathema, 102–4; as literary theme, 87–9, 98–105, 113, 160; writings, 89
- Memmi, Albert, 122
- Mickiewicz, Adam, 9; Franko's critique of, 195–6, 312n119; on Russia, 30; Wallenrod, 30, 103, 195
- Miliukov, Aleksandr, 157
- Miliukov, Pavel, 162–4
- Mirsky: on Karamzin, 10; Lermontov, 56; Ukrainian civilization, 27
- modernism, 197–8; attacks by Yefremov, 204–5; Central European, 207; national narrative, 197–212; reorientation of culture, 194–5; in Stus, 254–6
- Moscow Art Theatre (MKHAT), 217
- Moscow, 76, 121, 158, 166; Bulgakov in, 217–19; and M. Kulish's play, 220. *See also* Third Rome
- Myrny, Panas, 176
- Nabokov, Vladimir: on Gogol and Ukrainian language, 251
- Nagibin, Iurii, 262
- Nandy, Ashis, 85
- narodnost*, 10–11
- national movements: interpretation of, 190–2
- national self-determination: in Franko, 193–4
- Nechui-Levytsky, Ivan, 176, 187
- neoclassicism, 232–3; and Domontovych, 238, 243
- Neuman, Iver: on national bolshevism, 213–14; on Official Nationality, 11; on Romantic nationalism, 12, 14, 214
- New Council* (Nova rada), 166
- Nicholas I (tsar), 11, 181; Russification under, 11; Ryleev's poetry, 101
- Nogmov, Shora, 46
- nonhistorical peoples, 22–3
- Northern Bee* (Severnaia pchela), 131, 141
- Notes of the Fatherland* (Otechestvennye zapiski), 74, 108, 155
- Novgorod, 121
- Odoevsky, Vladimir, 11

- Official Nationality, 11, 51; and Belinsky, 120. See also Neuman
- orientalism, 8, 79; oriental stereotypes, 39–40; and Ukraine, 84
- Orlyk, Pylyp, 103
- Orthodox faith. See Russian Orthodox Church and Ukrainian Orthodox Church
- Osnova*. See Foundation
- Ostrovsky, Nikolai, 217
- Our Contemporary* (Nash sovremennik), 14, 261
- Panslavism, xiv, 11, 164
- Passek, Vadim, 70
- Paul of Aleppo: on high literacy level in seventeenth-century Ukraine, 302n157
- Pauls, John. P.: on Pushkin, 99
- Pavlychko, Solomiia, xiii, 204
- Pavlyshyn, Marko: view of colonial, anticolonial, and postcolonial, 191, 266, 311n108
- Pereiaslav Treaty, 4, 166; in literature, 94, 113
- Perovsky, Vasiliï (general), 44
- Peter I (tsar), 40, 103, 113; in Belinsky, 117, 120
- Petliura, Symon, 211; depiction in Bulgakov, 215–19
- Petrov, Nikolai: Ukrainian literature as lacking an independent dynamic, 157
- Petrov, Viktor: on Malaniuk, 247. See also Domontovych
- philo-Ukrainianism, 8, 76–7, 84, 121–2
- Pletnev, Petr, 130, 132
- pochvenniki*, 15
- Podillia (Podolia), 71, 152
- Pogodin, Mikhail, 12, 161
- Pokalchuk, Iurii: on Stus, 252
- Pokrovsky, Mikhail, 13; condemned by Stalin, 221; economic reasons for expansion, 19; on Ukrainian history, 80
- Poland: attitude to Ukraine, 5–7; Drahomanov's view of, 184–5; gentry on Right Bank, 6, 71–2; National Party, 195; Polish question in Russian Empire, 67–70; rebellions against Russia in nineteenth century
- Polevoi, Nikolai: depiction of Ermak's conquest of Siberia, 18; on the impossibility of a Ukrainian literature, 156; on Ukrainian writing as a witty prank, 29
- Polish literature: theme of death of Ukraine, 29; Ukrainian school in, 4, 31, 185
- Polonsky, Iakov: on conquest, 102–3, 299n130
- Pomialovsky, Nikolai: description of Orthodox seminaries, 147
- popular literature, 161–2; rendering of celebratory hymn, 305n34
- postcolonial identity, 27–8; in Ukrainian literature, 259–68
- postcolonial theory, 22–3, 191, 266, 270–5
- postmodernism: Russian, 262; Ukrainian, 262, 267
- Pratt, Mary Louise: concept of cultural combat zone, 34
- Pravda* (Lviv), 200
- Pravda* (Moscow), 220
- Prokopovich (Prokopovych), Feofan, 9, 32
- Pugachev rebellion, 89–90, 175
- Pushkin, Aleksandr: 52–3, 96; critique by Stus, 255; depiction of Mazepa, 99, 101–5, 300n134; and Gogol, 108; on Poland, 69–70; on Ukrainians, 108, 111
- Pypin, Aleksandr, 156–7
- Radishchev, Aleksandr, 96
- Rasputin, Valentin, 214
- Riasanovsky, Nicholas: on Russian expansionism and messianism, 11
- Right Bank Ukraine, 5, 71–2, 146; schools and clergy, 147–8, 151–2
- Romantic nationalism, 12–13, 26. See also Agursky, Neuman
- Rossilieu, Baron, 49
- Rozanov, Vasiliï, 9
- Rtishchev, Nikolai (general), 43
- Rudnytsky, Mykhailo: on Karmansky, 210
- Rus, 7–8; evolution of term, 285n107; in Kostomarov, 154
- Russian Academy of Sciences, 158
- Russian Empire: designation as imperiia, 4
- Russian Herald* (Russkii vestnik), 141, 154
- Russian imperialism, xi, xiv, 221–2, 230; apology for, 102; dark chapter in, 35
- Russian liberalism, 12, 16, 162–8; attacks by Khvylovy and Vynnychenko, 41, 97, 315; criticized by Krymsky, 199–200; Drahomanov's critique, 124

- Russian literature: historical literature, 86–95; on Poland, 30–1, 68–70; Ukrainian school in, 4. *See also* travel literature
- Russian messianism: in postcommunist times, 261. *See also* Khomiakov, holy Russia
- Russian national bolshevism, 213–14. *See also* Agursky, Neuman
- Russian nationalism, 12, 51, 162–8, 214; idea of leading people, 222. *See also* Agursky, Bassin, Neuman, Smenovkhovtsy
- Russian Orthodox Church, 3, 59–61, 106, 108; in Bulgakov, 218; and Khomiakov, 63–5; in P. Kulish, 183; anathematization of Mazepa, 104; on Right Bank, 147–8, 151–2; Shevchenko on hypocrisy, 136; and Slavophiles, 292n126. *See also* Dostoevsky
- Russian Volunteer Army, 211
- Russian-Ukrainian transnational identity, 161
- Rutherford, Andrea, 122
- Ryleev, Kondratii, 13, 95–101, 187; portrayal of Mazepa as national patriot, 298n113
- Rylsky, Maksym, 222
- Rylsky, Tadei: identity change, 32
- Sacke, Georg, 298n103
- Said, Edward, xi, 13; on Conrad, 212; on filiation, 114; on Tocqueville, 103, 300n135
- St Petersburg, 120, 133, 154; observatory opened in 1839, 137; performance of Shakhovskoi's play, 86
- Samarin, Iurii, 50
- Saunders, David, 84
- Savitsky, P., 12
- Sbitnev, Ivan, 70–1; on benefits of empire, 78, 85; on mockery of Russians, 73
- Schelling, 36, 51–2, 289n77
- Scott, Walter, 47
- Segel, Harold, 4
- Sentimentalism, 75–6, 81
- serfdom, 83, 96; abolition of 169, 188
- Shakhovskoi, A., 85–6
- Shamil, 35
- Shamrai, Ahapii: on Kvitka, 126–7
- Sherekh, Iurii (Shevelov): on Domontovych, 243; on Khvylovy, 224–5
- Shevchenko Scientific Society, 158
- Shevchenko, Taras, 27, 63, 90, 108; arrest, 304n193; and Belinsky, 66, 123; in Bunin, 167; in Dobroliubov, 155–6; in Miliukov, 157; poetry, 134–46. *See also* Slavophiles
- Shevelov, Iurii: on Stus, 256
- Shevyrev, Stepan, 37
- Shulgin, Vasili, 28, 162, 165–6
- Sienkiewicz, Henryk, 7, 82
- Siniavsky, Andrei: on Soviet civilization, 213
- Skoropadsky, Ivan (hetman): appointed by Peter I in Mazepa's place, 104
- Skoropadsky, Pavlo (hetman): removed anathema on Mazepa, 104; portrayal in Bulgakov, 215–16
- Skovoroda, Hryhorii, 25; Russian interpretation of, 26
- Slavophiles, 15, 26, 50, 59–60; and Belinsky, 120; and Shevchenko, 65, 136, 154, 292n126
- Smenovkhovtsy, 222–3
- Sollogub, Vladimir, 44
- Solovev, Sergei, 160–1
- Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr: hostility to Ukrainian independence, 250–1
- Somov, Orest, 72–3, 128; historical fiction, 91, 94–5
- Staël, Madame de, 36
- Stalin, Joseph, 217–18; letter on Khvylovy, 226; terror and famine of 1933, 221; toast of 1945, 222
- Star* (Zoria), 187
- Starytsky, Mykhailo, 176
- Stephen of Transylvania, 112
- Storozhenko, Oleksa, 133
- Struve, Petr, 16, 162–3
- Stus, Vasyl, 249–58
- Sumarokov, Pavel, 70–1, 78
- Suvorov, Aleksandr (general), 9
- Sverstiuk, Ievhen, 250
- Svinin, Pavel, 79, 108; and Gogol, 301n149
- Svydnytsky, Anatolii, 146–52
- Swallow* (Lastivka), 124
- Sypovsky, Vasyl, xiii
- Sysyn, Frank, 24
- Syvachenko, M., 149
- Syvokin, Hryhorii: on Kvitka, 126, 134
- Tatishchev, Vasili, 161
- Teplov, Grigorii: instructions to Catherine on treatment of Ukraine, 83, 296n72
- Terdiman, Richard, 185; counterdiscourse, xiii

- Terras, Victor, 120
 textbooks, imperial, 159–61
 Third Rome, 11, 281n25
 Thompson, Ewa: on
 nationalism, 9; taxonomy of nationalisms, 22
 Tiutchev, Fedor: on
 Poland, 69–70
 Tiutiunnyk, Hryhorii, 249
 Tocqueville, Alexis de, 103
 Tolstoi, Aleksei, 222
 Tolstoi, Lev, 36
 travel literature on
 Ukraine: Russian, 67–86; Western, 293n16
 tripartite (*triedinaia*)
 Russian nation, 4, 273
 Troyat, Henri, 49
 Tsitsianov, Pavel (general), 43
 Turgenyev, Ivan, 157
 Turiansky, Osyp, 205
 Tychyna, Pavlo, 205, 238;
 Stus's view of, 252–4
- Ukraine: as borderland, 6;
 as colony, xii; idea of
 national curse in Gogol,
 112–14; nomenclature,
 7; in politics, xv
 Ukrainian Academy of
 Sciences, 231
 Ukrainian Autocephalous
 Orthodox Church,
 218–19
 Ukrainian Galician Army,
 211
Ukrainian Herald (Ukrain-
 skii vestnik), 129
Ukrainian Home (Ukrain-
 ska khata), 197, 233
 Ukrainian liberalism,
 192–3
Ukrainian Life (Ukrains-
 kaia zhizn), 166
 Ukrainian national
 bolshevism, 214
 Ukrainian nationalism,
 21, 194–5; as chal-
 lenge to Soviet patrio-
 tism, 222
- Ukrainian Orthodoxy,
 183; criticized by Stus,
 254; and high culture,
 284n104
 Ukrainian People's
 Republic (UNR), 206,
 223, 231; Bulgakov on,
 219; and Malaniuk, 244
 Ukrainian schools, 27.
See also Paul of Aleppo
Ukrainian Seeding (Ukrain-
 skyi zasiv), 232
Ukrainian Voice (Ukrain-
 skyi holos), 206
 Ukrainka, Lesia (Larysa
 Kosach), 176, 197–205
 Uniate Church (Greek
 Catholics), 112, 181;
 criticized in P. Kulish,
 183; Dolgoruky on
 unpleasant hybridity,
 294n26
 Ustrialov, Nikolai, 213
 Uvarov, Sergei: and Offi-
 cial Nationality, 11;
 project for oriental
 academy, 37, 285n8
- Vadim. *See* Passek
 Valuev memorandum, 23,
 158; definition,
 282n72
 Veliaminov, Aleksei (gen-
 eral), 49
 Velychko, Samuil, 24
 Viazemsky, Petr, 69
Voice of Podillia (Holos
 Podillia), 206
 Volhynia, 61
 Voltaire, 76–7, 142
 Vovchok, Marko (Mariia
 Vilinska): identity
 change, 33
 Vsevolozhsky, I.S., 70–1
 Vynnychenko, Volodymyr,
 97, 176, 206
- Walicki, Andrzej, 60, 65
 Westernizers, 66, 84
 Western Ukrainian Peo-
 ple's Republic (ZUNR),
 xvi, 206, 209
- Wolff, Larry: on Enlight-
 enment views of East-
 ern Europe, 273
 Wölfflin, Heinrich, 239
- Yavorsky, Matvii, 221
 Yefremov, Serhii: attacks
 on modernism, 204
 Yekelchuk, Serhii: view of
 national movements,
 191–2; on Soviet litera-
 ture, 250
 Yermolov, Aleksei (gen-
 eral), 35, 38, 40, 41;
 liberated views, 49;
 Moslem consorts, 41,
 45; on crushing any
 independent state in
 Caucasus, 287n37
- Zabuzhko, Oksana, xiii,
 204, 243; on Franko,
 193–4; on modernism's
 reorientation of Ukrai-
 nian culture, 194;
 Shevchenko, 142;
 rejection of psychoana-
 lytical explanation of
 Shevchenko's anti-
 imperialism, 306n52
 Zahrebelny, Pavlo, 250
 Zaporozhian cossacks:
 history, 3, 24, 89–90;
 identity, 106, 131–2;
 philosophy, 89; Russia's
 attitude to, 5, 85; in
 Russian-Turkish war,
 279n4
 Zass, Grigorii (general),
 49
 Zerov, Mykola: Khylovy's
 affinity with, 224; on
 Kvitka's conservatism,
 130; relations with
 Domontovych, 231, 242
 Zholdak, Bohdan, 267
 Zhukovsky, Vasilii, 69,
 135–6, 139
 Zubov, Valerian (gen-
 eral), 9
 Zviniatskovsky, V.: on
 Gogol, 106–7