



Roman Szporluk

The western dimension of the making of modern Ukraine

In the coming years, analysts of current affairs are certain to examine and debate the "Orange Revolution's" significance for Ukrainian and more broadly post-Communist politics and societies. Guided by their own views of "2004", historians will be rethinking and rewriting the history of Ukraine. In so doing, they will remain faithful to a long-established academic tradition: as everybody knows, "1917" inspired generations of scholars, both in Russia and in the West, to search for — and find — in the history of nineteenth-century Russia the origins of the Bolshevik revolution.

A longer version of this article, "The Making of Modern Ukraine: The Western Dimension", was first published in March 2004.¹ Thus, it does not qualify as an attempt to write Ukrainian history in the light of the Orange Revolution, but it does contribute, as a historical commentary, to the current political debate about Ukraine's future relations with Europe and Russia.

I argue that the revolution of 1848 was a significant event in the history of Ukraine at a time when its history intersected with that of other nations of central and eastern Europe, including the Germans, Italians, Czechs, Hungarians, and Poles, and during that historical juncture when traditional empires were beginning to face the challenges of nationalism. The article then proceeds to situate the Ukrainian story in a broader chronological and spacial frame, since the Ukrainian national idea had first been formulated before 1848, and in the Russian Empire, not Austria. By choosing to become Ukrainian, Austria's Greek Catholic "Ruthenes" chose to be a part of a nation whose main part lived under the tsar and belonged to the Orthodox Church. The making of modern Ukraine thus required overcoming a deep religious divide, a problem familiar in the history of other nations, including Germany.

Whereas Ukraine became connected to German history through the Habsburg monarchy, the decisive moments in the making of modern Ukraine occurred in confrontations with Poland and Russia. In the post-1945 period, after centuries of Ukrainian-Polish conflicts, Poland became a supporter of Ukrainian national aspirations. As for "the Russia connection", the article leaves open the question of Russia's post-1991 policies and intentions toward Ukraine. It suggests that Russia has not yet decided whether it wants to restore its empire or to become a nation-state, whether it sees its future as a European power or as an entity outside Europe.

More than five decades ago, in February 1948, the British historian Lewis Namier delivered a lecture commemorating the centennial of the European revolution of 1848.² His lecture has been published many times since then as

"1848: Seed-plot of History".³

Namier's choice of 1848 as a point of departure was well founded. The year 1848 saw the first European revolutions: France was at the center, and there were also revolutions in Palermo, Naples, Vienna, Berlin, Buda, and Poznan, to name a few. It was also the year of nationalist revolutions in central Europe and the year of publication of *The Communist Manifesto*, which predicted that an international proletarian revolution would abolish capitalism, the state, nations, and nationalism.

A central theme of Namier's lecture was that "every idea put forward by the nationalities of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1848 was realized at some juncture, in one form or another" during the next century. Namier concluded: "1848 remains a seed-plot of history. It crystallized ideas and projected the pattern of things to come; it determined the course of the following century. It planned, and its schemes have been realized: but *non vi si pensa quanto sangue costa*."

Namier believed that the solution of the German Question — that is, "What is Germany?" — was and would remain the central national problem in central and eastern Europe for the next hundred years, that beginning in 1848 and continuing through World War I and World War II, the history of Germany defined the entire region's history. The other cases he reviewed (Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Yugoslav, and Ukrainian) were directly related to the German story. As one of the nationalities of the Habsburg monarchy that put forward their programmes in 1848, Ruthenians or Ukrainians were also a part of Namier's scheme. West Ukraine (Galicia and Bukovina) was the easternmost extension of the European revolutions of 1848–1849, and for modern Ukrainian history 1848 was a turning point.

Namier's "German-centered" schema helps to see better the larger stage on which Ukrainian history was made in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He draws our attention to the fact that at the very core of the Habsburg monarchy there grew and intensified a conflict — a "dialectical contradiction", to use a popular Marxist phrase — between the dynasty and its principles, on the one hand, and German nationalism, the German national question, on the other. The tension and conflict between "Empire" and "Germany" influenced the imperial government's treatment of other nationalities, Ukrainians included. Bringing the German story into a Ukrainian narrative allows us to correct the common view that Ukrainian nation formation was a delayed or retarded process, whereas the German one represented an advanced case. A closer look at Namier's German story makes one wonder whether that distinction can be made.

In order to understand Namier's story about what happened in 1848, it is necessary to go back half a century to the period when the stage for those later developments was set. The late eighteenth century saw two events that defined the course of Ukrainian history for the next 150 years. The first was the abolition of an autonomous Ukrainian entity (the Hetmanate) in the Russian Empire, which occurred at virtually the same time as the beginning of a Ukrainian cultural and literary revival there. The second was the partitions of Poland between 1772 and 1795. In the first partition (1772), Austria took Galicia, of which the western part was Polish-speaking and the eastern part Ukrainian-speaking. Prussia took Poland's Pomerania, and Russia took what is now Belarus. In the 1793 and 1795 partitions, Russia took the Right-Bank Ukraine, Lithuania, and the rest of Belarus, whereas Prussia and Austria divided between themselves the remaining core Polish territory (Warsaw went

to Prussia; Kraków, to Austria). The former Polish territories that now found themselves in Russia formed the stage on which the Ukrainian movement would coexist and compete with both Polish and Russian power.⁴

The seed-plot in brief

Germany played the most important role in Namier's scheme. He wrote that during the revolutions of 1848, four different models of Germany had been proposed, and each of them was realized, at one time or another, between 1848 and 1945. After the Habsburg defeat of 1848–1849 came (1) the Greater Austria of 1850; (2) in 1866, after the Prussian–Austrian war, a Greater Prussia emerged (Germany being partitioned in 1866); this was followed by (3) the Lesser Germany (Klein–Deutschland) of 1870–1871; and, finally, (4) Adolf Hitler's Greater Germany created in 1938–1939 — a Germany that included Austrian and Czech provinces and that was one of the radical ideas of the 1848 revolution (and Karl Marx's preferred German state).

According to Namier, several other nationalities of the Habsburg Empire realized their ideas in the century following 1848. The Hungarians' 1848 programme was achieved in the Compromise of 1867, which transformed the Austrian Empire into Austria–Hungary. That arrangement constituted a defeat for the "non-historic" peoples for whom the Greater Austria of 1850 had promised a better deal. The Italians also had some of their claims satisfied during 1866–1867: Vienna was forced to give up most of its Italian possessions to the new Kingdom of Italy. The Poles also gained: Galicia became autonomous in 1868, and the Polish nobility there became its real master, though under a constitutional regime.

"In 1918–19 came the time for the subject races of the German and Magyar spheres", Namier continues. The Czechs and Slovenes won their independence from the Germans; and the departure of the Croats, Slovaks, Romanians, and Serbs reduced the Greater Hungary of 1867. I add to Namier's account the facts that Hungary's Ukrainians became citizens of Czechoslovakia, and twenty years later, after the Sudetenland crisis in 1938, Prague granted autonomy to Czechoslovakia's "Ruthenian" province, which at the same time began to call itself "Carpatho-Ukraine". The events of 1938 and 1939 (when Hungary annexed that area with Hitler's approval) illustrate the connection between the unfolding of the Namierian German agenda and Ukrainian history.

The post–World War I period was also "the time" for the Poles: they and the Italians fully realized the goals they had set while living under the Habsburgs. In 1918–1921, the Poles were able to assert their power by taking physical control of Ruthenian territory in Galicia and claiming all of Galicia as Polish. The Italians were able to do the same with respect to the Yugoslavs — meaning Slovenes and Croats. (Namier wrote Yugoslavs: in 1948 Yugoslavia's survival seemed secure.)

The last act of the 1848 drama took place in 1939–1945, when "the Ruthenians completed their 1848 agenda with respect to the Poles, and the Yugoslavs completed their agenda in the Italian sphere." In consequence of World War II, the Ruthenians finally disentangled themselves from the Polish bond — a legacy of 1848 and 1918–1919. Namier did not elaborate on the meaning of the term "came the time" as it applied to Ruthenians. Although Polish rule over Ukrainians ended by 1945, national independence did not follow (thus, their 1848 agenda was not realized in 1945).

Namier's story ends in 1948, but here it will continue to 1991, in an expanded geographical framework. For a historian of Ukraine, Namier's lecture serves as a very clear point of departure for a review of Ukraine's European or western connection. Germans were involved in Ukrainian affairs in 1914–1918 and again after 1939; and in 1991, only one year after German unification, Ukraine finally gained its independence.

German nationalism and the Habsburg Empire

In 1797 Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Friedrich Schiller asked the famous question: "Deutschland? Aber wo liegt es? Ich weiß das Land nicht zu finden." Without giving an answer, they explained the source of their difficulty: "Wo das gelehrte beginnt, hört das politische auf."⁵

Fifty years later, in 1848, Germans remained deeply divided about the question of what Germany was. In 1848, the German nationalists' programme was to create a unified Germany as a nation state that would embrace all German kingdoms and principalities. The "Greater Austria" that emerged in 1850 dominated politics in all German lands, but it also included such countries as Hungary, which German nationalists were not ready to accept. Namier's listing of different models of Germany is a useful reminder that the German nation, which some old-style studies classify as a "historic" and thus well-defined nation, was itself undergoing complex processes of making, remaking, and unmaking during its transition to the age of nationalism. The new idea of a single, united German nation state was revolutionary: it called for the destruction of the historic states of Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, and dozens of others, and it challenged the integrity of the hereditary dominions of the house of Habsburg that lay within the Holy Roman Empire.

We can understand why the partitions profoundly influenced Polish, Ukrainian, and German history. They transformed Prussia and Austria and thus helped to "de-Germanize" these two states by adding substantial Polish populations and territories. The Polish question became a problem in Prussia's internal politics, and the inclusion of Polish territories into the Habsburg monarchy moved Vienna's center of attention east into the Slavic world. Thus, post-1815 Austria was less German than it was before 1772. This shift influenced the balance between the Germans and Slavs in favor of the latter.

When Austria took Polish territories (Galicia), it had to deal with a Polish nation that was more advanced in nation building than the Germans. Compared with Polish developments, German nationalism was still largely an intellectual phenomenon, not only in Napoleon's time, but even after 1815 and until 1848. Polish nationalism had inspired wars and uprisings in 1794, 1807, 1809, 1812, and 1830. Even when there was no Poland on the map, no Polish poet — let alone two! — would have answered the question "Where is Poland?" in the way Goethe and Schiller spoke about Germany. The Poles were ahead of the Germans (and the Russians) in nation building at this time — a fact that would also greatly influence Ukrainian nation formation, since the Poles constituted a major part of Ukraine's "Western dimension".

Not only were the Germans divided and confused about what their country was or should be. Other nationalities had problems deciding how to define their countries. Vienna wanted to create a multiethnic "imperial people", in opposition to German and other ethnic nationalities. The Czech historian Jirí Korálka writes that the Czechs faced no less than five concepts of nation by 1848: Austrian, Pan-German, Slavic, Bohemian, and Czech. He notes the

efforts of the Josephinian system "to create an Austrian state nation, whose main support was to come from the enlightened *homo austriacus* (Austrian man) in the Austrian state administration and school system, in the army and in the church, guided by the state". Until approximately 1860, Vienna was still trying to create an Austrian imperial national identity, which was just as anti-Czech or anti-Hungarian or anti-Polish as it was anti-German.⁶

The Ruthenians (or West Ukrainians) in Galicia were also confused about their identity in 1848. Ruthenians had had a long relationship with the Poles. Galicia was the first Ukrainian-inhabited area to find itself under Polish kings and had been under their rule uninterruptedly from the mid-fourteenth century until 1772. Following the 1772 partition, Germany [as "Austria"] entered into the Polish-Ukrainian connection in Galicia as a third force during a period of intellectual and political revolution. Galicia was drawn into the world of German problems, and the imperial government began to participate in the Polish-Ukrainian relationship.

The empire's policy aimed at creating a *homo austriacus* explains why even though Austria's entry into Ukrainian lands made possible the rise of a political community, Ruthenian peasants and Greek Catholics (Uniates) there did not become "Ukrainians". Their first political consciousness was imperial — that is, what Thomas Masaryk, writing in the late nineteenth century, ironically called "Viennism", while describing the Czechs' continuing loyalty to the monarchy. In general, even after subjects of the monarchy had adopted a modern national self-identification (as Czechs, Ukrainians, Slovenes, and so forth), as a rule they retained their loyalty to the Emperor until the monarchy's end.

At the time of the partitions, Austria failed to carry out its centralizing enlightenment-influenced reforms in Hungary and Bohemia, but it was more successful in Galicia. In the long run, the Poles benefited most from those reforms.

Some Polish historians have claimed that Vienna practiced a "Germanization" of Galicia after 1772, but that is not true. The addition of Galicia to the empire fostered the de-Germanization of Austria because it further diverted Vienna's attention from the German scene into the Slavic world. Any Germanization that the Habsburgs practiced was motivated by bureaucratic needs and not a part of German nation building. Vienna did not tell the Ukrainians (or others) that they were really German. And, as noted earlier, German nationalism had come into conflict with the Habsburg Monarchy, which the German revolutionaries wanted to dissolve by 1848. After 1772, Ruthenian Galicia became integrated with the other ex-Polish regions under Vienna. Until the revolution of 1848, the Poles generally believed, as did most politically aware Ruthenians, that Ruthenians were Polish. The dialect spoken by ethnically Polish peasants in western Galicia was different from that spoken by the eastern Galician peasants, but nationhood was considered a matter of politics, not ethnography. Choosing to be Polish meant choosing the Polish heritage as one's own, regardless of one's ethnic or religious background. Thus, as Jerzy Jedlicki writes, heritage was understood metaphorically: "the Polish peasant, the Polonized Jew, Ruthenian or German became the heir of the Polish nobility and of the entire history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth."⁷

A Ukrainian national alternative to Polonism emerged in Galicia under the influence of ideas coming from Ukrainians in the Russian Empire. The 1837 publication in Buda of *Rusalka Dnistrovaia*, a slim collection of folk songs and

poems written in the vernacular, was a landmark in the history of Galician Ruthenians, but as the contents reveal, its authors had been inspired by their East Ukrainian brothers. The young men who put it together were also responding to the national revivals among the Czechs and southern Slavs within the Habsburg monarchy. This was a slow process, however, which we can better understand by remembering how much trouble the more highly educated Germans had with choosing their own political identity.

For Austrian Ukrainians, their national revolution in 1848 was a declaration of secession from the Polish nation; it was a break with "Polonism", not with "Viennism". But even in 1848 they were still torn between different national alternatives. Vasył Podolynsky, in a short Polish-language book printed in 1848, titled *Slowo przestrogi* (A Word of Warning), identified and examined four national orientations current among his Ruthenian compatriots: Ruthenian/Austrian, Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian.⁸ Those who opted for the Ukrainian nationality declared that their homeland extended beyond the Austrian Empire, as far east as the Don River. But even in the Main Ruthenian Council, some defined their nationality more narrowly, as a much smaller "Galician–Ruthenian people". Eventually, however, upon the insistent demands of Yulian Lavrivsky, a member of the council who was not a clergyman, the declaration was revised to state that the Galician Ruthenians were a part of a fifteen-million strong Little Russian (Ukrainian) nation.⁹ One needed a secular view of politics to be able to declare that the Greek Catholics of Galicia belonged to a nation that was overwhelmingly Eastern Orthodox.

Between Russians and Poles: Ukrainians in the Russian Empire

Because his lecture stressed the centrality of the German Question, Namier left out the Russian dimension in the making of the Ukrainian nation, a dimension with its own western connections beyond the frame of "Vienna". The Ukrainian culture that the Galician Ruthenians were adopting from Russia was produced in part during the encounter of East Ukrainian awakers with Polish culture there. Similarly, the Russian–Ukrainian relationship was influenced by Russia's direct relations with western Europe. Thus, Russia was also part of Ukraine's western dimension during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in order to understand the Ruthenian declaration of unity with Ukraine in 1848, we must briefly consider intellectual and political developments involving both Poles and Ukrainians in the framework of Russian history before 1848.

While the Ruthenians of Galicia entered the European stage in 1848 through their experiences in that revolution, their ethnic kinsmen in the Russian Empire had participated in a very different kind of opening to Europe that was launched during the reign of Peter I (1689–1725) and continued under his successors, most notably Catherine II (1762–1796). In her study of nationalism, Liah Greenfeld argues that Russian nation formation was a direct consequence of Russia's opening to the West, and she offers a theoretical–comparative perspective in which to interpret it. She asserts that in order for nationalist ideas to spread (a prerequisite for nation–building projects), "a supra–societal system", or shared social space, has to exist.¹⁰ Considering that from the eighteenth century on Russia's rulers were trying to define their state in a European context, Greenfeld's concept of "shared social space" (better perhaps to say "shared cultural or mental space") supports Russia's inclusion in Europe. When imperial Russia first opened itself to the West, then, it was reasonable to expect that "Little Russia" would become integrated in the new St. Petersburg–centred and Europe–oriented Russian

state and society then emerging. In Marc Raeff's words: "All seemed to conspire to bring about the integration of the Ukrainian elite and its culture into that of the empire, leading, in fact, to russification, since Russian political culture had achieved dominance and monopoly in the empire."¹¹ Indeed, because of Ukraine's more developed educational network then, during Catherine II's reign natives of Ukraine were prominent in various governmental, educational, and other institutions in St. Petersburg and Moscow. They were among the most enthusiastic builders of an imperial Russian national identity — as a way to become European.

There were limits to Russia's Westernization or Europeanization, however. Russia's state-sponsored "opening" to Europe was closely controlled and very selective. It did not provide for the adoption of modern political ideas and institutions of the West, such as representative government, an independent judiciary, or freedom of the press. The tsarist state's refusal to evolve in the western direction became especially evident during the final phase of Catherine II's reign and under her two immediate successors, emperors Paul (1796–1801) and Alexander I (1801–1825). All doubts on this score were removed during the reign of Nicholas I (1825–1855) with its declaration of Orthodoxy, autocracy, and *narodnost'* as the fundamental principles of Russian statehood. Tsarist ideology and policies worked against the formation of a "European", modern Russian nation.

Thus, while Russia's "Europeanization" fostered the acculturation and assimilation of "Little Russia" into a common imperial culture and polity, the processes that were making Russians European — while turning "Little Russians" into European Russians — also created conditions in which the modern idea of a distinct Ukrainian nation could emerge. The selective opening toward Europe reflected in the empire's anti-liberal course was especially unwelcome in that area from which so many enthusiasts of Russia's Europeanization had come two or three generations earlier, that is, "Little Russia", or Left-Bank Ukraine. Its upper class was similar in some respects to the Polish elite and thought of itself as the carrier of Little Russia's traditions and liberties, a heritage of Ukraine's Commonwealth past that Ukraine did not share with Great Russia or "Muscovy". Thus, even after Little Russia submitted to the tsars, it retained a system based on a rule of law, and many of its offices were at least formally elective until Catherine put an end to this tradition by extending the Russian administrative system to the area. It was individuals belonging to that Ukrainian elite who in contact with European ideas, reaching them also through other channels besides St. Petersburg, produced the idea that Ukraine was a nation. Gradually they managed to draw their own road map to Europe — and even persuade the Ruthenians in Galicia to join them. As John LeDonne has written, "while the autonomy of Little Russia was indeed being curtailed [...] a larger Ukraine was coming into being."¹² The idea of a larger Ukraine was no less revolutionary than the idea of a greater Germany.

Thoughts about a Ukraine larger than the just dissolved historic "Little Russia" found support in the geopolitical changes taking place in eastern Europe. By placing, after the partitions of 1793 and 1795, Left-Bank and Right-Bank Ukraine together under one government, the tsarist state helped — unintentionally, of course — the Ukrainian national cause. The Poles were more than simply one of "the nationalities" in the multinational Russian Empire. In addition to the Kingdom of Poland (created in 1815 out of parts annexed by Prussia and Austria in 1795), a Polish-dominated social and cultural space extended far to the east, up to the 1772 border of the

Commonwealth. In the case of Kyiv, Polish influence moved even beyond the old border. Kyiv, until then a border town, became a place where the Left- and the Right-Bank elites could meet. Ukrainians from the old Hetmanate found themselves again face to face with the Poles, the tsar's new subjects. The emergent Ukrainian intelligentsia, owing to contacts with Polish cultural and political activists, discovered that the Poles knew a shorter road to Europe, in particular to its liberal and democratic ideas and institutions.

On the other hand, imperial annexation of so much Polish territory did not help Russia's "Europeanization". Vera Tolz has noted that the incorporation of Polish lands turned Poland into "Russia's internal ŒWest", but that area became the stage of the Russian-Polish struggle, making Russia's own problems more difficult and bringing differences between Russia and Europe out into the open.¹³ Polish writers and scholars working in places like Warsaw and Vilnius were passing on the new ideas of nationality, increasingly popular in Habsburg lands, to the Ukrainian, Lithuanian, and Belarusan intelligentsia in lands contested by the Poles and the Russians.

The emerging Ukrainian intelligentsia rejected Polish claims to Ukrainian lands, which the Poles wanted to make part of a restored Poland one day, and it similarly refuted the Russia's claims to those lands. The elite was receptive to Polish — that is, western or "European" — ideas, however. That was most notably the case in Kyiv, where in the 1840s the first significant Ukrainian intellectual and political circle, the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood, embraced political ideas circulating among the Poles. The Brotherhood held that the Ukrainians, an equal of Russians and Poles, were a member of the Slavic community of nations that also included the West and South Slavs beyond Russia's borders. Yet there were limits to how far the early Ukrainian activists could open up to the Poles. Under both the Russian and Habsburg empires, Polish landlords continued to dominate the masses of Ukrainian peasantry. When the Ukrainian-Polish national conflict emerged, it had a strong social component (peasants against landlords).

Official Russia viewed "Little Russians" as a branch of a greater Russian nation that also included Great Russians and Belarusians. It was not until the 1860s, under the impact of the Polish 1863 insurrection, that the Ukrainian movement (*ukrainofil'stvo*) was recognized as an attempt to break the unity of Russia. However, some Russian enemies of tsarism had recognized much earlier that *ukrainofil'stvo*, even disguised as an interest in local history, folklore, and literature, carried a political message of "cosmopolitan" or "European liberalism".¹⁴ If they were right, then the Ukrainian "project" was a Ukrainian "road map" to Europe, drawn in an encounter with the Poles and constituting an alternative to official Russia's position on Europe.

Gradually, the "European" theme became dominant in Ukrainian discourses on the nature of Ukraine's distinctiveness from Russia. The thesis that the Ukrainians' historical ties to Europe distinguished them from the Russians became an article of faith in Ukrainian national ideology. According to Mykola Kostomarov, "the basic differences between Ukrainians and Russians rested more on socio-political factors than on ethnicity, language or religion." Later, the leading spokesman of Ukrainian populism, Mykhailo Drahomanov, stressed that "the preponderance of national differences between Ukraine and Muscovy can be explained by the fact that until the eighteenth century Ukraine was more closely bound to western Europe", and the twentieth-century conservative ideologue Viacheslav Lypynsky saw "the basic difference between Ukraine and Muscovy" not in language but in a different relationship

between the state and society.¹⁵

The end of the Vienna connection

Paradoxical as this may appear, in 1914 the "stateless" Ruthenians of Galicia were a nation in a sense in which the Russians in "their own" empire were not. A Ukrainian subject of the Austrian monarchy enjoyed more personal and political freedom than a Ukrainian or Russian did in Russia. The Ukrainian national idea and the political ideas of the Ukrainophiles were compatible with the legal and political system and values of Europe as exemplified by Austria: what the Ukrainians wanted was even more of Europe — further democratic reforms, greater national rights, especially including autonomy for the Ukrainian part of Galicia. They certainly did not want autocracy to be introduced.

Students are amused to learn that among the many titles of the Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary was that of King of Galicia and Lodomeria, which meant that he considered himself the successor of the medieval Rus' princes of Halych and Volodymyr. But the Habsburg monarchy introduced many modern practices. In 1848, when serfdom was abolished in the monarchy, Austria's Ukrainian serfs were also freed, and Ukrainians, including the freed peasants, voted in 1848 to elect the monarchy's constituent assembly, the Reichstag; some of those elected as deputies were former serfs. Ukrainians voted together with Poles, Romanians, Czechs, Slovenes, Germans, and Italians, for all of whom this was a first experience. However critical one may be of the actual conditions under which they lived after 1848, until the end of the monarchy, the Ukrainians of Galicia and Bukovina knew the rule of law (the monarchy was a Rechtsstaat); were free to develop their own associations of all kinds, including political parties; participated in politics at local, provincial, and state-wide levels; and had their language recognized by the state in education, administration, and the courts of justice. In short, for Austria's Ukrainians, "Europe" did not mean only noble but abstract ideals but was, however imperfect in practice, something they experienced in their daily lives.

That does not mean that the Ruthenians of Galicia and Bukovina were somehow better Europeans or better Ukrainians than their cousins under Russia. Their Ukrainian national identity, and thus their self-definition as a European nation, was formed in their interactions with Poltava, Kharkiv, and Kyiv. Choosing the Ukrainian identity, the Galician Ruthenians accepted as their own the conception of Ukrainian history formulated by "Easterners". Mykhailo Hrushevsky, a Kyiv University graduate, wrote his great synthesis when he was a professor at the University of Lviv in 1894–1914.¹⁶ The Galician Ukrainians accepted "the Cossack myth" as a constituent element of their identity, and thus "agreed to forget" past Cossack–Uniate hostilities. Thus, they confirmed Ernest Renan's famous statement that "the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things." (Renan explained that "every French citizen has to have forgotten the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, or the massacres that took place in the Midi in the thirteenth century.")¹⁷

Ukrainian activists in the tsarist state recognized their contribution and also treated the achievements of their Austrian compatriots as their own. They explained the differences between the two Ukraines by the fact that one of them was part of a European state. Looking at pre-1914 Galicia, they expected that Russian Ukraine could do just as well if given an opportunity. Such an

opportunity came after the fall of tsarism, between March and November 1917, when the forces of Russian democracy and of Ukrainian autonomy worked to reach a modus vivendi satisfying both sides. But as Thomas Masaryk put it in 1918, the Russian revolutionaries and the Russian masses "have rid themselves of the Tsar, but they have not yet ridden themselves of tsarism."¹⁸ A democratic Russia did not survive. Petr Struve, writing many years later, described the revolution of 1917 as "the political suicide of a political nation" and called it "the most destructive event in world history".¹⁹

In the civil war both the "Reds" and the "Whites" fought against the Ukrainians. The Poles defeated the West Ukrainians in 1919 and ruled the Ukrainian part of Galicia until 1939. The Polish–West Ukrainian war might have ended differently if the East Ukrainians had not had to fight both the Red and White Russians. Or had the West Ukrainians been able to help instead of fighting the Poles on the western front, East Ukraine might have defeated its Red and White enemies.

The last act of "1848": 1945–1991

Namier was right to think that 1945 inaugurated a new era in European history. A process of European unification began with the Community of Coal and Steel, the Common Market, NATO, and, most recently, the European Union. To the east, there was the Soviet Bloc, or "Socialist Commonwealth". Nevertheless, after the defeat of the "Greater German Reich", in addition to the Ukrainian question, other "questions" inherited from 1848 remained, and of these the most important was the German one. As we shall see, Ukrainian history remained linked to German history until 1990.

It took almost fifty years from the end of World War II for the new version of the "German Question" to be solved to everybody's satisfaction. The solution was directly connected to political change within the USSR and the Soviet Bloc. In 1990, "What is Germany?" received an answer no one had anticipated in 1848; but at last everyone seemed happy, especially Poland and Czechoslovakia, when prior to German reunification the Federal Republic recognized the 1945 borders, thus renouncing any "revanchist" claims. It then became easier for the Poles (and others) to press for democracy at home and for independence from the USSR. But the end of the German threat did not guarantee the survival of all states we might with some justification call successors of the Habsburg monarchy. German unification was soon followed by the breakup of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, and in both cases it is possible to see echoes of 1848.

Ukraine's independence followed the unification of Germany in less than one year. The "intersection" between the histories of Ukraine and Germany during the late 1980s–early 1990s proved to be very helpful to the Ukrainians. Gorbachev's German policy undermined his political base at home, emboldened nationalists throughout the USSR, and in turn helped to end the Soviet Union's control over eastern Europe. The Soviet Union fell apart shortly after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, and the Russian Federation found itself within the "approximate frontiers of Peter the Great's Russia".²⁰

In 1991, the former "Ruthenians" of Habsburg Galicia were able to freely express their wish to live together with their compatriots in the East in an independent state called Ukraine. In March of that year, in a popular referendum on the future of the Soviet Union, which Mikhail Gorbachev organized in order to save the USSR as a single state, the three ex–Galician

regions overwhelmingly voted for Ukraine's independence. (In March, the option to vote for independence was not available elsewhere in Ukraine.) The Galicians reaffirmed their choice in the Ukraine-wide referendum of 1 December 1991, in which all of Ukraine voted for independence.

After 1991, some western (and Russian) analysts and scholars were predicting that Ukraine would break up the way of Yugoslavia. They pointed out several possible fault lines: one was along the old boundary between Austria-Hungary and Russia; another, following the divide between the mainly Catholic West and the Eastern Orthodox East (as part of a "clash of civilizations"); and, third, a break into Ukrainian- and Russian-speaking regions, with Crimea seceding first, followed by Donbas and Odesa. None of these scenarios materialized.

The Ukraine that became independent in 1991 was hardly a well-integrated country. It included, besides Galicia, two other territories that the Soviet Union had annexed after World War II: the so-called "Trans-Carpathian Ukraine" (taken from Czechoslovakia) and the northern portion of the old Austrian province of Bukovina (from Romania). Their populations had lived under the Habsburgs and then, during the twenty years between the wars, under their successors, who, despite their many shortcomings, differed markedly from Stalin's Soviet Union. Thus, the making of Ukrainians into one nation, a Romantic idea in 1848, would have been a complex, painful, and challenging process under the best of circumstances. Even so, during the final years of the USSR, the older Soviet Ukrainians were able to work with their compatriots in the newly attached western areas to produce a unified national movement. There was a remarkable unity of action between Lviv and Kyiv in 1989-1991, which proved crucial to the success of the independence movement.

During the crisis of the Soviet system, Poland's support helped to produce a unified Ukrainian politics. The Ukrainian-Polish conflict in the twentieth century was mainly a conflict between West Ukrainians and Poles. Starting in the 1950s, some Poles began to change their position on Ukraine: they accepted the loss of territory once considered part of Poland and decided to help the Ukrainians as part of their own effort to free themselves from Soviet hegemony. By the 1980s, this policy had become the guiding principle of political elites in Poland.²¹ In dealing with Russia, Ukraine did not face a threat at its "western front". There was "Im Westen viel Neues".

2004: An epilogue -- and a prologue?

When it won independence in 1991, Ukraine was not a democratic state, but it escaped the fate of Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia and remained one country. Only in 2004, some fifteen years after the central European revolutions of 1989-1990, did the Ukrainians, in their Orange Revolution, make an attempt to "catch up" with their former fellow Habsburg nations. The new generation was especially aware that Ukraine's revolution had not been completed. As a young man at Independence Square told a foreign correspondent: "In 1991 we became independent, now we want to be free."

The fundamental issue in the Orange Revolution was a stand against corruption and for human dignity and human rights. The most popular slogan -- "We are many -- we cannot be defeated" (*Razom nas bahato, nas ne podolaty*) -- recalls slogans of East German demonstrators in 1989-1990: "Wir sind *das* Volk" and "Wir sind *ein* Volk" as well as Solidarity's call in 1980: *Nic o nas bez nas* -- "nothing that concerns us -- without us". 2004 was also remarkable for the help their European neighbors gave Ukraine. In

Kyiv hundreds of thousands cheered "Poland, Poland" when Lech Walesa addressed them, and there were declarations of support and solidarity from Prague and other capitals.

However, by 2004 it was also clear that the breakup of the USSR had not conclusively solved "the Russian Question", in particular in the area of Ukrainian–Russian relations. In 1991, the Russian Federation had played a crucial role in the peaceful dissolution of the USSR and in Ukraine's gain of independence, and it seemed then that its leaders and its people had abandoned the goal of imperial restoration and an authoritarian form of government, in short — had agreed to become a "normal" nation, similar to other "post-imperial" nations.

Today, the picture is much less clear. President Vladimir Putin's open interference in the Ukrainian election process shows that Russia prefers not to view Ukraine as a truly independent country. Lilia Shevtsova recently noted the survival of "nostalgia for the imperialist [ie imperial] past" among Russia's political elites, and their hope, shared by Putin, that Russia will be able "to join the West on their own terms — that is, while preserving at least some elements of the Russian System".²²

Whatever choices Russia makes, they will reflect the European and Eurasian dimensions of its history, as one would expect of a country extending from the Baltic to the Pacific, and will directly influence Ukraine's domestic and foreign affairs — despite its choice for Europe in the election of 2004.

¹ *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, vol. XXV, no. 1/2, 57–90. This issue bears the date of 2001 but was actually published in March 2004. For the original version, with more bibliographical references, see: http://www.huri.harvard.edu/pdf/Szporluk_MakingModUkr.pdf.

² The distinguished British historian Sir Lewis Namier (1888–1960) was born Ludwik Bernsztajn (Bernstein) in Russian-ruled Poland. Later the family bought an estate in eastern Galicia and changed its name to Niemirowski. His father was a fervent Polish nationalist, but young Ludwik, who spent his childhood among Ukrainian village children, would later take the side of Ukrainians during the Polish–Ukrainian conflict in 1918–1919. See Mark Baker, "Lewis Namier and the Problem of Eastern Galicia", *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 23.2 (Winter 1998): 59–63, and Julia Namier, *Lewis Namier: A Biography*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1971, 31.

³ Lewis Namier, "1848: Seed–plot of History", in *Vanished Supremacies: Essays on European History, 1812–1918*, New York and Evanston: Harper Torchbooks 1963, 21–30.

⁴ John A. Armstrong, "The Autonomy of Ethnic Identity", in Alexander J. Motyl, ed., *Thinking Theoretically about Soviet Nationalities*, New York: Columbia University Press 1992, 29, argues that nationalism, which he defines "the contention that the organizing principle of government should be the unification of all members of a nation in a single state", became "salient" in 1775–1815, "the single decisive watershed in the historical development of ethnicity and nationalism".

⁵ For reference to this Goethe–Schiller "epigram", see James J. Sheehan, "What is German History? Reflections on the Role of the Nation in German History and Historiography", *Journal of Modern History* 53.1 (March 1981): 1. Klaus von Beyme, "Shifting National Identities: The Case of German History", *National Identities* 1.1 (March 1999): 39–52, also includes the post–1945 period in his discussion. David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780–1918*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998), xvi, observed that "unification meant that there was now a Germany on the map as well as a Germany in the head", but he also remarked, "What we call the unification of Germany was actually a partition." (Ibid.) This explains why the post–1871 Germany on the map did not correspond to the Germany in everybody's head, as demonstrated by the rise of the Third Reich.

⁶ Jiri Koralka, *Cesi v habsburske risi a v Evrope 1815–1914. Socialnihistoricke souvislosti vytvareni novodobeho naroda a narodnostni otazky v ceskych zemich*, Prague: Argo 1996, 19–20.

- ⁷ Jerzy Jedlicki, "Heritage and Collective Responsibility", in Ian Maclean, Alan Montefiore, and Peter Winch, eds., *The Political Responsibility of Intellectuals*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1990, 53–76.
- ⁸ Vasyl Podolynsky (1815–1876) considered himself a Pole before 1848, and belonged to a Polish secret society. In 1848, he opted for Ukrainian nationality and wanted Ukrainians to be a member nation of the Slavic federation.
- ⁹ Martha Bohachevsky–Chomiak, *The Spring of a Nation: The Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia in 1848*, Philadelphia: Shevchenko Scientific Society 1967, 29–30, and Yaroslav Hrytsak, *Narys istorii Ukraïny. Formuvannia modernoi Ukraïns'koi natsii XIX–XX stolittia*, Kyiv: Heneza 1996, 52.
- ¹⁰ Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1993, 495.
- ¹¹ Marc Raeff, "Ukraine and Imperial Russia: Intellectual and Political Encounters from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century", in Peter Potichnyj et al., eds., *Ukraine and Russia in Their Historical Encounter*, Edmonton: CIUS 1992, 78.
- ¹² John P. LeDonne, *Ruling Russia: Politics and Administration in the Age of Absolutism, 1762–1796* Princeton: Princeton University Press 1984, 305.
- ¹³ Vera Tolz, *Russia*, London: Arnold; New York: Oxford University Press 2001, 88–89. In making her argument, Tolz includes the opinions of nineteenth-century Russian commentators.
- ¹⁴ Nikolai Ulianov, *Proiskhozhdenie ukrainskogo separatizma*, New York: n.p. 1966, 156.
- ¹⁵ Jaroslaw Pelenski, "The Ukrainian–Russian Debate over the Legacy of Kievan Rus', 1840s–1860s", in *The Contest for the Legacy of Kievan Rus'*, Boulder: East European Monographs 1998, 222–223.
- ¹⁶ Serhii M. Plokyh, "Historical Debates and Territorial Claims: Cossack Mythology in the Russian–Ukrainian Border Dispute", in S. Frederick Starr, ed., *The Legacy of History in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, Armonk: M. E. Sharpe 1994, 150–151.
- ¹⁷ Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?" in Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration*, London: Routledge 1990, 11.
- ¹⁸ Thomas G. Masaryk, *The New Europe: The Slav Standpoint*, W. Preston–Warren and William B. Weist, eds. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press 1972, 123.
- ¹⁹ Petr Struve, quoted in Richard Pipes, *Struve: Liberal on the Right, 1905–1944*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1980, 301. Italics in the original.
- ²⁰ Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1997, 369. Elsewhere Zelikow and Rice write that the Soviets were opposed to German reunification, believing that it "would rip the heart out of the Soviet security system" and undo all the gains of World War II (125–126). (The Soviets were right.)
- ²¹ Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999*, New Haven: Yale University Press 2003, offers a broad synthesis of the Polish "dimension" of Ukrainian and East European history extending to the beginning of the post–Communist era.
- ²² Lilia Shevtsova, *Putin's Russia*, translated by Antonina W. Bouis, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 2003, 265–266.

Published 2005–07–22

Original in English

Contribution by Transit

First published in *Transit* 29 (2005) (German version)

© Roman Szporluk/Transit

© Eurozine