

Ukrainian Historical Writing in North America during the Cold War: Striving for “Normalcy”

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In this essay I am trying to identify the main intellectual trends in Ukrainian historical studies in North America in the second half of the 20th century.¹ Attention is focused mainly on the paradigm shift that occurred in the process of the academic “legitimization” or integration of Ukrainian historical studies in exile into the academic environment of US and Canada.² I touch upon issues of the institutional and conceptual innovations in Ukrainian historical studies in an attempt to identify their supposed impact on the respective academic disciplines in American and Canadian universities, such as East European, Russian and Soviet studies. Generally, this article is not only about the “exile historiography,” but rather also about the process of transcending this type of historical writing.³

The concept of “exile historiography” applies mainly to historians who have emigrated.⁴ It is used in this article as an equivalent to the category of the “émigré historiography.” Some scholars differentiate between the categories “émigré historiography” (as being written by the émigrés, who consider their residency abroad to be temporary) and “diaspora historiography” that has been institutionalized in the framework of an ethnic community in its corresponding country.⁵ For the purpose of this article, such a difference, if it exists, is not relevant. Both of the categories mentioned above represent a certain type of history-writing directly connected to the identity of certain, in this case ethnic Ukrainian, diaspora. It is aimed, on the one hand, at rethinking of a national history in the light of traumatic experience and on the other hand, at fulfilling the functions of preserving and protecting the collective identity of the diaspora along with its historical heritage.⁶

1 I would like to express my gratitude to Frank Sysyn and Zenon Kohut who provided me with their insightful comments and suggestions on the some important issues, facts and events. Of course, I am taking responsibility for all errors and shortcomings of the article.

2 Atamanenko, 2010; Kasianov and Ther, 2009; Stryjek, 2007; Kuzio, 2000; Ias, 2000; Subtelny, 1993; Ilnytzyk, 1992; Saunders, 1988; Saunders, 1991; Mackiw, 1984 and others.

3 The article is based on the relevant scholarly texts issued separately as well as in academic journals that indicated how Ukrainian studies were faring in North America—namely, the *Slavic Review*, *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, *Nationalities Papers*, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, and some others.

4 Stobiecki, 2005; Burrell, Panayi, 2006; Ballinger, 2003.

5 Atamanenko, 2010, 15–16; Wynar, 1988; Wynar, 1992.

6 Kostantaras, 2008, 700–720.

The 'protective' kind of the exile historical writing, connected with the Ukrainian community, was based on the idea of a primordial "thousand-year-old" Ukrainian nation, which struggled heroically against predator neighbours for its own independent statehood and unique identity, but constantly fell victim to their unprovoked aggressiveness. According to such a scheme, all the long-time historical intervals between the different "Ukrainian" states, from Kiev (Kyiv in Ukrainian) Rus' to the Ukrainian National Republic of 1917–1920, were filled with the process of recurrent "national renaissance". This kind of Ukrainian national historical narrative, consisted of intermittent periods of Ukrainian statehood and national renaissances, has acquired teleological character and was coloured with distinct semi-religious overtones.

In the post-war North America, the exile type of Ukrainian historiography was directly connected to the quality of the third wave of immigration.⁷ Between 1945 and 1955, about 250,000 émigrés from Ukraine and various parts of eastern and central parts of Europe arrived in North and South America, Australia, and some other Western countries.⁸ To the cultural heritage of the descendants of the first two waves of immigrants, who were already integrated into the local communities, these arrivals contributed their new experience of modern integral nationalism and National-Communism, as well as the authoritarian and totalitarian regimes of the first half of the 20th century. According to the Cohen's diaspora typology ('victim', 'imperial', 'labour', 'trade'), the Ukrainian American diaspora, in spite of its regional, social, religious, and political diversity, meets the characteristics of a victim diaspora.⁹

The third wave of Ukrainian immigrants is considered to be the most intellectual, politically matured, and diverse one, compared with the two previous waves of labour (peasant) immigrants from the western regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire before the World War I and its successor states, first of all from Poland in the inter-war period. No wonder they actively supported publishing, educating, and research projects related to the history of Ukraine. However, as Satzewich put it, "Fundraising by ethnic communities for academic chairs, institutes and programs can be a mixed blessing."¹⁰ The controversies between the "exile" and the "normal" or "academic" types of historical writings grew even more acute in the process of integration of Ukrainian historians into the professional, American University milieu.

7 Merfi, 2007; Satzewich, 2002; Stril'tchuk, 1999; Dyczok, 1995; Pawliczko, 1994.

8 Satzewich, 2002, 86.

9 Satzewich, 2002, 85; Holmes, 2007, 133–154.

10 Satzewich, 2002, 127.

The Ukrainian émigré historians' professional cohort was composed of two groups: interwar émigrés from the Central-Eastern European countries, Poland included, and those from the Russian/Soviet Empire. Some of the newcomers had acquired university diploma in Austria, Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia; others were educated in the American universities and made their reputation in the different field of humanities. All of them were certain that Ukrainian history became a legitimized field of academic specialization. The fully fledged network of Ukrainian historical knowledge production included specialized research and teaching institutions, chairs, archives, libraries, NGOs, publishing houses and periodic developed in Europe and Russia/USSR.¹¹ The Ukrainian émigrés strove to ensure the continuity with the previous epoch, to preserve historical intellectual heritage and, at the same time, to combine their scholarly activity with the “protective” function of maintaining collective identity in the Diaspora. This applies particularly to the Shevchenko Scientific Society (NTSh) and the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences (UVAN) and their publications, imported from Europe.¹²

The *Ukrainian Quarterly* journal, founded in the US in 1944, for a long time remained the only English-language periodical fully dedicated to Ukrainian issues. It was soon followed by the major Ukrainian academic journal of the 1950s, *The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences*, which played a prominent role in shaping the next generation of Ukrainian diaspora scholars. These and some other related Ukrainian institutions in the North America kept strong connections with the internationally established network of Ukrainian scholarly studies in the Western Europe, particularly in the Western Germany (Munich), Italy, France, and Great Britain.

A dialogue commenced between Ukrainian “exile historiography” and academic historical disciplines in the US and Canada after the WWII, appeared to be difficult.¹³ Ukrainians represented a nation without state or with a “façade” (Soviet) state. For that reason Ukrainians were considered a stateless and, therefore, “non-historical” nation hidden in the shadow of the Russian/Soviet or Polish history.¹⁴ Any knowledge about Ukraine in America was sparse: the fundamental texts of Ukrainian national historiography, beginning with Hrushevsky's *Istoriia*, were hardly known for most American scholars.¹⁵ No

11 Narizhnyi, 1942.

12 Dombrovsky, 1965, 7–8; Dombrovsky, 2000.

13 Prymak, 2009, 53–76; Prymak, 2003, 455–476; Buyniak, 2000, 230–244 (in Ukrainian); Prymak, 1988, 52–66; Prymak, 2003a, 272–285.

14 See Rudnytsky, 1980, 234.

15 Sysyn, 2013, ix-xii; Sysyn, 2005, 513–529.

wonder Western faculty were able—in the best case—only to profess wonder, as did Arnold Toynbee, at “a nation of thirty millions, and we have never heard its name!,” and—in the worst case—to consider its existence as a “propagandistic invention.”¹⁶

The main task of Ukrainian émigré historians was to prove the Ukrainian studies’ academic credentials in the American academy, dominated by the Anglo-Saxons who represented the most powerful states-winners in World War II. To be able to fulfil their task, Ukrainian émigré should endeavour to influence the American university professional milieu. The leading émigré historians—Olexander Ohloblyn, Mykola Chubatyi, Mykola Andrusiak and some others attempted to break through the isolationist tradition of the American Academia, to make it more open and flexible both on the institutional and conceptual levels.

The national paradigm of Ukrainian historiography before the World War II was represented in the three main academic versions: populist (*narodnytc’ka*), statist (*derzhavnyts’ka*), and Marxist (Soviet and non-Soviet) ones. The last one appeared to be the weakest one: after its main adept, Matvii Yavorsky, who represented the national-Communist political doctrine of the 1920s in the Soviet Union, was repressed by the Stalin regime, the trend gradually degenerated into the local branch of the Russian-Soviet official historiography.

The populist school of historical writing, was manifested most fully in the oeuvre of Mykhailo Hrushevsky, including particularly his multi-volume *Istoriia Ukraïny-Rusy* (History of Rus’-Ukraine), which emphasized ethnic-cultural and social values of Ukrainian peasants and low classes (*narod*).¹⁷ The statist school, attributed to the historian-sociologist of Polish origin, Vyacheslav Lypynsky, was based upon the bitter experience of the short-lived Ukrainian independent state of 1918-20s; it stressed the need to develop a territorial and multi-ethnic approach to Ukrainian history, as well as to rehabilitate the creative role of the social elites in the history.¹⁸ The political-ideological split between the populist and the statist schools of Ukrainian historical writing appeared to be deep enough to persist throughout the short twentieth century well into the post-Soviet epoch.¹⁹

National issue remained the main topic in Ukrainian studies in North America. After the World War II, Ukrainians were presented as a captive or submerged nation, similar to other peoples in the “socialist camp,” who desired

16 Toynbee, 1976, 157; Manning, 1947.

17 Plokyh, 2005.

18 Tereshchenko, 2010–2013.

19 Hyrych, 2000; Hyrych 1999; Masnenko 2000.

the resurrection of their sovereign state and a return to the “family of Europe.” Topics such as the Communist terror and heroic opposition to it in modern times predominated. The Soviet Union appeared as a direct successor of the Russian Empire, whose expansionist policy was, and continued to be, a constant threat to democratic countries. Correspondingly, the Russian Empire was depicted as the “prison of nations” and an aggressive Asiatic despotism—the political spawn of the Golden Horde and a spiritual heir to the Byzantine Empire claiming the exalted status of the “Third Rome.”²⁰

In terms of methodology, Ukrainian exile historiography was mostly associated with the conservative “totalitarianist” school in American historical writings and political sciences represented by such prominent figures as Zbigniew Brzezinski, Richard Pipes and Adam Ulam (all were refugees, natives of Poland) whose works could hardly be considered marginal in American academia.²¹ These scholars were wholly negative in their attitudes towards the Soviet Union. They believed it was a direct heir to the Russian Empire and emphasized the specificity of Russian historical evolution compared to that in the West. The “totalitarianists” attempted to address the heterogeneous character of both states, as well as the separate historical paths taken by the nations incorporated therein—in particular, the Ukrainians. Ukrainian studies contributed to further development of the “totalitarianist” school by providing new materials on the Soviet Communist crimes, especially those connected to the Stalinism.

Individual scholars among American faculty did their part to bring Ukraine to the attention of the world, especially during and immediately after the WWII, when Ukraine appeared in the center of the epic clash between Nazi Germany and Communist USSR; Ukrainian guerrilla-war on the Soviet-Polish borderland which lasted long after the end of the WWII and Ukrainian membership in the newly created OUN also contributed to the growing interest in the history of the “most numerous people in Europe without a sovereign state”, as William H. Chamberlin put it.²²

American Clarence Manning published concise overviews of Ukrainian history and current affairs.²³ Canadian G.W. Simpson popularised the life and works of the leading Ukrainian historians, Doroshenko and Hrushevsky²⁴ and

20 Hunchak, 1974; Pelenski, 1974; *Slavic Review*, vol. 26, no.4 (1967) (articles on the Moscow policy); Polons'ka-Vasylenko, 1951; Ševčenko, 1954, 141–180. See also Toumanoff, 1955, 445–448; Agurski, 1987.

21 Semenov, 2004, 614.

22 Chamberlin, 1944, 1.

23 Manning, 1957; Manning, 1949; Manning, 1947.

24 Simpson, 1939; Simpson, 1944, 34–57.

Philip Mosely, a co-founder of the Russian Institute at Columbia University, provided constant assistance to Ukrainian scholars and émigré publications. It was exactly this generation of scholars who strongly believed that “The Ukrainian national problem is closely linked with the triumph of democracy and individual liberty in the Soviet Union as a whole” and that “A free Ukraine... is an indispensable element in a free Europe and in a free world.”²⁵

However, for the majority of American scholars, Ukrainian studies were a-priori regarded as biased in an extremely nationalistic manner. As Arthur E. Adams, one of the most devoted critics of Ukrainian nationalistic “biases,” put it sarcastically in his review of one of the issues of Ukrainian exile historian, “this is nationalist history written by émigré Ukrainian patriots who see the Soviet Union as the enemy and who consider Western scholars of Slavic history to have been so brainwashed and bemused by Russian and Soviet historical writing that they need awakening to the truth about the Ukraine.”²⁶ In other words, Ukrainian professional historians sometimes were depicted as being unable to meet academic standards.

No wonder analytical surveys of Ukrainian studies in North America, compiled by Ukrainian scholars, are often full of complaints against the Western academic establishment—primarily for ignoring, misunderstanding, and overtly deriding the subject.²⁷ The Ukrainian intellectuals indeed considered American academia to be deeply influenced by Russian national and Soviet historiographies, along with their stereotypes, phobias and prejudices toward Ukraine.²⁸ In most cases, the Ukrainian scholars’ complaints were affirmed, at least in part, by the observations of contemporary non-Ukrainian writers.²⁹ The changes in the relevant fields of the American Humanities and social sciences began during the sixties, when American Slavic studies were reaching the heyday of its modern history.

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As Henry R. Cooper put it, “In October 1957, the Soviets sent into space that little beeping grapefruit-sized thing called *Sputnik*, and Slavic studies in the

25 Chamberlin, 1944, 85.

26 Adams, 1975, 623–624.

27 Chubatyi, 1971, 37–40; Sydorenko, 1976, 99–112; Ilnytskyj, 1992, 445–458; Kuzio, 2001, 109–132.

28 Chubatyi, 1971, 42.

29 Skilling, 1966, 6; Pech, 1968, 16.

United States skyrocketed with it.”³⁰ The 1960s were to see a dramatic rise in association membership in the American Association for Advanced Slavic Studies, from about 600 at its creation to 2,260 by 1969.³¹ At this time approximately 200 professors of Ukrainian heritage taught at American universities during the 1960s.³² Ukrainian scholars were employed in various fields of the social sciences and humanities. Some of the Ukrainian professors established and headed university Slavic studies departments, as, for example, Jaroslav B. Rudnyckyj and George S.N. Luckyj; Bohdan R. Bociurkiw headed the Institute of Soviet and East European Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa.

Ukrainian scholars were active members of their professional scholarly associations—as, for example, political scientists Dr. Peter Potichnyj, who chaired the Canadian Association of Slavists in 1977–78, and Dr. Bohdan Harasymiw, who served as secretary.³³ Dr. Stepan Horak initiated and chaired the Association for the Study of Nationalities and its journal, *Nationalities Papers*, in 1972.³⁴ Last but not least—“Ukrainian history,” according to Theodore Mackiw, “has been recognized as a discipline at major universities such as Harvard, Edmonton, and Toronto. There, topics on Ukrainian history have been accepted for dissertations and essays...”³⁵

During the 1950s and early '70s a new generation of Western scholars emerged that specialized in Ukrainian modern history—namely, the phenomena of Ukrainian modern nationalism (John A. Armstrong, Kenneth C. Farmer), Communist politics (Robert S. Sullivant), and national-Communism (James E. Mace). Leading American and Canadian Slavic studies journals began to regularly include articles on Ukrainian topics. In 1963, the *Slavic Review* journal hosted a discussion between Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, Omeljan Pritsak, and John Reshetar regarding the national framework of Ukrainian history that played a significant role in the process of integrating Ukrainian studies into Western scholarship.³⁶

In the course of the 1960s and '70s, the *Slavic Review* published 49 items (11 articles and 38 reviews) on Ukrainian topics. In the same period, the *Canadian Slavonic Papers* published 67 items on Ukrainian topics (29 articles and 38

30 Cooper, 1998, 25–27.

31 Fischer, 2008, 57–62.

32 Atamanenko, 2010, 230.

33 Atamanenko, 2010, 354.

34 Rudnytzky, 2012, 829–832.

35 Mackiw, 1984, 269–288.

36 Mackiw, 1984, 80–81; Potul'nytsky, 2002, 325–334.

reviews).³⁷ As far as number of articles, the *Canadian Slavonic Papers* greatly exceeded the number for the *American Slavic Review*, but the latter journal contained more issues written by non-Ukrainian authors. In terms of topics and chronological division, both journals are comparable—and in both, items on the history and current conditions of Ukraine dominated over those about other materials.

The 1960s epoch coincided with the start of several intellectual revolutions, the triumph of iconoclasts, and a symbolic drawing of the line between generations.³⁸ As a result of the “social turn” in the humanities, new “revisionist” school emerged in American historiography, challenging the former dominant “totalitarianist” school.³⁹ Leading representatives of this new school called for an understanding of the “organic nature” of the Soviet state, and for the study of the social underpinnings and grass-roots support of the Communist system that ensured its victory after the collapse of the Russian Empire as well as in the Second World War.

During the 1960s and '70s the so-called “modernist” paradigm in historical studies took hold. The modernists influenced by Ernest Gellner, Shmuel Eisenstadt, and some others—were interested in social communication and urbanization, as well as the demography, the civic and territorial-political aspects of national communities and their elites. In addition, significant changes had occurred in the understanding of nations and nationality issues. Contradicting the perennialists, it asserted the constructivist functional nature of nations, and their connection to modernization processes.⁴⁰

The fundamental changes in the academic and political climate in the USA could not but affect Ukrainian historiography in the diaspora. A long-lasting split between the populist and the state schools of historical writing became apparent, manifested not only in increased tension between various scholars and institutions as well in the generational conflict⁴¹ but also in calls for changes within Ukrainian studies both on the institutional and conceptual level. This, in turn, led to the reconsideration of the mutual relations between Ukrainian Academia and Community (Hromada in Ukrainian): they became more strained and publicly pronounced addressing the issues of the academic autonomy, from the one side, and the community service, from the other.

37 Calculated by the author—KV.

38 Rojas, 2004, 197–218; Vail' and Genis, 1996, 262–274; Kelli and Kalinin, 2009, 3–9.

39 See Fitzpatrick, 2008, 682–704 and Fitzpatrick, 2007, 77–91; Suny, 2007, 5–19; Suny, 2010, 707–711.

40 See Smith, 1998.

41 Atamanenko, 2010, 232, 273.

One of the attempts to respond to the new challenges was the Ukrainian Historical Society (UIT) and its periodical, *Ukrains'kyi istoryk* (Ukrainian Historian).⁴² The conception for the UIT was underpinned by the ideas of continuity and consolidation of the representatives of various institutions and groups in Ukrainian exile historiography under the banner of Mykhailo Hrushevsky, whose historical legacy was enthusiastically propagated by the founder of the UIT, Dr. Lubomyr Wynar. However, a programmatic article written for the first issue of the *Ukrains'kyi istoryk* journal by the former Soviet scholar Oleksander Ohloblyn—one of the leading representatives of exile/émigré Ukrainian historiography—appeared to be outdated; it emphasized the obligations of scholars more to the Hromada than to Academia.⁴³

Contrary to the program of UIT, Omeljan Pritsak called for more radical changes in Ukrainian academia. His article, marking the centenary of the founder of Ukrainian national historiography, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, in 1966 could be perceived as heralding the era of changing milestones in Ukrainian studies.⁴⁴ Unusually for publications of this type, the article was critical in tone and included grievous accusations against the honouree. Nonetheless, Pritsak's main message consisted not so much in his criticism of predecessors and contemporaries, but rather in his recognition of the need for an academic autonomy for Ukrainian historiography. Somewhat later, Pritsak also expressed strong criticism of Ukrainian studies “in exile,” accusing them of intellectual conservatism, lack of scope, and dilettantism.⁴⁵

In fact, Pritsak was speaking out in favour of an academic, “normal” scholarship, for which the chief objective would not be to protect the collective national identity of an ethnic community, but to conduct persistent intellectual seeking as well as revision of already existing concepts. In other words, Pritsak strove to “secularize” the field which was deeply penetrated by the spirit of sacralization of national history. Pritsak's views on the need for continued professionalization and academic “normalization” of Ukrainian studies were shared by his colleague, Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, another prominent representative of the Ukrainian historiography and a strong adherent of “free, critical thought, untrammelled by dogmas of any kind, whether Marxist or nationalist,”

42 Atamanenko, 2010; Sakada, 1999.

43 Ohloblyn, 1963 (ch.1, r.1) 1–3. Characteristically, Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky expressed his skepticism about the professional level of the journal and considered it dilettantish (Berdychowska, 2004, 608).

44 Pritsak, 1966.

45 Pritsak, 1972, 139–152.

predisposed to critical scrutinizing of any “preconceptions, biases and favourite myths even of one’s own community.”⁴⁶

Pritsak’s invectives, particularly the article about Hrushevsky, provoked a veritable uproar in the substantial part of Ukrainian Hromada and Academia.⁴⁷ When Pritsak put forward an initiative to establish new Ukrainian studies institutions at leading American universities—in that case, at Harvard,⁴⁸ his opponents responded with the concerns that the “Harvard project” would be susceptible to “Russification” under the influence of the faculty of Russian background.⁴⁹ The fact that Pritsak himself became eventually the first newly established Hrushevsky Chair of Ukrainian History at Harvard in 1968 and the founding Director of the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute (HURI) in 1973 can be considered a testament not only to his organizational talent but also to the growing intellectual maturity both of a good part of the Ukrainian American community and the American Academia as well. The establishment of a Chair of Ukrainian history in parallel with the further establishing of the Dmytro Chyzevs’kyj Chair in Ukrainian literature and the Olexander Potebnia Chair in Ukrainian philology in the leading American university legitimized the field of Ukrainian studies within American academia.

The discussion around HURI, however, was followed with another conflict between Ukrainian Hromada and Academia which flamed up around the Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Toronto in 1980.⁵⁰ The conflict began when the University accepted money from the Hromada in order to establish a Chair in Ukrainian history. The History Department, however, refused to acknowledge Ukrainian history as a legitimate field of study. The conflict was further exacerbated when the Department, being finally reconciled with the idea, decided to give preference to Paul Robert Magocsi over several other candidates of Ukrainian ethnic origin. The fact that Magocsi, in addition, expressed certain “heretical” thoughts on the Ruthenian (Rusyn) identity of the Trans-Carpathians as being separated from the Ukrainian national identity, agitated the Ukrainian Hromada even more. The latter reserved its acceptance of the Chair for over a quarter-century until recently, when all those involved into the conflict finally appeared to be satisfied.

Compared to the above, the history of the founding in 1976 of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) at the University of Alberta in Edmonton

46 Rudnytsky, 1981, ix.

47 Atamanenko, 2010, 302, 304, 521–526; Satzevich, 127–128.

48 Pritsak, 1973.

49 Atamanenko, 2010, 270–279; Satzevich, 127.

50 Arel, 2011, 125–126; Satzevich, 128–129.

seems downright peaceable.⁵¹ From its inception, CIUS was the result of a compromise between various players—the “old-timers” and the “newcomers,” the Hromada and the Academia, the “Diaspora” and the “Exiled” representatives of Ukrainian historical writing. The compromise was achieved in the favorable climate of the Canadian policy of multiculturalism in which Canadian Ukrainians played very active role from its inception. The provincial government of Alberta, together with the Ukrainian diaspora, became one of the main actors in the process of establishing the Institute within the University of Alberta.

It is hardly surprising then that the first director of CIUS became Dr. Manoly Lupul, an activist of the multiculturalism policy and a representative of the third generation of Ukrainian-Canadians, well integrated into the Canadian society. Dr. Bohdan Krawchenko, political scientist, another Canadian social leftist activist, became his successor in 1986. Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, mentioned earlier, joined the project of CIUS on its initial stage and became the first Professor of Ukrainian history in the University of Alberta. Subsequently, however, CIUS, even under the new American-Ukrainian, Harvard-styled directorship, was not able to avoid criticism from the Ukrainian Hromada. In this case it was provoked by the other intellectual “challenger”, American born John-Paul Himka, a UofA Professor and CIUS religious program director, who had been a student of Roman Szporluk (refugee historian of Ukrainian origin from Poland), collaborator of Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky and who recently turned to study some controversial aspects of Ukrainian recent history.⁵²

Both institutions—HURI and CIUS—provided the possibility of training a new generation of professional scholars, regardless of their ethnic origin or connections with the Ukrainian community. The new Ukrainian academic institutes in the USA and Canada became harbingers of and main players at a new stage in the process of academic legitimization of Ukrainian studies in the Western university milieu. Both institutions were practically overwhelmed by the graduates of elite US universities. Ironically enough, HURI under Pritsak appeared to be rather more traditional in its searching for research priorities than CIUS; while Ukrainian history and archeography dominated at the former, the latter immediately showed more openness towards the social sciences and Diaspora studies.

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51 Lupul, 1994, 88–111.

52 See Shymko, 2013, 13; (<http://www.istpravda.com.ua/columns/2013/01/13/108055/>); Himka, 2012, 230–233.

The institutional innovations were accompanied by substantial intellectual changes in the further development of American-Ukrainian historical studies. They could be examined in the context of the long-lasting polemics between the populist, community-oriented school of historical writing associated with Mykhailo Hrushevsky, and the state, territorial-oriented school which goes back to Vyacheslav Lypynsky. It seems like the latter gradually prevailed over the former in terms of an intellectual impact and a research potential. In this context several events should be taken into account: the establishment of the Lypynsky East European Research Institute in Philadelphia in 1963, especially after the well-known historian, Professor at the University of Iowa, Yaroslav Pelensky became its Director in 1986; Omeljan Pritsak's Professorship and Directorship in the Harvard University; and Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky's Professorship at the University of Alberta.

All of the three well-known scholars were in favour of the territory-oriented paradigm in the art of Ukrainian historical writing. In Pritsak's words, "The history of Ukraine is not the history of the Ukrainian ethnic mass...but the objective view, measured in linear time, of all types of states and communities which existed on the present territory of Ukraine in the past."⁵³ Later on the territorial approach to Ukrainian history facilitated a new perception of Ukraine as a multi-ethnic realm, where the cultures of various peoples—including Russians, Poles, Jews, and Crimean Tatars—evolved and interacted. Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, a specialist in the field of intellectual history, which became quite popular among the émigrés scholars in America after the World War II, exerted the most important influence on his contemporary fellows in searching for new paradigms in Ukrainian historiography.

Lysiak-Rudnytsky did not create an integrated national synthesis of monographic extent; instead, he contributed enormously to the updating and re-interpretation of the Ukrainian national historical narrative.⁵⁴ His articles, notes, and reviews, written "between history and politics", as the title of the collection of his articles suggests, appeared to be quite innovative as regards Ukrainian national-building process.⁵⁵ To put it briefly, Lysiak-Rudnytsky championed the idea of a "normalcy" of Ukrainian history, using a comparative approach and tracking down a social dynamic of the local society. This applies in particular to the dialectics of continuity and discontinuity of Ukrainian history, as well as to the role of non-Ukrainian elites in it. Lysiak also rejected the usefulness of the classical colonial model in defining Ukraine's

53 Keenan, 2006, 935–936.

54 See Himka, 2014, 4–8; Hrytsak 1994, 73–96.

55 Lysiak-Rudnytsky, 1976.

status within the Russian Empire,⁵⁶ argued for the necessity of revising perceptions on the very phenomena of Russification.

Orientalist Pritsak, historians Rudnytsky and Pelensky, byzantinist Shevchenko,—all of them emphasized the importance of regional, geopolitical dimensions of and comparative approach to the Ukrainian studies by putting them into the broadest political, cultural, civilizational context of the Eastern European and Eurasian studies. Re-thinking of Ukrainian geopolitical identity in terms of a synthesis of the “eastern” and “western” civilizational components furthered the process of re-conceptualization of the whole East Slavic history and its symbolic boundaries in American historical writing. The discussions regarding periodization, terminology, and borders in Eastern European history, in which Ukrainian scholars took an active part, also influenced the gradual re-conceptualization and re-contextualization of American Slavic and Eastern European studies.⁵⁷

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Ukrainian émigré historians endeavoured to establish direct dialogue with their Polish, Russian, Jewish, and German fellows in an attempt to re-conceptualize the basic interpretations of the historical phenomenon of “Europe” and “Russia”. Those who initiated this contact were interested not only in clearly delineating Ukrainian national space versus non-Ukrainian macrocosms, but also in the role of non-Ukrainian factors in their national history. The most successful of these was the Ukrainian-Polish dialogue, in which a positive role was played by the several factors: a principled position of some Polish and Ukrainian intellectual émigrés in Europe and USA; the new geopolitical realities of the mid-twentieth century; and the similar circumstances and challenges Ukrainian and Polish studies faced in America. The role of the Lypynsky’s state school in Ukrainian historical writing in this case as well as the intellectual origin of those Ukrainian émigré historians who was educated in the Polish schools and universities also can be hardly overestimated.

A huge volume of the recently issued intensive correspondence between Jerzy Giedroyc, the editor-in-chief of the Polish, Paris-based intellectual journal *Kultura*, and Ukrainian émigré scholars in USA, reveals that at least part of the intellectuals from the both sides clearly understood the need for normalization of Ukrainian-Polish mutual relations to be able to overcome the burden of the recent and more distant past, to join efforts on order to withstand

56 Lysiak-Rudnytsky, 1994, 149.

57 Keennan, 2006, 936.

nationalist resistance as well as the domination of the Russian/Soviet paradigm in American Slavic and European studies. Both sides realized the need to transform the Western academia into friendlier intellectual environment, open to innovations.⁵⁸

Scholarly contacts between Zbigniew Brzezinski, Richard Pipes, Jerzy Giedroyc, from the one side and Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, Taras Hunchak, Borys Lewycky, Roman Szporluk, Omeljan Pritsak, contributed to the scholarly projects as well as the development of the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute. Lysiak-Rudnytsky highly praised the monographs of Oskar Halecki on the new concept of Eastern and Central-Eastern Europe. Yaroslav Pelensky and Petro Potichnyj were instrumental in organizing several important Ukrainian-Polish conferences in USA and Canada and publishing their proceedings.⁵⁹ Their contribution to the further re-conceptualization of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Ukrainian-Polish relations in a more favourable light became visible in some issues of the new generation of Ukrainian scholars.

In contrast, the dialogue between Ukrainian and Jewish historians met with great difficulties, which have not been overcome to this day.⁶⁰ The reasons for this were varied, but basically rooted in negative national stereotypes on both sides that had accumulated for hundreds of years. Another factor to be reckoned with was the similarity of the Ukrainian and Jewish national narratives: both of them grew up from the long tradition of statelessness; both of them developed contested visions of the same territory of the Polish-Russian-Ukrainian borderland; both evolved in the diaspora, were founded on the idea of victimization, and even overlapped in their lexicon. Interestingly enough that they bear a great resemblance with the Polish-Jewish relationship in the US permeated with “ignorance, prejudice, and bad faith.”⁶¹

Ukrainian-Russian dialogue of scholars appeared to be even more complicated, bearing in mind the current political circumstances and the ongoing struggle between the two for the Rus’ historical legacy.⁶² Russian studies were at the time the most influential component of the nascent American Slavic studies—a kind of locomotive for the growing field. Ukrainian scholars were less innovative in their interpretation of Russian history: they emphasized the specific, non-European character of the Russian Empire as well as its direct connections with the so called Tatar-Mongol Commonwealth (Pritsak, Pelensky,

58 Berdychowska, 2004; Giedroyc, 2004.

59 Potichnyj, 1980, *Poland...*

60 Potichnyj, 1980, *Ukrainian...*

61 Biskupski, 2007.

62 Pelensky, 1998; Demkovich-Dobrianskyi, 1989; Holubenko, 1987; Kononenko, 1969.

Hunchak). Nevertheless, Ukrainian historiography contributed to the better understanding of the complexity of the “Rus”-based denominations, such as, for example, the differences between “Rus” and “Russia”.⁶³

Finally, a couple of words must be said about the dialog between Ukrainian Diaspora and Soviet Ukrainian scholars. In the 1960s the rhetoric of the Cold War times was abandoned, at least for a while, and ideas about the convergence of two political systems developed in the politically relaxed conditions of the *détente*. The political thaw in the Ukrainian SSR was accompanied with an attempt to revive at least some elements of the National-Communism policy of the 1920s as well a renewal of the contacts with the outside world.

The Ukrainian diaspora then faced the question of whether to establish contacts with the Soviet side—knowing in advance that they are closely watched by the KGB, or to avoid them and remain in the struggle against the Soviet regime. Some of the nationalistically minded diaspora rejected the possibility of any kind of contact with the Soviet side.⁶⁴ On the other hand, many Ukrainian intellectuals in the Diaspora belonged to the liberal minority of “*realitetnyky*” (realists) who, in contrast to the so-called nationalist establishment, was in favour of contacts with the Soviet side, in the hope that the Soviet regime would gradually evolve towards democracy and national freedoms.

In 1967 Ukrainian professors from several American universities, including Lysiak-Rudnytsky, publicized “Declaration 35” about the current situation in Ukraine. The declaration included demands of the Soviet government that were aimed at reinstating Ukraine’s sovereignty as a part of the USSR. Not surprisingly, this document provoked a stormy discussion in the Ukrainian community, and criticism from the part of Ukrainian Hromada and Academy including the American branch of NTSh, who accused the authors of legitimizing the Soviet regime in Ukraine.⁶⁵ On the other hand, the program formulated in “Declaration 35” turned out to be compatible with the attitudes of Ukrainian Soviet dissidents. Official contacts between Ukrainians on the both sides became possible. The IREX Program enabled visiting Soviet Union for some Ukrainian American scholars.

At this time, attempts were made to reconcile part of the Soviet historical legacy (in a broad sense of the word) with the Ukrainian national historical narrative.⁶⁶ The question of whether the Soviet era was an organic part of the national history, or whether it was a foreign, extraneous thing, imposed from

63 Lysiak-Rudnytsky, 1981, 233–268; Horak, 1975, 5–24; Horak, 1972, 853–862.

64 Neduzhko, 2005, 43–48.

65 Hrytsak, 1996, 888–889; Atamanenko, 2010, 9.

66 Hrytsak, 1996, 114–125.

the outside by occupiers, acquired a paramount importance. For example, Lysiak-Rudnytsky's attitude to the Soviet phenomenon was influenced by the motifs of *realpolitik* and historical optimism, as he proposed to assess the Soviet era from the perspective of its achievements—seeing the potential that Soviet statehood unlocked for Ukraine's future development. This kind of position created the conditions for dialogue with Soviet Ukrainian historiography, which at that same time was beginning to demonstrate positive developments.⁶⁷ However, in practice the public, professional dialogue between them remained impossible.

In the USSR, Soviet Ukrainian historiography continued to be strictly monitored, while the main symbols and elements of the Ukrainian national-state narrative were meticulously passed through a triple-screen of censorship (state, professional, and personal). In addition, the professional level of Ukrainian historiography in the diaspora was incomparably higher than that in the Soviet Union, which had halted its theoretical development at the level of classical positivism and the Soviet *kraevedenie*. The two sides were truly speaking different languages, in both the direct and indirect meanings of the word.

Be that as it may, they did watch one another carefully, and even the slightest movement or event in the field of Ukrainian studies was noticed.⁶⁸ They could not be unaware of one another, and even more, they sometimes mirrored each other. It seems like, for example, the journal *Ukrains'kyi istoryk*, which was published in the US, began in response to the appearance in the USSR of the *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal* in 1957.⁶⁹ And to a certain extent, the *Ukrains'ka Radians'ka Entsyklopediia* (Ukrainian Soviet Encyclopedia) was reacting to the publication of émigré historian Volodymyr Kubijovyč's *Entsyklopediia ukraïnoznavstva*.⁷⁰ The Soviet authorities issued even more Ukrainian encyclopaedias in the course of some twenty years, and a network of departments of Ukrainian history established at Soviet Ukrainian universities in the late 1950s was a reaction to the Ukrainian diaspora's activity at American and Canadian universities. When the Soviet authorities launched an ideological campaign against Ukrainian "bourgeois nationalists" at the beginning of the '70s, cutting the period of political thaw, they used contacts with the Ukrainian diaspora as a pretext to institute formal charges.

67 Atamanenko, 2010, 240–259; Hrytsak, 1996, 875–903.

68 Wynar, 1979, 1–23; Serbyn, 1969, 169–182; Horak, 1965, 258–272; Ohloblyn, 1963; Krupnytskyi, 1957.

69 Sakada, 1999, 13.

70 See, for example, Lysiak-Rudnytsky's review of the "Ukrainian Soviet Encyclopedia" Lysiak-Rudnytsky, 1967, 358.

After the end of the “thaw” in the USSR, development of Soviet Ukrainian historiography was blocked once again. This phase of bureaucratization, provincialization, and ideologization lasted for nearly 20 years. Political changes in the USSR were accompanied by a growing influence of neo-Stalinist and nationalist forces within the Russian political and cultural elites. In turn, these circumstances engendered disillusion with the Soviet experiment in the West, a weakening of the left, and strengthening of conservative ideologies and attitudes.⁷¹ Regardless, Ukrainian studies continued to develop and under the strong influence of American Slavic studies overall.

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The younger generation of Ukrainian studies scholars—particularly those schooled at the Harvard and the University of Alberta—has fully adopted their supervisors’ openness to intellectual innovations and demonstrated the next stage of the integration of Ukrainian studies into the American scholarship in the course of ’70s–’80s. Methodologically, the new stream of Ukrainian studies in North America was influenced by the “revisionist” school in American Soviet and Slavic studies. Along with the national aspects of the history of Ukraine, the scope of their research interests includes modernization issues and the concomitant socio-demographic, economic, and urbanization processes of the postwar era which became evident in the publications of Bohdan Krawchenko, Roman Szporluk, George Lieber, Orest Subtelny.

The “iconoclastic” trend of Ukrainian studies fully manifested itself in the issues of George Grabowicz and John-Paul Himka: the former criticized the Lysiak-Rudnytsky’s attitude to the question of the so-called “non-historical” nations and offered a new, innovative interpretation of the legacy of the founding father of Ukrainian nation, Taras Shevchenko while the latter attacked the Lysiak’s main thesis about the centrality of the national theme in the modern Ukrainian history proposing instead the neo-Marxist approach. Furthermore, the national aspects of Ukrainian early modern history were given more sophisticated and nuanced treatment in research by Orest Subtelny, Zenon Kohut, and Frank Sysyn; the dialectic of regional and national aspects of Ukrainian history was championed by Paul Robert Magocsi while Roman Szporluk offered new conceptualization of the Russian and Western aspects of the Ukrainian nation-building process; last but not least—women studies for the first time emerged as a new sub-discipline within Ukrainian studies (Marta Bohachevska-Chomiak).

71 Kolasky, 1979.

It is not incidentally that precisely this generation managed to achieve a long-lasting dream of Ukrainian intellectual Diaspora to produce a new, modern synthesis of Ukrainian history according to the standards of the Western scholarship. Orest Subtelny's narrative published in 1988 in English and translated into Ukrainian was based on the idea of modernization and its specific role in Ukrainian national history. Paul Robert Magocsi applied territorial and multicultural concepts to Ukrainian historical process. Both of them demonstrated how the intellectual innovations in the Western humanities can be applicable to Ukrainian historiography. No wonder both of the narratives mentioned above gradually replaced all the previously written textbooks of Ukrainian history in the American universities.

Conclusions

During the 1960s–1980s, the Ukrainian national historical narrative of glorification and victimization was revised in all of its main components. This is rightly considered the foremost achievement of Ukrainian historiography in the American Diaspora. Breaking the boundaries of exile historiography, as well as openness to innovations and professional dialogue, overcame the tendencies to isolationism and a lack of precision in this field.⁷² In this sense, Ukrainian émigré historiography was a 'blessing in disguise': it was proven capable of making an intellectual horizon vaster, overcoming a parochialism and preconceptions regarding Ukrainian topics. Ukrainian studies provided much new material towards an understanding of the very phenomenon of modern nationalism and also of modernization processes in the region of Eastern Europe.

It would be fair to say that the dialogue between Ukrainian historiography and its American counterpart improved constantly during this period, with gradually increasing numbers of US scholars specializing in Ukrainian history. Moreover, experts in the theory and history of nationalism and in Russian, Soviet and Eastern European studies increasingly referred to works issued by Ukrainian authors. Finally, academic exchanges focused on specific problems rather than debating the very existence of Ukrainian history as a separate discipline. At least some Western scholars began to comprehend that studying the history of Russia, Poland, and the USSR would be problematic without taking into consideration the Ukrainian question.⁷³ Accordingly, to find a proper

72 Saunders, 1991, 84.

73 See interview with Larry Wolf: <http://polit.ua/analitika/2014/03/14/wulf.html>.

place for Ukrainian, what were needed were new concepts of the “Eastern Europe” and “Russia.”

The academic “normalization” of Ukrainian studies in the West is by and large a success story—one which prompted John A. Armstrong to speak of “the amazing improvement in Ukrainian historiography which had taken place during the past forty years.”⁷⁴ Thus, I would disagree with the assertion that diaspora Ukrainian historiography emerged from being an ethnically isolated intellectual field only in the post-Soviet period and began to influence important development trends in the rejuvenated Russian studies;⁷⁵ from my observations this happened much earlier, around the early 1980s.

At the same time, David Saunders was quite correct when he wrote in 1988 that the increasing number of works on Ukrainian topics published in the West, even in English, as well as the unquestionable successes achieved by Ukrainian studies in the latter twentieth century, did not yet mean that this field had entered the mainstream of Western Slavic studies.⁷⁶ The academic milieu, and particularly the historian’s world, is generally rather conservative in its prejudices and preferences. Significantly, it was only in the mid-1990s—5 years after the declaration of Ukraine’s independence that the *Slavic Review*, one of the leading American journals in the field, organized the public forum on Ukrainian history, its integrity, and its place among other socio-humanities disciplines.⁷⁷ Besides, both Western and “Eastern” Ukrainian studies remain greatly dependent on current political circumstances.

Olexander Ohloblyn had believed that the interpretation of Ukraine’s historical process in Western historiography would change only upon the emergence of an independent Ukraine.⁷⁸ In fact, these changes transpired even earlier than Ohloblyn had predicted, but the progress in this case has been inconsistent and fragmentary—not unlike the situation in Ukrainian recent politics. And it must be said that the Ukrainian studies in US and Canada, in spite of their overall high level of professionalism, did not affect the current politics as perhaps it should have.

Socio-cultural and political realities of life in post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia continue to influence historical thinking on both sides of the Atlantic, Western Europe and North America. Thereby has been nurtured the following stereotypes of Ukraine, starting long before the dissolution of the Soviet Union: the

74 Saunders, 1988, 473.

75 Semenov, 2004, 614.

76 Saunders, 1988, 473.

77 *Slavic Review*, vol. 54, no. 3, autumn, 1995, 658–719.

78 Atamanenko, 2010, 90.

Ukrainians still have no “true” nation-state; it exists only as a besieged fortress whose dimensions extend only as far as Galicia—the Ukrainian Piedmont—and which needs outside help to survive. Given this motif, any venture by academic historiography outside the symbolic boundaries of the nation-state paradigm—including “experiments” with regional studies, border studies, entangled histories, and cultural anthropology—only widen the gap between the academic and the exile type of historical writing. Conflicts between the two are certain to continue, but neither side will be able to avoid seeking compromise.

Another factor to be considered is the state of arts in American Russian, East European, and Slavic studies. Twenty years ago Oleh Ilnytzkyj came to the conclusion that, “For Westerners, Ukraine’s arrival on the international scene is almost as disorienting as for Russians, perhaps because the store of knowledge the West has about this region offers no logical explanation for current events.”⁷⁹ Today, in the course of the recent unpredictable, tragic events on the Russian-Ukrainian border, another scholar only re-affirm this conclusion: “The events of the past year in Ukraine have been unprecedented, and therefore not easily comprehensible as a single yet complex phenomenon.... We simply lack a ready analytical language and explanatory models to describe the birth of the new Ukraine as a unique and—yes—unprecedented phenomenon.”⁸⁰ It seems like the intellectual crisis of Russian studies in America in light of the recent events can be possibly explained by their ignorance in Ukrainian topics.

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79 Ilnytzkyj, 1992, 450–451.

80 Gerasimov, 2014, 22.

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