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National democracy, the OUN, and Dontsovism: Three ideological currents in Ukrainian Nationalism of the 1930s–40s and their shared myth-system[☆]

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ABSTRACT

The ideology of Ukrainian nationalism in the 1930s and 1940s was a contested arena in which three dominant currents fought for hegemony: the national democrats grouped around the UNDO party, the authoritarian nationalists who supported the OUN movement, and the more extreme brand of authoritarianism espoused by the publicist Dmytro Dontsov. The three currents can be distinguished by analyzing both ideological writings and the myth-system that underpinned creative literature of this period. Distinguishing between the three currents allows for a better understanding of ideological shifts among those calling themselves nationalists, particularly shifts which occurred during the Second World War and its aftermath. It also helps to explain some of the confusions that surround the term “Ukrainian nationalism” in the present day.

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The term “nationalism” as applied to Ukrainian politics in the 1930s and 1940s has long been in need of greater terminological precision. During these years the “nationalists” in what is today Western Ukraine (Galicia, Bukovyna and Transcarpathia) and in émigré Ukrainian communities throughout Europe can be seen as three related but separate political currents: national democrats, members of the OUN, and ideological supporters of Dmytro Dontsov. Distinguishing these currents throws light on many nuances in the politics and ideology of the day. In particular, it helps to explain how individual figures could shift, sometimes imperceptibly, between different forms of nationalism while articulating what appear to be the same basic principles. This article offers a new framework for understanding interwar nationalism, examines relations between the three currents, and outlines the myth-system that is shared by all three currents and is most evident in the creative literature of these decades.

1. Defining three currents in Ukrainian nationalism

National democrats supported the struggle for linguistic, cultural and political rights, but saw the ultimate goal as either an independent Ukrainian state or an autonomous Galician Ukraine within Poland. All indicators show that this current represented most intellectuals and writers, both in Galicia and in émigré communities living in European cities.

[☆] The argument developed in this article is based on my monograph *Ukrainian Nationalism: Politics, Ideology and Literature, 1929–1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

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It included such political organizations as the UNDO (Ukrainian National–Democratic Association), many supporters of the UNR (Ukrainian People's Republic) and Catholic organizations.¹ National democracy represented a broad current with a range of political ideologies. The UNDO and UNR had roots in the decades of struggle for civil and national rights that preceded the revolution of 1917. From the mid-twenties the UNDO, a firm believer in the values of parliamentary democracy, contested elections to the Polish parliament (*Sejm*). Supporters of the UNR often belonged to the Social Democratic and Socialist Revolutionary parties, both of which had struggled to create an independent Ukrainian republic in the years 1917–20. In 1930–32, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in response to nationalist and communist acts of political terror formed two organizations: Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn created the Ukrainian Catholic People's Party (UKNP; renamed the Ukrainian People's Revival –UNO—in 1932) and Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky created the Ukrainian Catholic Union (UKS). Observers viewed both organizations as part of the national democratic mainstream.

Nonetheless, the drift to the right throughout Europe affected national democrats. After 1926, when Josef Pilsudski came to power in Poland, a number of individuals in the UNR camp began supporting his increasingly authoritarian regime, primarily because of its opposition to Soviet expansionism. Moreover, the Catholic parties and organizations were strongly conservative: some church leaders opposed what they termed social and political “liberalism.” Despite this drift, within the national democratic camp there was general agreement that various parties and currents had to coexist and work within the parliamentary system and democratic norms.

Authoritarianism expressed itself in support for the “integral” nationalism of the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists), which developed a mass base in the early thirties, especially among veterans who had fought for independence in 1917–20 and Galician youth. The OUN's nationalism was articulated by a group of writers, who contributed to a network of publications produced outside Galicia, in which the organization had been outlawed by the Polish government. The OUN's main organs, *Surma* (Trumpet) and *Rozbudova natsii* (Nation-Building), were published in Berlin and Prague, and smuggled into Galicia.² Although the organization's membership in Western Ukraine on the eve of the Second World War was an estimated 8000–9,000, it had dedicated activists, a strong conspiratorial network and gained extensive publicity from its assassinations, arsons and “expropriations,” that is, robberies of banks and post offices (Wysocki, 2003, 337).

Dmytro Dontsov, who published the journal *Vistnyk* (Herald, 1933–39) in Lviv as his own private operation, represented a third, more extreme current of integral nationalism. Earlier he had been editor of *Literaturno-naukovy vistnyk* (Literary-Scientific Herald, 1922–32), which had a wide range of contributors from various political camps. *Vistnyk* drew on a narrower group. In fact, Dontsov wrote many articles himself, often under pseudonyms, and selected for publication only materials that fitted his own ideology. His doctrine was distinguished by a focus not on specific political goals but on a psychological—spiritual revolution, and by a particularly vehement, intolerant tone.

In the interwar period, therefore, the competition for Ukrainian hearts and minds was increasingly fought out between national democracy and two versions of integral (extreme authoritarian) nationalism – the OUNite and the Dontsovian brands. The OUN used the term “organized nationalism” (orhanizovanyi natsionalizm) to characterize its doctrine. Dontsov called his ideology “active nationalism” (chynnyi natsionalizm). Leading members of the UNDO and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church tended to avoid the term altogether, although a current existed within the Church that called itself “Christian nationalist.” Of course, opponents of the Ukrainian autonomy or independence often made no distinction between moderate and radical currents, legal and illegal forms of struggle, parliamentary and underground organizations. This was true of Polish officials and journalists, who sometimes branded any politically assertive Ukrainian as a nationalist, and it was also true east of the Polish border, in the Soviet Union, where tens of thousands were accused of nationalism, arrested, imprisoned and executed. Among them were an estimated 50,000 Galician Ukrainians or returning émigrés who participated in the movement to implement Ukrainianization. This policy was proclaimed in 1923 by the Soviet Ukrainian republic. During the years that Kharkiv was the republic's capital, from 1923 to 34, an energetic attempt was made to introduce and spread the use of Ukrainian in schools, the press, government and administration. The 1930 show trial of the SVU (Spilka Vyzvolennia Ukrainy – Union for the Liberation of Ukraine), an organization entirely fabricated by the secret police, was the first signal to the population that the policy had come under attack. The trial served as the pretext to arrest 30,000 school teachers and educators. In 1933 all the policy's architects were arrested, and Mykola Skrypnyk, the Commissar for Education, committed suicide.

¹ Among the more visible Christian parties and civic-religious organizations were the Ukrainian Christian Organization (Ukrainska Khrystyianska Orhanizatsiia, UKhO), which in 1930 became the Ukrainian Catholic Organization (Ukrainska Katolytska Orhanizatsiia, UKO); the Ukrainian Catholic People's Party (Ukrainska Katolytska Narodna Partia, UKNP), which was formed in 1930 and renamed the Ukrainian People's Revival (Ukrainska Narodna Obnova, UNO) in 1932; the Ukrainian Catholic Union (Ukrainsky Katolytsky Soiuz, UKS) formed in 1930–31; the Catholic Action (Katolytska Aktsiia, KA), which later became the Association of Ukrainian Youth (KAUM).

² The organization also published a number of newspapers, such as *Ukrainske slovo* (Ukrainian Word, 1933–40), which appeared in Paris, and the popular journals like *Proboiem* (Breakthrough, 1933–44), which was published in Prague, and *Samostiina dumka* (Independent Thought, 1931–37), which was published in Chernivtsi. In Galicia the Lviv newspaper *Holos* (Voice, 1938–39) which replaced *Holos natsii*, (Nation's Voice, 1936–37) edited by Bohdan Kravtsiv, was influential.

1.1. Relations between National democracy and the OUN

Conflicts between the three currents of nationalisms are generally underestimated in scholarly literature. Throughout the 1930s in Galicia and within the emigration the national democratic camp protested the OUN's extreme authoritarianism and use of violence, particularly the assassination of political opponents, most of whom were Ukrainians.³ Sometimes the criticism was tactical: it was argued that terrorism was counter-productive and turned the broader population, along with Western democracies, against both the organization itself and the cause of independence. Often, however, the criticism was founded on ethical principles. For example, the newspaper *Dilo* (Deed), an unofficial organ of the UNDO, complained that violence was spreading immoral conduct and training a generation of gunmen. The Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Andrei Sheptytsky, condemned terrorist killings as acts of banditry that were drawing youth into crime, and warned that any amoral patriotism driven by bloodlust threatened genuine patriotism. After the assassination in 1934 of Ivan Babii, a respected director of a Ukrainian high school in Lviv and a leader of the Catholic Action group, who was shot in the back several times by a student who then turned the gun on himself, Sheptytsky wrote: "If you wish to treacherously kill those who oppose your work, you will have to kill all professors and teachers who work for Ukrainian youth, all parents and mothers of Ukrainian children, all guardians and leaders of educational institutions, all political and civil activists" (Sheptytskyi, 2009, 177–78).

The OUN's conflict with mainstream society and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church lasted throughout the interwar years. The Catholic camp rejected integral nationalism, and especially Dontsovism, as incompatible with Christian ethics (Behen et al., 2011, p. 317). In response, the Homeland Executive of the OUN (its Galician leadership) accused the Catholic organizations, along with other Ukrainian parties, of acting as police informers or potential informers "as a result of their political convictions" (Behen et al., 2011, p. 314). The clash was sharp in the early thirties, during which time the OUN's Galician leadership saw the church as a competitor for the hearts and minds of youth. In later years this conflict diminished. Some priests served in the OUN, and Andrii Melnyk, who took over the leadership of OUN in 1938 after Konoval's assassination, was known to have strong clerical sympathies: he had in the thirties headed the Catholic Association of Ukrainian Youth (KAUM or "Orly" – "Eagles") (Stefaniv, 2011, p. 244, 247, 240).

As it became a mass organization, the OUN absorbed various ideological tendencies, including activists who were members of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Partly as a result of pressure from its base, in the forties it underwent an evolution away from its pre-war ideology. One scholar has written: "the evolution of the OUN's ideology from a radical rightist one in the interwar period to a more democratic rightist one during the Second World War was due, among other things, to the influence of the moral authority of the GCC [Greek Catholic Church] clergy. This allowed the OUN to draw representatives of various political views and various nationalities into the liberation struggle it led" (Stefaniv, 2011, p. 244).

In the thirties, the OUN opposed parliamentary democracy, which it saw as weak and ineffectual. It admired dictators, in particular Mussolini. The apogee of the organization's totalitarian phase, according to Zaitsev, occurred with the appearance in the autumn of 1939 of the "Outline of a Project of the Main Laws (Constitution) of the Ukrainian State." The first article of this document stated: "Ukraine is a sovereign, authoritarian, totalitarian state of professional estates that bears the name Ukrainian State" (Zaitsev, 2011, p. 211).

1.2. Relations between the OUN and Dontsovism

In scholarly literature the ideologies of the OUN and Dontsov are sometimes treated as nearly indistinguishable. Oleksandr Zaitsev has argued that the difference between them was not a matter of principle, but rather one of priorities: "Dontsov's were developing the nation's spontaneous [stykhiinnoi] will to life and creating a new voluntaristic Ukrainian, while the OUN's were a hierarchical disciplined organization capable of realizing a national revolution and establishing a national dictatorship" (Zaitsev, 2011, p. 228). Moreover, in the years 1937–41, when the organization began to cooperate more closely with Germany, Dontsov's influence within the OUN was at its height. However, the OUN leadership's differences with Dontsov were significant and are systematically understated or – more often – completely ignored in contemporary discussions.

Because the OUN's goal always remained Ukrainian independence through violent revolution, its orientation toward Germany and ideological shift in the years 1937–41 could be seen as opportunistic. It was more inclined to view ideological structures as mutable, in contrast to Dontsov, who was implacably committed to totalitarian ideology. From the early twenties his views remained fascist-inspired and fanatical. Following Georges Sorel, he called for the creation of a myth-making that encouraged mystical-ecstatic forms of belief, which would prepare readers for self-sacrifice and allow them to overstep long-established, socially-accepted ethical boundaries. He espoused violence and radical action as ways of hardening the human spirit. His xenophobia, which included anti-Semitism, was frank, and during the Second World War he openly expressed racist views. Rarely noted in the literature on Dontsov is his contempt for the popular will and his insistence that a chosen few should impose their will on the people. To describe this chosen elite he used the term *orden*, which suggests something akin to a militant religious order. This doctrine is today allowed prominence on the websites of Tryzub, the SNA (Sotsial-Natsionalna Asambleia) and other members of the far right, who republish Dontsov's statements without comment. Throughout

³ Of the 63 known victims of assassination attempts by the OUN in the years 1921–39, there were 36 Ukrainians, 25 Poles, 1 Russian and 1 Jew. Only one individual was a communist (Motyl, 1985, 50). These figures are incomplete, since there may have been other, unreported cases.

the interwar period the *Vistnyk* editor explicitly and uncritically supported not only Italian fascism, but Nazism and other right-wing dictatorships. Unlike the OUN's, his ideology resembled an immutable faith system disconnected from concrete political goals: he proposed no transitional or achievable tasks, never joined the OUN or any political party, and continued to criticize all parties for failing to display the ferocious determination that he admired in Italian fascism and Nazism.

1.3. Shifting lines of demarcation

The above typology is useful for understanding the ideological landscape that unfolded in front of individuals in the 1930s and 1940s. Observers shifted ideological positions as they moved between different currents of nationalism. Firm demarcation lines between the supporters of the national democratic camp, the OUN and Dontsov were not always visible. For example, even though most national democrats were appalled by the OUN's violence and authoritarianism, some agreed with the national liberation movement having a terrorist wing. Volodymyr Kuzmovych, a member of the UNDO and Secretary of the Ukrainian Catholic Union, who had in the early twenties been a member of the paramilitary UVO (Ukrainian Military Organization), spoke of the need to “correlate legal and illegal work, so that they support one another” (Onatskyi, 1981, p. 75). Such opinions were born of frustration with the Polish government, which broke its promise to grant autonomy to Ukrainian Galicia and instead embarked on a policy of rapid colonization and Polonization, often punishing public expressions of national identity such as raising the Ukrainian flag or singing patriotic songs. If a student was caught with an OUN publication or a copy of the Decalogue (the OUN member's “Ten Commandments”), he could be thrown out of school or jailed.

Lines of communication continued to link the national democrats, the pro-OUN and the pro-Dontsov currents. The OUN's leader Yevhen Konovalts remained on good terms with some members of the UNDO. He met eleven Ukrainian parliamentarians from the Polish *Sejm* when they visited Berlin and Geneva in 1928, and corresponded with Milena Rudnytska, a leading senator and prominent feminist. He supported her when she tried to lobby the League of Nations in 1930–31 on behalf of the Ukrainian minority in Poland and when she drew Western attention to the Great Famine (Holodomor) in Soviet Ukraine in 1932–33. Yevhen Onatskyi, the leading OUN figure in Rome, was able to arrange audience with Mussolini for her in 1933, which resulted in several students from Galicia coming to Italy to study. It should be noted that Konovalts considered violence a tactic to be used selectively in self-defence and accepted the need for a party in the “legal sector.” In the early thirties some within the OUN's émigré leadership still demanded the organization's division into paramilitary and legal wings, arguing that the former should be a voice for independence in the Polish *Sejm*.

Individuals shifted ground between different nationalist currents in discussions concerning political tactics and ideology. This is particularly evident in the extensive creative literature produced during the interwar period. In 1929 in Poland alone there were 60 Ukrainian publishers producing 86 periodicals, 25 of which were political (Behen, 2011, p. 108, 112). Journalists and creative writers drew on a similar myth-system, but they elaborated it in different ways. Most writers were sympathetic to the national democrats.⁴ The OUN's publications within Poland were frequently censored (only a couple of the 86 periodical in Galicia were unofficial organs of the banned organization). As a result it produced most of its literature abroad. Dontsov's Lviv-based *Vistnyk* was not censored, because the editor avoided any criticism of the Polish government's policies. This appears to have been part of an arrangement made with Polish authorities in the early twenties.

1.4. Political myth in literature

Although scholars like Ernst Cassirer (1979a; 1979b) have denounced mythmaking, counterposing it to rationality and enlightened thought, it is today generally viewed as a universal, ever-present human activity.⁵ Max Weber's comments from 1918 concerning the disenchantment of the world and the need for myth are often quoted.⁶ So are the statements from the 1920s made by the surrealists and Benjamin (1978, p. 157), who realized that mythic images are generated in advertising, collective dreams, and the fetishizing of products and places (also Gilloch, 1996; Koepwick, 1999). The interwar fascination

⁴ The wider constellation of émigré and Galician writers is sometimes referred to as the Prague School. It included Yurii Daragan, Oksana Liaturynska, Nataliia Livytska-Kholodna, Oleksa Stefanovych, Halyna Mazurenko, Iryna Narizhna, Andrii Harasevych, Ivan Kolos and Natalena Koroleva. The non-OUN literary periodicals published in Poland included *My* (We, 1931–39), *Naperedodni* (On the Eve, 1937–38), *Nedilia* (Sunday, 1929–36) and *Nazustrich* (Toward, 1934–38). In addition there were various religious periodicals, such as the Catholic *Postup* (Progress, 1921–31), *Meta* (Goal, 1931–39), *Dzvony* (Bells, 1931–39) and *Nova Zoria* (New Dawn, 1926–39), women's publications, youth, professional and local publications. They created a diverse literary field. Supporters of the OUN sometimes published alongside those who were not. A direct challenge both to the views of both the OUN and Dontsov was also posed by the journal and publishing house *Novi shliakhy* (New Paths, 1928–32) and the periodical *Krytyka* (1933), which were organized by Antin Krushelnytsky, received Soviet funding and took a Sovietophile line.

⁵ Cassirer's views were discussed by Barash (2008); and Tudor (1972), p. 31–36.

⁶ Max Weber argued in 1918 that rationalization and intellectualization was shaping modern societies and was producing a “disenchantment of the world.” The attraction to myths was a compensatory urge for the dull regularity of people's lives (Weber, 1974, p. 155). Many later scholars have argued that the search for myths as a way of conceptualizing human existence is a normal part of life. Story-telling helps us to understand the world, and provides rules and precedents for moral action. Myths embedded in national narratives convey important information about society's development, especially about its beginnings and how it can be rejuvenated or improved. Myths of origin, for example, describe the fundamental character of a people, while eschatological myths describe a civilization's collapse, or the overcoming of an evil order. Such mythmaking is an essential part of religious, cultural and political belief-systems. It brings meaning and harmony to people's lives, reassures them that they are connected to a greater destiny, and satisfies the yearning for a morally coherent world.

with myth influenced Ukrainian nationalists, who drew on visions of a heroic past to criticize what they considered to be a degenerate present, and explored ancient beliefs that would support their modernizing project. There were, however, differences in the way the three currents of nationalism approached myth-making.

The national democrats focused on patriotism (love of the land and people) and national liberation. Like the nineteenth-century romantics, they collected legends, traditions and folk stories. In patriotic children's stories they portrayed young boys and girls showing self-sacrificing attachment to their native land in the spirit of Joan of Arc. They glorified Kyivan Rus' and the Cossack period.

Mythmaking of this kind, Anthony Smith has argued, is typical of modern nations that endeavour to shape their political identity by creating myths of origin (symbolic, sacred places), and myths of greatness (symbolic moments in time and their golden ages). Such stories affirm bonds to the ancient past by repainting landscapes, retelling legends and revisiting monuments. They endow the national identity with dignity by drawing on ancient chronicles and sacred tales (such as the lives of saints), and by resurrecting folk heroes (Smith, 1988, 1991).

By contrast with the national democratic camp, which took an evolutionary approach to society's transformation, the OUN promoted society's complete overthrow through violent revolution. The writers most often associated with the OUN and integral nationalism are: Yevhen Malaniuk, Olena Teliha, Leonid Mosendz, Oleh Olzhych, Yurii Lypa, Ulas Samchuk and Yurii Klen. Malaniuk, was already a well-known figure in the mid-twenties. The other six made their reputations in the thirties. Olzhych, Teliha and Mosendz were members of the OUN. Samchuk, although not formally a member, nonetheless acted as the organization's spokesperson. Klen only began corresponding with Dontsov and contributing to *Vistnyk* in the early thirties when he moved to Germany from the Soviet Union.

Like writers in the national democratic camp, those close to the OUN drew on Nietzsche. They, however, emphasized the German philosopher's praise of the Dionysian spirit, his fascination with deep and tumultuous forces, and his desire to smash through the rationalism of modern culture and morality. Their works differ in tone from the mainstream interest in history and myth by voicing impatience and anger with society, and calling for immediate, violent action.

Dontsov's particular contribution was the anti-conservative and anti-traditionalist call to overstep established political and moral codes. Some minor writers, such as Rostyslav Yendyk, openly identified with Dontsov's racist and anti-Semitic views.⁷ However, for the most part this cannot be said of the leading figures. Klen's political journalism in the thirties and Samchuk's in the forties was anti-Semitic: the articles Klen published in *Vistnyk* made disparaging comments about Jews, and Samchuk in 1941 wrote anti-Semitic editorials for *Volyn* (Volhynia), a newspaper published in Rivne under German occupation. On the other hand, Samchuk's creative writings both before and after the war, and to degree Klen's in the 1940s, show sympathies for the fate of Jews (Shkandrij, 2015, 241–43, 449–51).

Nevertheless, Dontsov's political mythmaking exerted an influence. So did his style, which favoured simple, dichotomous structures (Europe versus Russia, militancy versus pacifism, and so on). Some writers, and readers, embraced the depiction of ruthless heroes. However, many refused to accept the idea of violence as a means of self-assertion. The major writers close to the OUN recoiled from sanctioning extremism for its own sake and most could not stomach Dontsov's total rejection of the mainstream humanist tradition. Unfortunately, it was to this message that many younger people in the OUN were drawn (Golczewski, 2010, p. 512–20).

2. Myths of palingenesis, Rome and personal transformation

Roger Griffin has stated that the great organizing myth of the interwar period was that of palingenesis (the idea of a restorative regeneration through violence) (Griffin, 1991, 2007 and 2008). The integral nationalist version of palingenesis first appeared in Dontsov's *Natsionalizm* (Nationalism, 1926), a book that strongly influenced many members of the OUN. On the eve of the Second World War Oleh Olzhych, the OUN's spokesperson on cultural affairs, produced his own version of this myth. In 1941, in the essay "Ukrainska istorychna svidomist" (Ukrainian Historical Consciousness), he spoke of militancy and the martial ethos as traits of "Ukrainian consciousness" through the ages. His myths of origins were the legends of Dazhboh and Japheth (Olzhych, 2007, p. 274). Dazhboh was the chief god of pagan Rus'. Japheth, one of Noah's three sons, is mentioned in Genesis, where he is assigned the lands of northern and western Europe. Olzhych presented both the pagan Dazhboh and the biblical-Christian Japheth as the nation's founders and embodiments of its fundamentally warlike character. However, Olzhych's dominant theme remained group solidarity and soldierly commitment to the cause of independence. He did not share Dontsov's praise of fanaticism for its own sake, or his admiration of brute force.

For writers close to the OUN, Rome symbolized devotion to civic virtues, the military and the state, but Malaniuk focused on the catastrophic lack of Roman virtues in Ukrainian society, while Lypa, Samchuk and Mosendz were primarily concerned with the people's capacity for self-organization. Lypa's faith in the spontaneous activity of the masses brought him into conflict with Dontsov, who accused him of populism and in effect expelled him from *Vistnyk*. In fact, whenever the praise of

⁷ Other notable Nationalist writers include: Bohdan Kravtsiv, Oles Babii, Maksym Hryva (M. Zahryvny), Mykola Chyrsky (Podoliak), Ivan Irlivsky (Roshko), Andrii Harasevych, Ivan Kolos (Koshan) and Yurii Horlis-Horsky (Horodianyn-Lisovsky). Kravtsiv was best well-known as editor of the Galician periodicals *Visti* (1933–34), *Holos natsii* (1936) and *Holos* (1937–38), and the literary journals *Dazhboh* (1932–35) and *Obrii* (Horizons, 1936–37). Babii was author of the poem "Marsh" (March, 1929), which became an anthem of the OUN.

civic virtues turned in the direction of “democratic” self-organization, it threatened Dontsov's vision of caste rule and drew a fierce condemnation.

Personal transformation or spiritual rebirth played an important role in all three currents of nationalist writing, but pro-OUN writers tended to focus on an individual's conversion as resulting from a sudden discovery of national identity and connection to ancient origins. Personal transformation in the works of Mosendz, for example, is instantaneous and complete, suggesting that a dormant national consciousness can reappear unexpectedly to claim an individual.

Palingenesis, Rome and personal transformation are some of the “myths” that served as vehicles for expressing integral nationalism in literature and the arts. Writers used them in different ways with changing emphasis. In any case the OUN's attitude toward literature, as outlined in a resolution taken at a meeting of the Cultural-Educational Commission held during the founding congress in 1929, was ambiguous:

Basing its ideology on the nation's urge to life and growth Ukr[ainian] Nationalism will support cultural production that awakens a healthy drive toward strength and might, but will struggle against manifestations that weaken or ruin the healthy national organism. Synthesizing in its ideology conservatism and revolutionism, Ukr[ainian] Nationalism will nurture art that is rooted in healthy elements of our past, that draws on the cult and heroism of knighthood and the voluntaristic, creative attitude toward life. Ukr[ainian] Nationalism is attentive to the voice of the native land and nurtures culture as the organic flower of the Ukr[ainian] national soil, while opposing its culture to international, bolshevik culture. [...] It counterposes its art to Muscovite nihilism and pessimism, turning its attention instead to West[ern] Eur[opean] cultures with their cult of optimism, joy of life, and activism. (Muravsky, 2006, 162)

While stressing vitalism and purposefulness, the resolution does not clarify what constitutes the European tradition. Although some comments in *Vistnyk* implied that literature's role was limited to the dissemination of martial attitudes, the major pro-OUN writers challenged such simplifications, along with Dontsov's nihilistic attitude toward the country's past cultural achievements and its popular traditions.

Overarching literary-mythic structures were therefore important in shaping the three nationalist currents, but a closer examination reveals strong differences – even incompatibilities – in the way these structures were interpreted.

There were, of course, other issues that caused tensions between most pro-OUN writers and Dontsov. The scholarly literature has been remarkably reticent concerning them, especially the question of what constitutes good literature, Dontsov's relations with other journals, and the editor's “dictatorial” methods. Olena Teliha appears to have been the only major figure who behaved as a faithful acolyte. Malaniuk, Lypa, Mosendz and Samchuk all published outside Dontsov's sphere of influence, or tried to set up competing journals. Lypa openly broke with Dontsov in the mid-thirties; Mosendz, Samchuk and Klen did so in the postwar years, when they also renounced much of the OUN's interwar legacy.

3. The OUN's political ideologists and Dontsov

Moreover, in the political realm the OUN's leadership clashed repeatedly with Dontsov. His most violent conflicts with the OUN's ideologists were with Yevhen Onatsky, Dmytro Andriievsky and Volodymyr Martynets. Onatsky challenged Dontsov's blanket dismissal of past Ukrainian leaders (Dontsov, 1935a, 1935b), while Andriievsky described the editor as “organically incapable of living with people, either in private or public life” (Cherchenko, 2010, p. 321). However, Konovalts, the OUN's leader until his assassination in 1938, recognized Dontsov's influence and persisted in unsuccessful attempts to steer him (Cherchenko, 2007, p. 10–11). The main issue for the OUN was Dontsov's fanatical tone and unqualified support for fascism, and his imprecise and impractical demands for a complete break with past ways of thinking. When Onatsky polemicized with Dontsov over the issue of ruthlessness in politics, the latter branded him a half-hearted radical, an apologist for socialist ideas and a representative of the generation that failed to win independence in the revolutionary struggle of 1917–20 (Dontsov, 1935b, p. 920).

Another major and long-standing disagreement was over the idea of rule by an aristocratic caste. Stsiborsky reacted to Dontsov's call for a chosen order or elite by emphasizing the need for action in concert with the common people (Stsiborsky 1935, p. 64–65). Dontsov's contempt for the “common herd” was considered incompatible with the OUN leadership's desire to build a mass organization and launch a popular revolution.

Finally, there was a continual discussion within the OUN about the attitude toward violence. Although the organization maintained that violence was necessary in the struggle for independence, the leadership also recognized that physical aggression against opponents and the use of murder as a political weapon needed strict control, lest they harm the collective cause. Dontsov's writings imposed no such limitations. Instead, they encouraged the unleashing of unbridled and irresponsible mass violence. This is especially evident in his articles from 1937.

In short, for most of the thirties Dontsov expressed an ideology that was more extreme than the OUN's émigré leadership found acceptable. He introduced particularly xenophobic views, an uncritical worship of all dictators, including Hitler, and promoted “ecstatic” forms of expression that whipped up emotions and downplayed the role of reason.

Although the three currents of nationalism all nurtured visions of a transformed, modern Ukraine catching up with Western Europe in the economic and cultural realms, these visions differed significantly when it came to the pace and nature of the transformation. National democrats saw modernization as occurring in a more evolutionary fashion; integral nationalists viewed it in terms of a revolutionary upheaval; Dontsov introduced the idea of a psychological transformation and

glorified the idea of personal dictatorship. Moreover, his rejection of the past and the self-organizing “demos” (common people) projected a deep sense of national self-hatred.

Early in the thirties the OUN distanced itself from Nazism, refused to cut ties with established churches, rejected racial theory and challenged Hitler's idea of *Lebensraum* (the idea of Eastern Europe as a territory dominated by Germans). The OUN's ideologists and writers were aware that in *Mein Kampf* Hitler had described the German nation as responsible for civilization's most important achievements and the Slavs as subhuman. In response to Nazi ideology they attempted to develop a counter-mythology that focused on the need for strong, assertive individual commitment to the national cause. Whether the protagonists in these writings were workers, businessmen and farmers (as in Samchuk's works), soldiers and warriors (in Malaniuk, Lypa and Olzhych), strong-willed youth (in Teliha and Mosendz), or adventurers and conquerors (in Klen), they were portrayed as developing out of the mass of ordinary people. This kind of writing diverged from Dontsov's views, which expressed contempt for the ordinary, humble citizen and impatience with faith in a gradual process of education and in personal development. His attitude recalled that of an arrogant feudal lord set on driving the common “herd” to a predetermined goal. Such views were resisted within both the national democratic and the OUN camps. Eventually, this aspect of Dontsov's thinking alienated almost all creative writers.

In the years 1938–41 the OUN increasingly began to take on board Nazi anti-Semitism and irrationalism. Both the émigré leadership in Prague, Berlin, Vienna, and Rome, and the Homeland Executive (*Kraiova ekzekutyva*) in Galicia, adopted a more “Dontsovian” tone in their propaganda. Some figures in the leadership sensed that Hitler was being appeased and accommodated by Western powers, that Germany's absorption of Austria in 1938 and part of Czechoslovakia in 1939 had initiated a political reconstruction of Europe, and they began to hope that the Führer's declared policy of national self-determination might lead to the creation of a Ukrainian state. In this situation a number of these individuals took a Dontsovian “leap into the void” by advocating the tearing down of past political gods, and the throwing overboard of all moral restraint and gradualism. It was in these years that Dontsov exercised his greatest influence on Western Ukrainian youth, particularly on uncompromising young OUN members in Galicia who were eager for action.

In 1939, when Hitler and Stalin agreed to the secret treaty dividing Eastern Europe (the so-called Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact) and then invaded Poland, many leaders of the OUN in Galicia, including Stepan Bandera, were either released, or escaped from Polish prisons. The Homeland Executive in Galicia had in fact been acting autonomously since the early 1930s. In 1941 it broke from the émigré leadership of the OUN, forming the OUN-B or Bandera wing of the organization. Most émigré activists continued to recognize Andrii Melnyk, who had been appointed as a leader after the assassination of Yevhen Konovalets in 1938. This smaller group is often referred to as the OUN-M or Melnyk wing of the organization.

When the German-Soviet war broke out in 1941 both wings sent organizers into Central and Eastern Ukraine in the wake of the German advance. They quickly discovered that the local population was averse to any totalitarian creed; it rejected all talk of dictatorship and any agitation against democratic ideas. The OUN also learned within the first weeks of the German invasion that Hitler had no intention of setting up a Ukrainian state. Instead he began to arrest and execute activists from both wings of the OUN. Bandera was also arrested. As spontaneous armed opposition to the German occupation spread, the OUN-B adopted in 1943 an anti-imperialist, anti-totalitarian program that jettisoned its anti-democratic and anti-parliamentary positions. From this moment on both the OUN-B and the UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) which came under its control fought under a national liberationist platform, emphasizing “freedom for the individual and freedom for nations”.

At the end of the war, when many members of the OUN-B found themselves in emigration, pro-Western and pro-democratic views within the organization continued to grow. An internal opposition demanded a fuller democratization within the party and a public break with the pre-war totalitarian ideology and Dontsovism in particular. Eventually, in 1956, this opposition left the organization to form the OUN-Z (from *Zakordonom*, or Abroad). It is no small irony that those who left the organization had travelled full-circle and had now adopted the national democratic positions that the organization had found so abhorrent in the thirties. After 1956 many who remained in the OUN-B continued to argue for the adoption of a more democratic internal politics and for a public break with the ideology of the thirties. However, neither Bandera himself, nor Yaroslav Stetsko, who became leader after Bandera's assassination in 1959, were prepared to denounce Dontsov (Shkandrij, 2015, 98–99). As a result, in postwar decades the OUN-B failed to adequately distance itself, either in words or actions, from an embarrassing authoritarian legacy. Unsurprisingly the mainstream émigré community remained deeply suspicious of this party and its attempts to control all aspects of Ukrainian political life.

The Soviet regime continued to fight the armed underground resistance until the mid-1950s, while eradicating support within the population by imprisoning anyone suspected of contact with the partisans and deporting thousands of families. It became a standard tactic at this time to brand anyone who resisted the imposition of Soviet rule as a Banderite and to associate them with the Nazis and atrocities committed during the war.

In today's situation the term “Banderite” is used by Vladimir Putin's propagandists as a term of abuse, an attempt to define all Ukrainians who support national independence and a democratic state as “fascists”. In defiance of this disinformation, many Ukrainians mockingly describe themselves as “Banderites,” using the term as a synonym for “nationalist” or “freedom fighter.” However, there appears to be a limited understanding in the general population that the national movement in the 1930s and 1940s consisted of different competing currents, each of which went through a complex ideological development. An inability, or in some cases reluctance, to analyze the contest between these currents in the mid-twentieth century contributes to confusion surrounding the term “nationalism” in contemporary debates.

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