

THE FURIES OF NATIONALISM:
DMYTRO DONTSOV, THE UKRAINIAN IDEA, AND EUROPE'S TWENTIETH
CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

Trevor Erlacher: *The Furies of Nationalism: Dmytro Dontsov, the Ukrainian Idea, and Europe's Twentieth Century*
(Under the direction of Donald J. Raleigh)

Using the biography of diplomat, publicist, editor, ideologue, and literary critic Dmytro Dontsov (1883-1973) as a framework, this dissertation places Ukrainian integral nationalism—an authoritarian rightwing doctrine that subordinates individual, class, and humanitarian interests to those of the nation—into its broader regional, cultural, and intellectual historical contexts, from its roots in late imperial Russia to the early Cold War in Canada. As the “spiritual father” of this ideology, Dontsov’s formative experiences in the Russian-Ukrainian and Polish-Ukrainian borderlands, his cosmopolitan interests and aspirations, and his transnational life path were paradoxical yet necessary factors in the development of his worldview and its resonance in Ukrainian politics and literature. He progressed from heterodox Marxism, to avant-garde fascism, to theocratic traditionalism, cultivating a literary circle to forge new national myths, radicalizing a generation of Ukrainian youth, and influencing Ukrainian thought and culture to this day. Despite the ruptures in his politics and the contradictory sources of his ideology, a continuum of what I term “iconoclastic authoritarianism” and “cosmopolitan ultranationalism” links Dontsov, the young socialist, to Dontsov, the elderly mystic.

To Megan

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Historiography.....	6
Iconoclastic Authoritarian, Cosmopolitan Ultranationalist.....	21
Sources.....	37
CHAPTER 1: THE ROOTS OF UKRAINIAN INTEGRAL NATIONALISM: DMYTRO DONTSOV'S FORMATIVE YEARS, 1883-1914.....	40
Becoming Ukrainian in "New Russia".....	46
Becoming a Heretic in East Central Europe.....	58
Nationalism and Marxism in the Late Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires.....	87
Conclusion: The Fervor of the Convert and the Narcissism of Small Differences.....	94
CHAPTER 2: "THE <i>GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG</i> OF UKRAÏNOPHILIA:" DMYTRO DONTSOV AND THE ENTANGLED EASTERN FRONT, 1914-1918.....	97
The Ukrainian National Movement at the Outset of the First World War.....	103
The Union for the Liberation of Ukraine.....	108
Epistles to the Germans.....	113
The League of Russia's Foreign Peoples	125
The Hetmanate.....	134
Conclusion: "Good Europeans" and "Great Politics".....	160

CHAPTER 3: “TO THE OLD GODS!” REACTIONARY MODERNISM AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF UKRAINIAN INTEGRAL NATIONALISM, 1919-1925.....	165
The Versailles Settlement and the Realignment of Ukrainian Nationalism.....	176
The Ukrainian-Polish-Soviet War and the Treaty of Riga.....	182
The Foundations of Ukrainian Integral Nationalism.....	189
The Formation of Ukrainian Nationalist Groups in Postwar East Central Europe.....	208
Dontsov, Fascism, and the Avant-Garde.....	227
Conclusion: New Traditions.....	236
CHAPTER 4: NATIONALISTS, COMMUNISTS, AND NATIONAL COMMUNISTS: DMYTRO DONTSOV, THE OUN, AND SOVIET UKRAINE, 1926-1933.....	239
The Assassination of Petliura and Dontsov on Jewish-Ukrainian Relations.....	243
Making Ukraine “Faustian” Again.....	253
The Dontsov-Lypyns’kyi Polemic and the Formation of the OUN.....	268
Dontsov’s Critics and the Image of the Russian Enemy.....	285
National Communism, “Active Nationalism,” and the “Executed Renaissance”.....	300
Conclusion: Dontsov the Moskal’?.....	322
CHAPTER 5: THE PERSONAL AND THE POLITICAL: FEMINISM, NAZISM, AND THE <i>VISTNYKIVTSI</i> , 1926-1939.....	325
<i>Vistnyk</i> between Hitler and Stalin.....	328
Romance and Rivalry at the Salon Dontsova.....	343
The “New Woman” and the “New Europe”.....	363
Disagreements in the Family.....	371
Conclusion: In Search of Allies on the Eve of the Final Battle.....	387
CHAPTER 6: FROM POLITICS TO MYSTICISM: DONTSOV’S FINAL BATTLE AND THE FATES OF THE <i>VISTNYKIVTSI</i> , 1939-1973.....	396

The Sundering of the <i>Vistnykivtsi</i>	398
Caste, Race, and the Nazi-Soviet War: Dontsov and the Reinhard Heydrich Institute...	416
Born Again: A Cold War Epilogue.....	432
Conclusion.....	463
CONCLUSION.....	467
Reactive Nationalism: Nietzsche contra Dontsov.....	471
Which Europe? Dontsov's Afterlife in Post-Soviet Ukraine.....	478
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	494

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 - Map of Ukraine's <i>guberniias</i> on the eve of World War I.....	46
Figure 1.2 - Dmytro Dontsov's older brother Sergei.....	50
Figure 1.3 - Dontsov's hometown of Melitopol'	51
Figure 1.4 - Mug shot of Dontsov, 1907.....	58
Figure 1.5 - Mug shots of Dontsov, 1907.....	58
Figure 1.6 - Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi.....	59
Figure 1.7 - Mariia Bachyns'ka-Dontsova.....	76
Figure 2.1 - Dmytro Dontsov in middle age.....	105
Figure 2.2 - Ukraine during World War I.....	137
Figure 2.3 - Hetman Skoropads'kyi, Erich Ludendorff, and Hindenburg.....	151
Figure 3.1 - Map of interwar Ukraine.....	178
Figure 3.2 - Józef Piłsudski.....	183
Figure 3.3 - Symon Petliura.....	183
Figure 3.4 - Colonel Ievhen Konoval's'kyi.....	183
Figure 3.5 - Ievhen Malaniuk.....	221
Figure 3.6 - Iuryi Lypa.....	221
Figure 3.7 - Oleh Ol'zhych.....	221
Figure 4.1 - The First Congress of the OUN in Vienna.....	282
Figure 4.2 - Mykola Khvyly'ovyi.....	315
Figure 4.3 - Oleksandr Shums'kyi.....	315
Figure 5.1 - The Neoclassicists.....	335

Figure 5.2 - Olena Teliha.....	350
Figure 5.3 - Natalia Livyts'ka-Kholodna.....	350
Figure 5.4 - Caricature of Dontsov as Don Quixote.....	351
Figure 5.5 - Olena Teliha and Dmytro Dontsov in Warsaw.....	360
Figure 5.6 - Olena Teliha and Dmytro Dontsov in Vorokhta.....	360
Figure 5.7 - Olena Teliha and Dmytro Dontsov in L'viv.....	361
Figure 5.8 - Olena Teliha and her husband Mykhailo Teliha.....	361
Figure 5.9 - Natalia Gerken-Rusova.....	373
Figure 5.10 - Caricature of Dontsov and Mykhailo Rudnyts'kyi.....	374
Figure 6.1 - The 1941 OUN(M) expedition to Kyiv.....	409
Figure 6.2 - MUR members (Malaniuk, Shevel'ov, Samchuk).....	436
Figure 6.3 - Dontsov near the end of his life.....	463
Figure 7.1 - Commemorative plaque to Dontsov in Melitopol'.....	489
Figure 7.2 - Commemorative plaque to Dontsov in L'viv.....	489

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABN	Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations
BN	Biblioteka Narodowa (National Library of Poland)
CURB	Central Ukrainian Relief Bureau
DD	Dmytro Dontsov Archive
FNE	Front of National Unity (<i>Front natsional'noi iednosti</i>)
HUNM	Group of Ukrainian Nationalist Youth
KP(B)U	Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine
KPZU	Communist Party of Western Ukraine
LAC	Library and Archives of Canada
LFR	League of Russia's Foreign Peoples (<i>die Liga der Fremdvölker Russlands</i>)
LUN	League of Ukrainian Nationalists
LVU	League for the Liberation of Ukraine
MUR	Artistic Ukrainian Movement (<i>Mystets'kyi Ukrainis'kyi Rukh</i>)
NEP	New Economic Policy
NKVD	People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs
OVKUH	Organization of the Higher Classes of Ukrainian Gymnasium Youth
OUN(B)	Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Bandera Faction
OUN(M)	Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Mel'nyk Faction
OUN(z)	Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, Abroad (<i>za kordonom</i>)
PUN	Leadership of the Ukrainian Nationalists (<i>Provid ukrains'kykh natsionalistiv</i>)
PPS	Polish Socialist Party

RSDRP	Russian Social Democratic Workers Party
SOUN	Union of Organizations of Ukrainian Nationalists
SUNM	Union of Ukrainian Nationalist Youth
SVU	Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (<i>Soiuz vyzvolennia Ukrainy</i>)
TsDALIM	Central State Archive of Literature and Art
TsDAHO	Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine
TsDAVO	Central State Archive of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine
TsDIAK	Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Kyiv
TsDIAL	Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in L'viv
UDKhP	Ukrainian Democratic-Agrarian Party
UKP	Ukrainian Communist Party
UkrSSR	Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
USKhD	Ukrainian Union of Agrarian-Statists
UNDO	Ukrainian National-Democratic Alliance
UNR	Ukrainian People's Republic (<i>Ukrains'ka Narodna Respublika</i>)
UPA	Ukrainian Insurgent Army (<i>Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armiia</i>)
UPC	Ukrainian Parliamentary Club
UPSF	Ukrainian Party of Socialist Federalists
UPSR	Ukrainian Party of Socialist Revolutionaries
UPNR	Ukrainian Party of National Work (<i>Ukrains'ka partiia natsional'na roboty</i>)
USDRP	Ukrainian Social Democratic Workers Party
UVO	Ukrainian Military Organization (<i>Ukrains'ka viis'kova orhanizatsiia</i>)
ZUNR	Western Ukrainian People's Republic

INTRODUCTION

The subject of Ukrainian nationalism, previously obscure outside of Eastern Europe, moved to the center of the world's attention in the wake of Ukraine's 2014 Maidan Revolution. Named after Independence Square in central Kyiv, this pro-Western, liberal-democratic upheaval ousted an unpopular authoritarian regime loyal to Moscow, prompting Russia's annexation of the Crimea in March and a Russian-Ukrainian war in the Donbas region. Insisting that the revolution was a coup d'état by Ukrainian "fascists" backed by Western powers, the Kremlin's international propaganda machine justified these aggressive interventions by invoking the specter of Nazism and the Ukrainian collaborationist groups of World War II: namely, the protofascist Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), founded in 1929, and its military wing, the guerrilla Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), which from 1943 to 1949 engaged in the largest internal struggle against Soviet power in the country's history. Although the Russian media lavished the self-proclaimed descendants of the OUN and UPA with attention out of all proportion to their power—they were but a small faction of a much larger demonstration—this strand of Ukrainian nationalism does represent a symbolically potent force in Ukrainian culture and politics. Many of them have volunteered to fight in eastern Ukraine, joining paramilitary battalions or the official armed forces, and carrying on what they consider a long tradition of defending Ukraine from perennial Russian aggression. Typically reimagined by their sympathizers as beleaguered democrats resisting the evils of both Nazism and Stalinism in Ukraine, the UPA and the OUN have provided many Ukrainians with an effective countermythology to the largely (though not

entirely) Russocentric Soviet myth of the Great Fatherland War (i.e. the Nazi-Soviet conflict in World War II, from June 1941 to May 1945). Indeed, the symbols, slogans, songs, and heroes of the OUN and UPA were present in the vast crowds that drove the Maidan Revolution, during which the rightwing political party *Vseukrains'ke ob'iednannia "Svoboda"* (All-Ukrainian Union "Freedom") and the paramilitary group *Pravyi sektor* (Right Sector) successfully promoted the use of the nationalist watchword: "*Slava Ukraini! Heroiam slava!*" ("Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the heroes!"). But these groups found Ukrainian society at large to be disinterested in the personality cult of Stepan Bandera (1909-1959), the most prominent and divisive of the OUN's leaders. The radical rightwing ideology and violence of latter-day "Banderites" has frightened or embarrassed most of Ukrainian society.¹ Yet, with rightwing nationalism ascendant throughout the region—from the Law and Justice Party in Poland, to Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's "illiberal democracy," to Putinism and the upsurge in irredentist Russian nationalism—Ukrainian politics could conceivably follow suit, abandoning hard-won rights, liberties, and cosmopolitan aspirations for the sake of wartime cohesion, self-reliance, xenophobia, authoritarianism, militarism, and iron discipline.

Ukraine's Europe-oriented politics and the Kremlin's anti-Western reaction have brought about a resurgence of interest in the history, contents, and modern carriers of the OUN's ideology, usually termed "integral nationalism"—an authoritarian rightwing doctrine that

¹ Although tokens of the latter have worked their way into Ukraine's government, *Svoboda*, *Pravyi sektor*, and other far rightwing organizations performed quite poorly in the parliamentary and presidential elections that followed the Maidan Revolution. As of 2017, there is nothing even remotely resembling a genocidal "fascist junta" in Kyiv, and no reason to suppose that one is just over the horizon. Apart from the general malaise of corruption produced by the regime of ousted president Viktor Yanukovich (1955-), the motivating force behind the Maidan Revolution and the Russo-Ukrainian conflict was not Ukrainian nationalism or nefarious Western meddling in Russia's "near abroad," but Ukrainian attitudes shifting away from a preoccupation with survival, security, stability, and identities (typical of post-Soviet Russian society) toward a desire for self-expression, new values, and modernization along "European" lines. Yaroslav Hrytsak, "Ignorance Is Power" *Ab Imperio* 3 (2014): 218-28. On the life and personality cult of Stepan Bandera, see Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera: The Life and Afterlife of a Ukrainian Nationalist: Fascism, Genocide, and Cult* (Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2014).

subordinates individual, class, and humanitarian interests to those of the nation.”² Still, for all the controversy and mystique surrounding it, the strand of nationalism that connects the OUN to the marginal yet dangerous militias of post-Maidan Ukraine remains understudied and poorly understood. What were the foundational beliefs of the OUN, its affiliates, and its successors? How, when, and where did these ideas originate and evolve? Who articulated them, and on the basis of what precedents?

This study—a contribution to the cultural and intellectual history of Ukrainian integral nationalism, from its roots in the late nineteenth century to the early Cold War—seeks to address these questions. It places Ukrainian integral nationalism into its broader regional, cultural, and intellectual historical contexts, using the biography of the journalist, editor, diplomat, publicist, ideologue, and literary critic Dmytro Dontsov (1883-1973), the chief progenitor of this ideology, as a framing device. Dontsov represents an ideal case study for comprehending Ukrainian integral nationalism because he stood at the forefront of its conceptualization and dissemination, and embodied its concerns and values. His long, itinerate life intersected with prominent figures of Eastern European history in over a dozen cities across the globe, from the southeastern Ukrainian town of Melitopol’ to Montreal, Canada. Both mirroring and anticipating broader changes in the Ukrainian national movement, Dontsov turned from the far left to the far right in the course of World War I and its revolutionary fallout, simultaneously yet independently crafting an ideology akin to Italian Fascism. Like many Ukrainian integral nationalists, he

² The early theorist and historian of nationalism Carlton Hayes coined the term “integral nationalism” for the militant, expansionist ideologies of nations in possession of independent statehood (such as Nazi Germany or Imperial Japan). Hayes considered it the opposite of “Risorgimento nationalism,” which he applied to stateless nations struggling to build an independent, liberal nation-state (such as nineteenth-century Poland or Italy). The sense in which I am using the term is different: following the convention established in much of the literature on the OUN, my definition of “integral nationalism” is broader, applicable to both state and stateless nationalities, and derived from the earlier formulation of French royalist Charles Marraus (1868-1952), for whom *nationalisme intégral* meant placing the nation above all other values and obligations. Carlton J. Hayes, *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism* (New York: R.R. Smith, Inc., 1931).

gravitated toward German National Socialism (Nazism) during the 1930s then distanced himself from it after World War II, crossing the Atlantic and converting to pious, strictly anti-Communist positions. Dontsov personified the Ukrainian exile experience, positioning himself as a leading representative of the many thousands of émigrés unable or unwilling to live in the Soviet Union, and an ambassador for Ukrainian interests throughout Europe. A prolific, polyglot writer, he exerted a major influence on the non-Soviet Ukrainian elite and public as an editor of and contributor to literary and political periodicals in Kyiv, Vienna, St. Petersburg, Prague, and L'viv—cities teeming with avant-garde cultural and political experimentation in the early twentieth century.³ He shaped Ukrainian politics and literature in multiple capacities: as student radical in Kyiv and St. Petersburg and a participant in the Revolution of 1905; as international antitsarist propagandist and secret agent of the German Foreign Office in Switzerland during World War I; as diplomat and information minister of the Central Powers-backed Ukrainian State (also known as the Hetmanate) in 1918; as “conservative revolutionary” ideologue, cultural critic, and editor of the leading literary and political journal⁴ of the interwar Ukrainian emigration; as pro-National Socialist journalist in wartime Berlin, Prague, and Bucharest; and, finally, as professor of Ukrainian literature at the University of Montreal during the early years of the Cold War. Progressing from heterodox Marxism, to avant-garde fascism,⁵ to theocratic

³ Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981); Jacques Le Rider, *Modernity and Crises of Identity: Culture and Society in Fin-de-siècle Vienna* (New York: Continuum, 1993); Irene Rima Makaryk, and Virlana Tkacz, eds., *Modernism in Kiev: Kyiv/Kyïv/Kiev/Kijów/Ķiev : Jubilant Experimentation* (New York: University of Toronto Press, 2010); Mark D. Steinberg, *Petersburg Fin De Siècle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011); and Katerina Clark, *Petersburg, Crucible of Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

⁴ *Literaturno-Naukovyi Visnyk* (Literary-Scientific Herald, 1922-32), revived under Dontsov's sole discretion as *Vistnyk* (Herald, 1933-39).

⁵ Throughout this work, “fascism” as a generic phenomenon is lowercased while the specifically Italian original is uppercased.

traditionalism, Dontsov expounded a philosophy of will power, “creative violence,” idealism, and fanaticism, cultivated a literary circle to give it aesthetic content,⁶ and inspired a generation of Ukrainian youth to pursue national revolution by any means necessary.

Dontsov’s part-Marxist, part-Nietzschean worldview was an artifact of the pan-European “crisis of reason,” which provided fertile ground for the proliferation of rightwing extremism well before opposition to the spread of Bolshevism gave it a *bête noire* and a model of organization.⁷ He cast Ukraine as the decisive combatant in a worldwide clash between the “progressive” Occident and the “reactionary” Orient—between “European civilization” and “horde-like Muscovy” (i.e. Russia). Valorizing willpower over rationality and decrying pacifistic, internationalist values, Dontsov’s incendiary prose inspired generations of Ukrainians to violent action, above all through their participation in the OUN and UPA. In addition to the insurrections, assassinations, terrorism, ethnic cleansing, racism, and espionage generally associated with the latter groups, however, Dontsov’s work also fostered a rich tradition of defiant Ukrainian prose and poetry. Ukrainian nationalists ever since have regarded him as one of their “spiritual fathers” and strived to put his ideals into practice.

But how and why did Dontsov become a “conscious” Ukrainian and a nationalist at all in a time and place (late imperial Russia) when the majority of ethnic Ukrainians were peasants disinterested in national politics and identities, and when even moderate forms of Ukrainian nationalism had yet to command a mass following, remaining the purview of a small and suppressed intelligentsia? Up to World War I, activist Ukrainian intellectuals remained in Phase A of Miroslav Hroch’s account of nation creation: researching the “apolitical” cultural

⁶ That of the so-called *Vistnykivtsi*, including the poets, novelists, and essayists Olena Teliha, Yevhen Malaniuk, Yurii Lypa, Oleh Ol’zhych, Leonid Mosendz, Yurii Klen, and others.

⁷ J. W. Burrow, *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848-1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

foundations of national unity in language, folklore, and history to be invoked by a larger cadre of activists in Phase B—converting increasing numbers of the target ethnic group to nationalist causes—and Phase C—a fully developed social movement made up of a variety of political parties embracing the majority of the nation.⁸ Much of the existing literature on Dontsov has implicitly assumed that the radical brand of Ukrainian nationalism for which he is known today was somehow nascent from birth, destined for realization as a natural reaction to certain events, and closed to revision thereafter. This ahistorical, essentialist approach to the question cannot account for what motivated the founder (not to mention the followers) of Ukrainian integral nationalism to embrace the ideas and identities that he did when he did, despite the many easier options available to him. To grasp the appeal and meaning of Dontsovism, one must think about the young Dontsov, not retrospectively, as a Ukrainian integral nationalist in the making, but contextually, as a traveler proceeding along a tortuous road punctuated by forks and pitfalls, unaware of what lay ahead and inclined to forget or embellish what lay behind. Similarly, one must view the mature Dontsov not as the unwavering prophet of a new worldview that he proclaimed himself to be, but as a seeker of knowledge and fame amid a surfeit of would-be prophets, constantly adapting to historical forces beyond his control and powers of prediction. Dontsov's personal, professional, and intellectual journey took a serpentine course through the most catastrophic chapters of Ukrainian and world history.

Historiography

Much of the scholarship on Dontsov has treated his identity in essentialist, teleological terms as immutable, innate, or inevitable, either retrospectively ascribing to him an unchanging,

⁸ Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups Among the Smaller European Nations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

heroic (or demonic) Ukrainianness and a stable nationalist ideology, or dismissing him altogether as a “typical representative of the imperial Russian intelligentsia,”⁹ depending on the author’s political commitments. This approach—though favorable to the creation of unifying myths or cautionary tales—effaces the complexity of human thought and development. Ukrainian commentators who oppose Dontsov’s ideology have tended to downplay his influence, regarding him as an embarrassing, possibly Russian-influenced anomaly in Ukrainian intellectual history. To the extent that they have acknowledged his relevance and studied him, their assessments of his role in Ukrainian politics and literature since the 1920s have been overwhelmingly negative. The resulting scholarship is simultaneously defensive and condemnatory, yet unwilling to analyze Ukrainian integral nationalism on its own, constantly changing terms to sympathize with the individuals who earnestly believed in it, however discomfiting that might be. By contrast, Dontsov’s admirers, despite writing a great deal more about him than his detractors do, have resisted discussing unsavory aspects of his life and work, tending to exaggerate his importance and philosophical originality, and showing little interest in the ideologically inconvenient or irrelevant vagaries of his personality and intellectual journey. The normative Ukrainian nationalist account of Dontsov downplays the non-Ukrainian and cosmopolitan elements that shaped his worldview and overlooks the fluidity of his (national) identity, his racism and anti-Semitism, the mercuriality of his beliefs and values, his crises of faith, and other impurities. The product is an icon of the unwavering “prophet of the national idea” who realized the evils of Marxism and virtues of romantic nationalism in an irreversible, crisis-born conversion experience. Dontsov propounded a cast-iron worldview, telling Ukrainians what they needed to

⁹ Omeljan Pritsak, “V. Lypyns’kyj’s Place in Ukrainian Intellectual History,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 9, no. 3 (December 1985): 245-62.

hear when they needed to hear it and jolting them into the nationalizing mainstream of modern Europe, away from the totalitarian barbarism of the Soviet “prison of nations.”

Typological disputes have dominated the literature on Dontsov and his ideology, which he termed “active nationalism” (*chynnyi natsionalizm*) and presented most comprehensively in his 1926 book *Natsionalizm* (Nationalism). Should he be categorized as fascist, integral nationalist, both, or neither? Is Dontsov totalitarian or antitotalitarian? Modernist or traditionalist? Are there any fundamental, ideational continuities underlying the drastic shifts in his thought, or was Dontsov a chameleon or opportunist? Commentators have answered these questions depending upon the contexts in which they wrote, their national and political identities, their moral evaluations of Dontsov and his influence, and the aspects of his career upon which they have chosen to focus. Debates about Dontsov and his legacy are often also debates about Ukrainian nationalism as a whole. Those who have endeavored to salvage Dontsov or the nationalist movements he inspired from historical ignominy have tended to deny that his ideology can be categorized as totalitarian, fascist, racist, or anti-Semitic. Others have stopped short of dismissing Dontsov as a fascist, preferring the less inflammatory term “integral nationalist” or “authoritarian rightist,” which leaves him open to both sympathetic and negative assessments. Still others have taken the existence of interwar Ukrainian fascism under Dontsov’s tutelage as proof that Ukrainians really are and have always been “normal” Europeans, even during their period of statelessness.¹⁰ Some scholars insist that Ukrainian statelessness, and its corollary liberationist tendencies, make Dontsovism, at worst, an instance of protofascism directed against an intolerably oppressive status quo. According to this interpretation, totalitarianism and fascism should be applied only to state ideologies, not movements aimed at the attainment of statehood. Commentators hostile toward Ukrainian nationalism in general, and

¹⁰ Kost Bondarenko, “Fashyzm v Ukraini. Do istorii problemy,” *Ukrains’ki varianty* 2 (1997): 74-82.

its interwar varieties in particular, have asserted that Dontsov and his doctrine were neither original nor independently Ukrainian phenomena, but abject puppets of the fascist and imperialist powers to Ukraine's west.

Ukrainian socialist scholars—both Soviet and non-Soviet—began writing about Dontsov in the late 1920s, shortly after he achieved celebrity status in interwar eastern Galicia, grounding their censure of his ideas in Marxism. Soviet writers also had to take into account the occasionally conflicting political requirements of the Soviet state and Leninism, including Moscow's desire to undermine interwar Poland by promoting Ukrainian nationalist and separatist sentiments in Galicia, while carefully controlling or repressing them inside Soviet Ukraine. In early Soviet discourse, however, Dontsov was beyond the pale even if he was a thorn in Warsaw's side. Soviet critics categorized Dontsov's "active nationalism" as "petit-bourgeois nationalism" or, more polemically, "fascism." Following the then common Marxist interpretation of this term as late capitalism baring its true, antidemocratic nature, this account maintains that fascist parties and movements appear when the bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie, fearing proletarian revolution, enter a crisis, dismantle parliamentary and electoral institutions, appeal to the basest national egoism of the masses, and utilize police and paramilitary groups to attack leftists and organized workers. The *raison d'être* of fascism—its rhetoric about revolution and social welfare notwithstanding—is to protect the capitalist status quo. Soviet authors were likely to denounce any form of anti-Communism as fascism or petit-bourgeois nationalism. Since Dontsov was not only fervently anti-Communist, but anti-Russian as well, their assessment of him and "active nationalism" was extremely negative.¹¹

¹¹ Representative works in this vein include: Volodymyr Ievdokymenko, *Krytyka ideinykh osnov ukrains'koho burzhuaiznoho natsionalizmu* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1967); Volodymyr Ievdokymenko, "Reaktsiina sutnist' ideolohii ukrains'koho burzhuaiznoho natsionalizmu," *Filosofs'ka dumka* 1 (1974): 94-104; Volodymyr Ievdokymenko, *Burzhuaiznyi natsionalizm — zapeklyi voroh internatsional'noho iednannia trudiashchykh* (Kyiv:

Most Soviet works on the subject of Dontsov's brand of Ukrainian nationalism, tending to be more propagandistic than scholarly, offer little of interest to biographers. There were, however, several exceptions prior to the early 1930s.¹² Denouncing Dontsov's ideology as fascism in the epithetical, nonacademic sense of the term was *de rigueur* for Soviet writers, but some expressed original ideas on the subject. Volodymyr Iurynets's 1926 review of *Natsionalizm*, for example, examines the influence of the radical French philosopher Georges Sorel and the Polish Marxist Stanisław Brzozowski on Dontsov, challenging the assertion by other Soviet authors that his ideology lacked a theoretical foundation, labeling him an "extreme fetishist of the state."¹³ After World War II, the Soviet annexation of Western Ukraine and the pacification of the UPA insurgency there, the subject of radical Ukrainian nationalism became something of a taboo in Soviet discourse, broached only to blacken it and insist on its foreignness to genuine Ukrainian life. The quality of Soviet literature criticizing Dontsov and his thought degenerated into simplistic caricatures of the man as a translator of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* into Ukrainian, a hireling of the imperialist West with no ideas of his own, and a cheap propagandist of no relevance to "real" (i.e. pro-Soviet) Ukrainians anywhere. Soviet Ukrainian academics nevertheless recognized Dontsov, whose ideas they considered to be the theoretical

Polityvydav Ukrainy, 1976); Iuryi Rymarenko, *Burzhuaiznyi natsionalizm ta ioho 'teoriia' natssia* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1974); Klym Dmytruk, *Bezbatchenyky. Pravda pro uchast' burzhuaiznykh natsionalistychnykh i tzerkovnykh iiearkhiv u pidhotovtsi napadu fashists'koi Nimechchyny na SRSR* (L'viv: Kameniar, 1972); Klym Dmytruk, *Zhovto-blakytni bankroty* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1982). On the subject of Ukrainian integral nationalism in late Soviet discourse and propaganda, see Trevor Erlacher, "Denationalizing Treachery: The Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in Late Soviet Discourse, 1945-85," *REGION: Regional Studies of Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia* 2, no. 2 (2013): 289-316.

¹² See Ie. Hirschak, "Khvyl'ovyzm ta dontsovshchyna," *Zakhidna Ukraina* 2 (1930): 47-52; M. Motuzak, "'Zovsim novoho type ukraintsi' (Do orhanizatsiino-ideolohichnykh ta prohramovykh osnov ukrains'koho fashyzmu)," *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy* nos. 7-8 (1929), 70-79, and no. 9, 70-81; S. Tudor, "Bellua sine capite. "Literaturno-naukovi vistnyk," L'viv (January-June 1931), in S. Tudor, *Tvory: V 2-kh tomakh*. vol. 2 (Kyiv: AN URSR, 1962), 330-39.

¹³ V. Iurynets, "Novyi ideolohichnyi manifest ukrains'koho fashyzmu," *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy* 2-3 (1926), 61-87, 72. More recent scholarship, discussed below, disputes this claim.

basis of the OUN and UPA, as enough of a threat to warrant dozens of philippics. After the 1920s, Soviet authorities strictly regulated access to Dontsov's publications, which were available only to Communist Party members with special clearance, or, perhaps, in the form of illegally produced and circulated copies (*samvydav/samizdat*).

Mykhailo Sosnov'skyi, a co-founding member of the OUN(B)-controlled Canadian League for the Liberation of Ukraine (*Liga vyzvolennia Ukrainy*, LVU), executive of the World Congress of Free Ukrainians from 1969 to 1971, and personal associate of Dontsov's, wrote the first biography of the latter shortly after his death in the spring of 1973. Despite its biases and shortcomings, Sosnov'skyi's 1974 study remains one of the most comprehensive treatments of Dontsov's life and thought to date. His evaluation of the ideologue's impact is largely favorable, albeit with certain reservations. "In Ukrainian life," Sosnov'skyi writes, "a situation existed that needed a 'doctor' with the psychology and talent of Dontsov. Dontsov's appearance was a historical inevitability (*zakonomirnist*)." ¹⁴ "Active nationalism" was a necessary response to the failure of attempts to build an independent nation-state during the Ukrainian revolution (1917-1921), entailing a wholesale rejection of the nineteenth century and its idols—democracy, human rights, liberalism, socialism, and egalitarianism. ¹⁵ While Dontsov did not simply copy fascism, his ideology shared certain elements with it, including voluntarism (a philosophical doctrine that asserts the primacy of will over reason), elitism, striving for the 'spiritual rebirth' of society (the "palingenetic myth"), ¹⁶ the *Führerprinzip* (leadership principle), the call for an "initiative

¹⁴ Mykhailo Sosnov'skyi, *Dmytro Dontsov, Politychnyi portret: z istorii rozvytku ukrains'koho natsionalizmu* (Toronto: Trident International, 1974), 259.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 168.

¹⁶ On the concept of "palingenetic ultranationalism," see Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

minority,” the creation of a stronger “new man,” and action for its own sake.¹⁷ Such ideas were not so much an outgrowth of Dontsov’s individual psychology and intellectual choices but an unavoidable by-product of the European zeitgeist for which neither he nor his followers can be held responsible. Without Dontsovism, however morally repugnant one might find it, Sosnovs’kyi implies that the Ukrainian nation may have failed to survive the staggering brutality of the twentieth century. Portraying Dontsov as a typical European and a political imperative, Sosnov’skyi cites the French integral nationalist thinkers of Action Française—Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras—as Dontsov’s closest analogues. “Under their influences,” Sosnovs’kyi writes, “the doctrine of fascism, including Dontsov’s doctrine of ‘active nationalism,’ formed.”¹⁸ Sosnovs’kyi pays insufficient attention to the more immediate influences on Dontsov from Russian, Polish, Jewish, and Germanic sources, treating his conversion to radical Ukrainian nationalism as a foregone conclusion, teleologically predestined by European reality and Ukrainian exigency. Consequently, he reads Dontsov’s mature ideology and fiercely pro-Ukrainian identity backward into his prenatalist youth, seeking out its roots everywhere and assuming the naturalness of the ideologue’s eventual position. There is little room in Sosnovs’kyi’s account for a discussion of the contingency, nuance, flux, and multivalence in Dontsov’s intellectual biography, or for an acknowledgement of the contradictions, impurities, paradoxes, and lapses in faith and judgment that the founder of Ukrainian integral nationalism exhibited. Dontsov becomes the avatar of a foundation myth who unwaveringly propounded certain ancient and self-evident truths rather than the idiosyncratic and all-too-human seeker that

¹⁷ Sosnovs’kyi notes that Dontsov’s ideology matches Ernst Nolte’s definition of fascism. Ibid., 256. Nolte defined fascism as “anti-Marxism [that] seeks to destroy the enemy by the evolverment of a radically opposed and yet related ideology by the use of almost identical and yet typically modified methods, always, however, within the unyielding framework of national self-assertion and autonomy.” Ernst Nolte, *The Three Faces of Fascism* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1965), 20-21.

¹⁸ Sosnovs’kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 289.

he was. Sosnovs'kyi thinks of Dontsov's Ukrainianness and nationalist ideology as things essential, ineluctable, and inherent to him, but these were acquired characteristics, subject to revision in the course of his existence, that developed alongside seemingly contradictory ideas, feelings, and identities (cosmopolitanism, socialism, exile, and assimilation).

Other historians of the Ukrainian diaspora weighed in more critically on Dontsov and his legacy, sometimes working from expressly ideological premises in the politically charged atmosphere of the Cold War era. Ivan Lysiak-Rudnyts'kyi, for example, made clear his preference for the monarchist conservative ideology of Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi and his followers (particularly Osyp Nazaruk—one of Dontsov's most avid contemporary critics), over and against the demagogic voluntarism of "active nationalism." Initially, Lysiak-Rudnyts'kyi argued that Dontsovism was genetically distinct from Fascism and Nazism, staking out a position close to that of American historian John Armstrong, whose work on collaborationism draws parallels between the Hungarian, Croatian, Slovakian, and Ukrainian cases during World War II.¹⁹ Later in life, however, Lysiak-Rudnytskyi switched positions, writing: "with the whole of his authority [Dontsov] directed Ukrainian nationalism down the fascist channel."²⁰

The Ukrainian-American historian and political scientist Alexander J. Motyl published the first English-language monograph on Dontsov and the intellectual origins of the OUN, *The Turn to the Right*, in which he rejects the fascism label for Dontsov and his followers on the grounds that "fascism was a way of *organizing* a state, while Ukrainian Nationalism was a way

¹⁹ Armstrong was the first to label the OUN "integral nationalist," but largely overlooked Dontsov's influence on the organization. John Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism, 1939-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955); "Collaborationism in World War II: The Integral Nationalist Variant in Eastern Europe," *Journal of Modern History* 40, no. 3 (September 1968): 196-410.

²⁰ Ivan Lysiak-Rudnyts'kyi, *Istorychni esei*, vol. 2 (Kyiv: Osnovy, 1994), 251-5, 2493.

of *attaining* a state.”²¹ Whereas the state preceded the nation in Italian Fascist thought, the nation necessarily enjoys primacy over the state in Dontsov’s conception. Whether one accepts this line of reasoning or not, the book’s ten-year scope, ending in 1929, the year of the OUN’s founding, leaves this organization’s actual period of existence untouched. As Motyl acknowledges, Dontsov and elements within the OUN fell under the influence of Nazism in the course of the 1930s. Though Motyl concludes that “Ukrainian Nationalism was as organically Ukrainian a phenomenon as any other political current of the 1920s,”²² he (like Sosnovs’kyi) exaggerates the influence of French integral nationalism on Dontsov and the OUN, and almost entirely ignores the preceding Polish, Zionist, German, and Russian strands of radical nationalism with which they had direct contact. Motyl astutely notes Dontsov’s counterintuitive Yankophilia in the 1920s, describing the latter’s stated preference (as late as 1929) for the US model of what he called a “conservative democracy” made up of “free individuals,” properly restrained and directed by the “moral tyranny of the majority.”²³ (Dontsov thus applauded precisely what the British philosopher John Stuart Mill decried as the most insidious enemy of liberty in his celebrated essay *On Liberty*.) Motyl contends that Dontsov’s democracy was not totalitarian, and not even authoritarian.²⁴ Yet, although Dontsov occasionally flirted with the ideal of Anglo-American classical liberalism in 1920s, his decidedly antilibertarian, majoritarian understanding of it would strike most Americans as odd, and in any case not applicable to the untutored and intemperate Ukrainian peasantry, such as it was. What Dontsov admired in the United States

²¹ Alexander J. Motyl, *The Turn to the Right: The Ideological Origins and Development of Ukrainian Nationalism, 1919-1929* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 166.

²² *Ibid.*, 173.

²³ *Ibid.*, 66, 74-75, 82.

²⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, “Dukh amerikanizmu,” *LNV* 98, no. 4 (1929): 357-71, 362.

citizenry of his imagination (he relied on Alexis de Tocqueville's mid-nineteenth-century work, *Democracy in America*, which, ironically, singled out Russia for praise too) was the same thing that he admired in the Bolshevik activists or Mussolini's Blackshirts: iron discipline, high energy, mobilization capacity, *esprit de corps*. Given the less-than-ideal circumstances in places such as Ukraine, Italy, Germany, and Russia, Dontsov reasoned, extensive state intervention was needed to do what American society achieves through collective self-mobilization. His rumored liberalism, exaggerated and short-lived, was a moot point. Taking a dim view of the ideologue, Motyl attributes Dontsov's remarkable success swaying the nationalist youth and veterans of interwar Galicia to the poverty of Ukrainian political thought at the time.

Polish scholars have been particularly active in counteracting the often uncritically pro-OUN/UPA, pro-Dontsov historiography of governmental and nongovernmental Ukrainian nationalists. But Polish commentators bring their own perspectives, and of course, biases to the subject. Wiktor Polishchuk's forays into the matter convey palpable outrage. He asserts that Dontsov's ideas predominated in the OUN's ideology, cult of the nation, apotheosis of violence and war, territorial expansionism, racism, amoralism, elitism, and dictatorial authoritarian tendencies.²⁵ Weighing in on the label debate, Polishchuk's reasoning—that since fascism is a form of integral nationalism, the converse, every instance of integral nationalism is also an instance of fascism, and hence the OUN and Dontsov were fascists—is a logical fallacy (affirming the consequent, or the confusion of necessity and sufficiency).²⁶

Polish historians Tomasz Stryjek and Roman Wysocki have produced more dispassionate, evenhanded analyses of the subject. Stryjek periodizes Dontsov's intellectual

²⁵ Wiktor Polishchuk, *Doktryna D. Doncowa — tekst i analiza* (Toronto: Poliszczuk, 2006); Wiktor Polishchuk, *Źródła zbrodni OUN i UPA* (Toronto: Poliszczuk, 2003), 10-12.

²⁶ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 38-39.

evolution in the following manner: 1) the nation as an agent of progress—Ukraine as a cause of revolution (1913-1914); 2) the nation as a state—Ukraine as a part of *Mitteleuropa* (1914-1918); 3) the nation as a historical task—Ukraine as the bastion of Europe (1921); 4) the nation as will—Ukraine as a manifestation of the force of nature (1922-1933); 5) the nation in the plan of ‘fascism’—Ukraine as *Sturm und Drang* (1933-1939); and 6) the nation as a duration (*tryvannia*)—Ukraine as a conglomerate of races (1939-1950s).²⁷ Stryjek sees opportunism in these vicissitudes. Dontsov jumped from one position to the next in search of the ideas that, at any given moment, carried the most social and political purchase. Thus, for example, Dontsov supported fascism as a European force capable of destroying Bolshevism “using Bolshevik methods” and thus liberating Ukraine.²⁸ Stryjek accepts the designation of Dontsov’s nationalism as “integral” because “nationalism of his type consists of the recognition of the nation as a singular value that cannot be subordinated to any restrictions, which is to say the kind [of value] without which no other values can emerge.”²⁹ While Stryjek acknowledges that there is “no basis to deny that Dontsov [was] a supporter of fascism, but one cannot forget that this was an eastern- or east-central-European fascism and that Dontsov was a popularizer of an idea and not an actor in the fascist movement in Ukraine.”³⁰ In the years following Hitler’s rise to power, Stryjek argues, Dontsov and the OUN drifted toward Nazism, but remained integral nationalist until 1941, when both fully embraced fascist ideas (with the latter engaging in genocidal

²⁷ Tomasz Stryjek, *Ukraińska idea narodowa okresu międzywojennego: Analiza wybranych koncepcji* (Wrocław: Fundacja na Rzecz Nauki Polskiej, 2000), 123-59.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 146.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 189.

³⁰ Tomasz Stryjek, “Europejskość Doncowa, czyli o cechach szczególnych ideologii ukraińskiego nacjonalizmu,” in G. Motyka and D. Libionka, eds., *Antypolska akcja OUN-UPA 1943-1944: fakty i interpretacje* (Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2002): 19-32.

behavior) only to back away from them in 1944 and thereafter.³¹ Instead of comparing Ukrainian integral nationalism to Nazism, Roman Wysocki focuses on its relation to Polish integral nationalism, juxtaposing the intellectual and political biographies of the chief theorists of these two movements—Dontsov and Roman Dmowski (1864-1939), the leader of the Polish National Democracy (*Endecja*) movement. Wysocki makes a compelling and well-researched case for the former's sizable debt to the latter.³²

The L'viv-based historian Oleksandr Zaitsev and a leading expert on Ukrainian integral nationalism has challenged both the blinkered partisanship of the pro-Dontsov and pro-OUN camp, and the sententious, accusatory scholarship of opposing Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, and Westerners. Zaitsev's research recognizes the presence of both liberationist and totalitarian elements in Ukrainian integral nationalism, which he divides into Dontsov's "active nationalism" and the OUN's "organizational nationalism" (as well as the "creative nationalism" of the lesser known Front of National Liberation, led by Dmytro Paliiv). Emphasizing the sacralization of politics and palingenetic myth-making at the center of Ukrainian integral nationalist thought, Zaitsev describes the ideology and movement as a secular religion in the making. Following the custom, Zaitsev intervenes in the typological debate, but proposes a new category: "ustashism" (from the Croatian Ustaša, a radical nationalist group that collaborated with the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia). Zaitsev defines ustashism as "revolutionary integral nationalism developing under conditions of perceived foreign oppression and using violence for the purpose of national

³¹ Tomasz Stryjek, "Fashyzm czy integral'nyi natsionalizm? OUN u suchasnykh suspil'nykh diskusiiakh i v istorihrافیchnii ta natsional'nyi perspektyvi," *Ukraina moderna* 20 (Kyiv, 2013): 123-51.

³² Roman Wysocki, *W kręgu integralnego nacjonalizmu: Czynny nacjonalizm Dmytra Doncowa na tle myśli nowoczesnych Romana Dmowskiego* (Lublin: UMCS, 2014).

liberation and for creating an independent authoritarian state.”³³ Ustashism differs from fascism so long as it is stateless but transforms into fascism in cases where it achieves statehood.³⁴

Zaitsev reads Dontsov’s project as the creation of a national mythology—an “ersatz religion” showing Ukrainians their origins in a golden age, their unity as an organism, their Europeanness and role as a bulwark against the chaotic forces of the Orient (i.e. Russia), their civilizing mission, the division of humanity into superior and inferior types (and the natural right of the former to rule to the latter), and the coming apocalypse—a holy war against the forces of darkness.³⁵ The great drawback of Zaitsev’s account is that it ends at the beginning of World War II, when this idea was finally put to the test.

Zaitsev considers Fascism and Nazism to have been the chief influences on Dontsov in the 1920s and 1930s, respectively. Dontsov openly embraced the label, albeit with reservations and only “for the lack of a better word.” At other times he denied that “active nationalism” was synonymous with fascism, even while praising Mussolini, Hitler, and other fascist leaders of the era. He thought of fascism, Zaitsev contends, as the negation of allegedly harmful influences on European civilization—socialism, pacifism, cosmopolitanism, and so on. Ultimately, Zaitsev echoes Motyl’s argument that Dontsov’s concern—creating an independent state—was fundamentally different from that of Italian Fascism—expanding and reorganizing an already existing one. Zaitsev cites the nonbiological, nonracial character of Dontsov’s anti-Semitism as evidence that he cannot be classified as a Nazi either. Instead, the ideologue was, as historian

³³ Oleksandr Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm (1920-1930-ti roky): Narysy intelektual'noi istorii* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2013), 13, 485; Oleksandr Zaitsev, “Fascism or Ustashism? Ukrainian Integral Nationalism of the 1920s-1930s in Comparative Perspective,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 48, no. 2-3 (June-September, 2015): 183-93.

³⁴ Stryjek, “Fashyzm chy integral'nyi natsionalizm?” 147-49.

³⁵ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 205-22.

Mykhailo Chuhuienko has argued, a “conservative revolutionary” or a “literary protofascist” in favor of a “third way,” neither liberal nor Marxist.³⁶ (Viewed through this lens, the radically antiliberal Italian esotericist and ultra-traditionalist Julius Evola [1898-1974] bears a particularly strong likeness to Dontsov.) Zaitsev does not accept Chuhuienko’s dismissal of claims that Dontsovism is “totalitarian” thanks to its traditionalism and repudiation of the “rational-technocratism of utopian Communism,” writing that “dogmatism, fanaticism, and creative violence” “elitism, antipathy toward ‘partisanship,’ sympathy toward fascist regimes . . . and, finally, a conception of nationalism as a modern religion gave Dontsov’s worldview expressly totalitarian features.”³⁷ Zaitsev regards Dontsov’s role in shaping the OUN as crucial, but not canonical. More important, perhaps, was his radicalization of the generation of Galician youth who joined the OUN in large numbers between 1929 and the outbreak of war. Dontsov hewed to the anti-Semitic line until the end of World War II (and, more privately, until the end of his life), but the Bandera faction of the OUN charted a more liberal, ethnically tolerant course in its 1943 program, which Dontsov sharply criticized.³⁸

In addition to accusations of anti-Semitism, totalitarianism, and fascism, one of the central controversies in the historiography on Ukrainian integral nationalism concerns the relationship between and comparison of Dontsov and the OUN. To what extent did Dontsov provide the OUN with its ideology at different stages in its development, before and after the 1940 schism between the older, more cautious followers of Andrii Mel’nyk (1890-1964) and the

³⁶ On this point, Zaitsev cites the contemporary Russian “philosopher” of neo-Eurasianism and National-Bolshevism, Alexander Dugin, who argues that the “conservative revolutionaries” of “the Third Way” are both to the right of the rightists in their extreme traditionalism, and to the left of the leftists in their total opposition to the status quo, albeit from the antithetical, anti-modern direction. *Ibid.*, 235-36.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 237.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 281.

younger, more militant devotees of Stepan Bandera? If the official ideology of the OUN significantly differed from “active nationalism,” was one more radical, totalitarian, or racist than the other? In her dissertation on Dmytro Dontsov, Ukrainian scholar Iryna Shlikhta regards Dontsov as a democratic thinker at heart who proposed national dictatorship only as a bridge to an Anglo-American style republicanism.³⁹ She acknowledges his significant ideological sway—though chiefly on matters of rhetoric and abstractions—among the leaders and rank and file of the OUN’s factions until the final years of World War II, but argues that he cannot be held responsible for the organization’s antidemocratic outlook prior to 1943. Dontsov had always maintained his distance from the organization (some thought irresponsibly), which had its own official ideologues, but he became a scapegoat for many Ukrainian nationalists eager to escape their politically suspect pasts after the war, but he retained his supporters and admirers despite the changing times.⁴⁰

Canadian scholar Myroslav Shkandrij, by contrast, argues that the OUN, though laboring under morally questionable Dontsovist premises, charted a decidedly more moderate course, in part because OUN members were the ones charged with realizing nationalist ideals and programs in practice, and thus faced the severe repercussions for illegal or subversive actions.⁴¹ Privileged and sheltered by his position as a bystander engaged in purely intellectual work (with the complicity of the Polish authorities, whom he refrained from antagonizing), Dontsov could afford to take more extreme and uncompromising positions on the desired social and political

³⁹ Iryna Shlikhta, *Dmytro Dontsov iak ideoloh i teoretyk ukrains'koho natsionalizmu* (PhD diss. Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, 2005).

⁴⁰ This includes OUN leaders Stepan Bandera and Iaroslav Stets'ko, who uncritically embraced Dontsovism that all members do the same, and Rostyslav Iendyk, who wrote an apologia: Rostyslav Iendyk, *Dmytro Dontsov, Ideoloh ukrains'koho natsionalizmu* (Munich: Ukrains'ke, 1955). Shlikhta, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 156-88.

⁴¹ Myroslav Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism: Politics, Ideology, and Literature, 1929-1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

order of the prospective Ukrainian state and on the means permissible in attaining it. Shkandrij implies that Dontsov himself is largely to blame for the corruption of interwar Ukrainian nationalist youth and Ukrainian literature. The postwar disavowal of Dontsov among his former protégés and the OUN becomes a tale of a liberal-democratic awakening and redemption in Shkandrij's telling, while Dontsov and Dontsovism becomes an aberration relegated to the dark days of the 1920s and 1930s, when the inexperience of youth and the humiliation of defeat left Western Ukrainians and Ukrainian émigrés morally and intellectually defenseless against the temptations of unfettered hatred and desperate remedies.

Iconoclastic Authoritarian, Cosmopolitan Ultranationalist

My study highlights flux and contingency, as well as the contradictions, paradoxes, and ambiguities that defy the easy categorization of individuals and their beliefs across time.⁴² It seeks to contextualize Dontsov and Dontsovism diachronically, placing his words, actions, and associations in their early and mid twentieth-century contexts, and using his publications and correspondences to reconstruct the social, political, and intellectual environments within which he developed and disseminated his ideology. It thus offers a portrait, not only of Dontsov, but also of the people who surrounded him, the spaces he inhabited, the ideas that inspired him, and the institutions with which he associated himself. Situating the extremism of Dontsov and his followers against this backdrop, I aim to grasp the roots and resonance of his thought in

Ukrainian society, and to put it into dialogue with radical right- and leftwing ideologies, regimes,

⁴² As literary scholar Benjamin Harshav has put it: "To be sure, individuals often embrace ideologies or various beliefs, and some of them hold to them for a long time. Yet, in principle, it would be more appropriate to see the individual as an open semantic field through which various tendencies crisscross: some of them are involuntary and some he himself embraced and helped formulate, some become dominant and others merely hover in the field of consciousness. We are dealing here with sensibilities and attitudes, which are fuzzy and ambivalent and not as systematic and consistent as ideologies would like to be. Individuals, even highly articulate ones, are often undecided on various matters, inconsistent, compromising between opposite ideas, changing their position with time." Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 53-54.

and movements elsewhere in turn-of-the-century, interwar, and postwar Europe. What shaped Dontsov's worldview and evolution? How did his worldview relate to contemporary intellectual and political currents, such as Ukrainophile populism, Russian pan-Slavism and Eurasianism, Italian Fascism, German National Socialism, Bolshevism, Zionism, and Wilsonian liberalism? How were his ideas received internationally and domestically at different historical moments? What does his career and intellectual development tell us about Ukrainian nationalist culture? To what extent did his ideas continue to influence the political culture of the Ukrainian diaspora, and what impact did they have upon official and unofficial Soviet Ukrainian discourse after Stalinism? What relevance do Dontsov and Dontsovism hold for post-Soviet and post-Maidan Ukraine? More broadly, what might his intellectual biography tell us about European nationalisms that became mass movements relatively late, during the tumult of the first half of the twentieth century?

Despite the ruptures in his politics and the contradictory sources of his ideology, a continuum of what I term iconoclastic authoritarianism links Dontsov, the young socialist activist, to Dontsov, the elderly ultraconservative mystic. He tailored his message to appeal to and promote the "authoritarian personality," and exhibited many attributes of it himself. Although he was not thinking in these exact terms, Dontsov's martial notion of the "new" "strong man" with the "stone heart and burning faith" needed to carry out a merciless war for Ukrainian national liberation celebrates the extraordinary violence and unflinching discipline of which this personality type is capable.

The psychological traits of the authoritarian personality, as described by Theodor Adorno, Else Frankel-Brunswick, Daniel Gevinson, and Nevitt Sanford in the classic sociological work *The Authoritarian Personality*, include a rigid conception of identities ("stereotypy"),

“superstition,” “authoritarian submission” to the powerful, “authoritarian aggression” against the weak, “conventionalism,” obsessive prudery, contempt for empathy and sentimentality (“anti-intracception”), a fixation on “power” and “toughness,” “anti-intellectualism,” “destructiveness,” “cynicism,” and a tendency to scapegoat the “inferior” minorities in one’s midst rather than face one’s own anxieties and shortcomings (“projectivity”).⁴³ Possession of an authoritarian personality, Adorno et al assert, predicts an individual’s likelihood of becoming anti-Semitic and fascist, which they sought to measure using the “F-scale.” The “democratic personality”—which they originally termed the “revolutionary personality” in line with their Marxist roots before deferring to the pressures of their American publishers—represents the healthy antipode of the authoritarian.

Critics of the study have objected that the political right does not have a monopoly on authoritarian pathologies. Deploying a stock concept of Freudian psychoanalysis, Adorno et al attribute the authoritarian personality to the Oedipal complex, wherein suppressed homosexual tendencies lead to patricidal hostility, which is suppressed in turn out of the fear of punishment (castration, humiliation) by the father, which produces an exaggerated obedience to and idolization of him and of authority figures in general.⁴⁴ The anxious authoritarianism produced by repressed sexual impulses gives irrationality free reign, empowering political ideologies, like

⁴³ Theodor Adorno, Else Frankel-Brunswick, Daniel Gevinson, and Nevitt Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1950).

⁴⁴ Ibid., 192. There were numerous attempts to diagnose fascism, as well as Communist or liberal-capitalist varieties of authoritarianism, as a kind of mass neurosis on the basis of a synthesis of Marx and Freud, blaming the ego- or superego-driven repression and oppression of desire (libidinal energy) for the observed perversions of modern individuals in the first place. Two of the most influential works in this vein are Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (London: Routledge, 1987) and Wilhelm Reich, *Die Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1933). (The latter—an Austrian from Eastern Galicia (in modern-day Western Ukraine)—was expelled from the Communist Party of Germany for his criticisms of the Soviet regime in the same book.) Other philosophers and psychologists have gone further, aiming to dethrone the Oedipal complex itself (along with the edifice of psychoanalysis and institutional psychiatry): see Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (New York: Penguin, 2009); and Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* (London: Allen Lane, 1979).

Dontsov's, that rely on mysticism, emotionalism, and fantasies of salvific, cathartic violence. The point here is not to take a (probably inadvisable) plunge into "psychohistory," but to describe the personal (as opposed to political) factors in the appearance and growth of Ukrainian integral nationalism. In any event, the source material relating to his childhood is too scarce for anything more than speculation. I will not hazard an Oedipal diagnosis, but simply note that Dontsov's father and mother died before he reached puberty, depriving him of the usual familial authorities at an early age, and there is no reason to suppose that he resented his outward conformity to heterosexual norms. We can only surmise the adult Dontsov's actual beliefs and feelings imperfectly; his inner psychology cannot be disentangled from his published views and public personae. Nevertheless, the concept of the authoritarian personality, treated as a Weberian "ideal type," is descriptively and analytically useful.⁴⁵ It closely matches Dontsov, both as a public intellectual—that is, a body of texts bearing his name or imprimatur—and as a flesh-and-blood human being.

But the match is an idiosyncratic one; iconoclastic tendencies—that is, open antagonism toward all sorts of received authorities—tempered Dontsov's authoritarianism. However much he regarded power and hierarchy as the keys to salvation, Dontsov played the role of a consummate gadfly more than once in his life. His rebellious gravitation toward the illegal, revolutionary, non-Russian left during his first thirty years shows an early penchant to defy state

⁴⁵ An ideal type is a hypothetical abstraction—a subjective fiction—intended to make sense out of the seeming chaos of social reality, which cannot be studied in the positivistic, objective way that the natural sciences permit. The validity of an ideal type in the fields of sociology, economics, and history is a question of interpretive adequacy. By contrast, the natural sciences generate causal laws that correspond with observed reality. The latter are encumbered in qualitatively different ways by epistemological problems of perspective and bias. Weber argues that the historian or social scientist must be self-conscious and publicly forthright about the value commitments and subjectivities they bring to their research and analysis. So, in the spirit of intellectual integrity, I confess to having an aversion to many of Dontsov's ideas and beliefs, but nevertheless strive to produce a nonpartisan and clear-sighted account of them. Max Weber, "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy" and "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and Economics," in E. A. Shils and H.A. Finch, eds., *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (New York: Free Press, 1949).

authority and culturally hegemonic convention, even if it was in the name of a new authority and ostensibly older, more legitimate traditions. Unwilling to surrender himself to party discipline and always hostile toward the reigning intellectual and political authorities in Ukraine, he could not tolerate ideological deviation and other displays of insubordination and disloyalty among his followers. Dontsov and his wife Mariia never had biological children, but they became parental figures to the younger generation of nationalist writers who rallied around their journal, *Vistnyk*. The ideologue became a “spiritual father” to his closest acolytes—sons and daughters who either grew to regard him as a stifling patriarch, asserted their independence, faced his wrath, and turned against him, or remained loyal to the guru and his teachings even to the point of martyrdom. In short, Dontsov permitted himself to be an individualist, a rebel, a dissenter, and a wanderer, but decried this unmoored, fractious condition in his fellow countrymen, browbeating subordinates into conformity with his vision and publicly savaging apostates.

Again, Dontsov reserved the right to modify his ideological program whenever and however he saw fit, dropping former beliefs and allegiances like so many discarded snakeskins, but conviction breaks in his thought do not indicate opportunism or a lack of rigor so much as a lifelong conviction that the national interests of Ukraine, however defined, trumped moral or intellectual concerns in changing historical contexts. He readily sacrificed logic and consistency for the sake of emotive impact or political expedience, vulgarized the ideas of the writers whom he invoked to fit the rhetorical needs of the moment, and moved chameleon-like between political, cultural, and philosophical trends. In practice, Dontsov took to heart Nietzsche’s dictum—“the will to a system is a lack of integrity”⁴⁶—but that did not stop him from advertising his major works as a coherent “worldview” (*Weltanschauung*) built upon stable

⁴⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, edited by Aaron Ridley and Judith Norman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 159.

philosophical foundations. The latter varied considerably from one decade to the next: from the conventionally Russo-Marxian atheism, materialism, positivism, and anticlericalism of Dontsov's 1910 work, *Shkola a relihiia* (The School and Religion), to the amoralism, vitalism, and voluntarism of his 1926 magnum opus, *Natsionalizm* (Nationalism); from the Social Darwinian "democracy" of the peasantry and petite bourgeoisie found in his 1921 monograph *Pidstavy nashoi polityky* (The Foundations of Our Politics), to the theocratic traditionalism and anthropological racialism of *Dukh nashoi davnyny* (The Spirit of Our Antiquity) (1944). Dontsov followed the intellectual fashions of contemporary Europe closely, amassing the foreign names and quotations that he marshaled to impress and bewilder his readers into submission. He rarely grappled with the substance of the chic Western and Russian concepts that he injected into Ukrainian politics, and generally had little to offer that was novel and positive. Instead, Dontsov was most effective as a critic and a denigrator, especially of subjects closer to home. His jaundiced yet incisive attacks on Russian imperialism (both tsarist and Bolshevik) and on the shibboleths of nineteenth-century Ukrainian populism show a familiarity with the subject matter that can come only from personal experience and a fascination born of suppressed affinity. Dontsov loathed what he knew best and knew best what he loathed.

This intellectual restlessness manifested itself even when it came to core philosophical and epistemological paradigms, such as positivism and antipositivism (or neo-Romanticism). As a youth Dontsov adhered to the positivism of the Russian *fin de siècle*, a doctrine that hoped to supersede "theological" and "metaphysical" thinking with a materialist account of nature and society as one in the same, subject to identical laws, and capable of being improved upon by enlightened intellectuals. Cocky, atheistic, and anti-Romantic—not unlike a Ukrainian Bazarov, the quintessential "nihilist" of Russian literature, as depicted in the famous 1862 novel *Fathers*

and Children by Ivan Turgenev—Dontsov attacked and ridiculed Christianity, patriotism, and the state and educational institutions sustained by them as a rebellious student activist. There was no place for blind faith, effete sentimentality, or the raptures of patriotism in the universe according to this austere brand of positivism and “scientific socialism.”⁴⁷ However, as far as Dontsov’s generation of aspiring intellectuals was concerned, positivism had already become a creed of the Russian and Ukrainian intelligentsias’ proverbial “fathers,” hence banal and hackneyed. Thus, breaking with the classical Marxism of his youth, Dontsov joined the “revolt against positivism”—a continent-wide rejection of the nineteenth century’s conviction that scientific achievements guaranteed human progress. The fantastic technologies and disenchanting bureaucracies of the modern world seemed only to expand the destructive capacity of the beast in man. Mechanized warfare, social dislocation, industrial exploitation, crumbling empires, scattering nationalities, and urban rot left Dontsov and many of his contemporaries cynical and pessimistic about modernity and its prospects. Despairing at the “nihilism” and “decadence” of the times, which allegedly deprived people of authenticity, nobility, and stability, they yearned for a golden age and sought the untimely values and baptismal fire that would usher in a total rebirth on the basis of something lost and elemental. Like others, Dontsov turned to ancient myths, medieval polities, forgotten creeds, blood, soil, race, and caste. Still, he habitually fell back into positivist habits, cherry-picking theories from the natural and social sciences to buttress his claims. (The clearest instance of this wavering was his formulation of a pseudoscientific, Nazi-inspired, racist definition of the Ukrainian and neighboring nations during the 1930s and

⁴⁷ Richard Pipes, *Struve, Liberal on the Left, 1870-1905* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 295-96. The “Legal Marxist” cum liberal nationalist Kadet Petr Struve, Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdiaev, and others dealt with the contradiction between romantic nationalism, the vaunted cure for a perceived crisis of meaning, and positivism by positing a dualism of transcendental (spiritual) and empirical (political) realms. To the extent that Dontsov acknowledged such a contradiction, he failed to grapple with it on the same philosophical level, wavering between positivism and romanticism as it suited the moment.

1940s.) Dontsov assailed the purported idols and mores of the preceding generations of the Ukrainian and Russian intelligentsia, as well as the Russian Empire and its literature, which his family and upbringing had taught him to revere, but he never escaped this patrimony, recapitulating it despite himself in novel ways. He took part in the perennial sons' rebellion against the fathers (who were, in their time, also iconoclastic), but did so in the name of forefathers, authorities, and traditions that were older still.

The “ethno-symbolist” theory of nationalism, which, in contrast to “modernist” accounts of nationalism, regards the premodern symbols, myths, historical memories, and homelands of named ethnicities as a *sine qua non* of nationalisms and nation-states (which are, all the same, an almost entirely post-1789 phenomenon), best corresponds with Dontsov's case and the Ukrainian experience in general. John Armstrong, one of the pioneers of ethno-symbolism (as well as the historiography of Ukrainian integral nationalism), highlights the importance of the *longue durée* for the emergence of modern nations, arguing that centuries-old “mythomoteurs”—the constitutive myths that imbue ethnic groups with a sense of self-conscious collective purpose—drive processes of semiotic exclusion and agglomeration based on ways of life (nomadic or sedentary), religions, imperial polities, laws, and languages.⁴⁸ Another leading proponent of ethno-symbolism, Anthony D. Smith, argues that modernist theories of nationalism, such as the industrialization thesis of his mentor Ernst Gellner, tend to define “nation” and “nationalism” as

⁴⁸ Armstrong draws on the insights of social anthropologist Frederik Barth, claiming that the group-forming boundary is more durable than the attitudes and perceptions of the members it encloses. He thus understands ethnicity and nationality phenomenologically as a cluster of moving sentiments, ascriptions, and self-ascriptions organized into mythic, symbolic, and communicative structures that constitute interdependent ethnic groups. Moreover, as Barth explains, “categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information, but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained *despite* changing participation in the course of individual life histories”—an observation demonstratively borne out in Dontsov's case. John A. Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982); Frederik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1969), 9.

synonymous with the canonical Western European cases (Britain, France, Germany, etc.), and consequently suffer from a partial, Eurocentric perspective.⁴⁹ Chronically afoul of the state (or states) it lacks and representing an almost entirely pre-industrial population, Ukrainian nationalism would not have survived if it did not refer to an already existing *ethnie*, as Smith terms it, including a collective proper name (Ukrainian), a myth of common ancestry (the early East Slavs and Kyivan-Rus'), shared historical memories (especially of the early modern Cossack Period), a common culture, an associated homeland, and a sense of solidarity or kinship among sufficiently large swaths of the population or at least its elites. *Ethnies*, too, are discursively constructed "myth-symbol complexes," but they are necessarily prior to nations and nationalisms (in extreme cases by millennia). Also emphasizing the long-term cultural precursors to nationalist movements, John Hutchinson insists on the distinction between "political" nationalism, which seeks statehood (and, by extension, membership in the international community of nation-states), and "cultural" nationalism, whose chief concern is not statehood, but the moral regeneration of an ethnic community and its metamorphosis into a self-sufficient nation. He observes that cultural nationalist intellectuals play a key role in defining and reconstructing ethnic communities through the revival of ancient myths, symbols, and memories, sometimes working in parallel with political nationalism, at other times, especially on the heels of failed attempts at state-building, representing an alternative to it.⁵⁰ Such intellectuals appear in times of crisis and can point the way toward the cultural, social, and political renewal of ethnic groups. Additionally, cultural nationalists' regard humanity as "infused with a creative force

⁴⁹ For a succinct statement of his life's work on the subject, see Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2009). Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cornell University Press, 2009).

⁵⁰ John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation* (London: Unwin and Allen, 1987).

which endows all things with an individuality,” and the nation as “the product of its unique history, culture, and geographical profile,” irrespective of its accidental and nonessential possession of a state. To the cultural nationalist, the nation is an organic entity with a living agency and personality. As such, according to Hutchinson, the nation thrives or dies according to natural laws and primal urges, with or without legal sanction, and depends upon the episodic injection of vigorous youthful rebellions and the retrenchments of ageing traditionalists to regenerate itself in perpetuity.⁵¹

This conception of nationalism strongly resonates with how Dontsov perceived his life and work and the historic purpose to which he felt himself called—bringing about the spiritual rebirth of the Ukrainian nation through the “recovery” of time-honored myths, symbols, memories, institutions, and moralities.⁵² In reality, Dontsov and his coterie understood from reading Sorel that they had to *create*, or at least reimagine, these myths and traditions. Paradoxically, the outward form of their traditionalism took inspiration from iconoclastic, avant-garde literary conceptions, such as expressionism and futurism, and modernist philosophy (vitalism, voluntarism, phenomenology, etc.).

Drawing on the integrated East-Central European framework pioneered by Omer Bartov, Eric Weitz, and others in *Shatterzone of Empires*, my study grapples with Dontsov’s ideology as it was shaped by conditions in the ethnically diverse borderlands between competing, mutually radicalizing powers—first the Russian, German, and Austro-Hungarian empires, then the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Bartov and Weitz define “borderlands” as “both zones of coexistence

⁵¹ John Hutchinson, “Cultural Nationalism and Moral Regeneration,” in John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, eds., *Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁵² “Ukraine still does not exist, but we can create it in our souls. A nation does not need objective preconditions to extort from history its claim to statehood. . . . We must re-awaken the idea of supremacy of one ethnic group on one specific territory—an aspiration which has come down from our ancestors and which they wished to leave to their progeny.” Dmytro Dontsov, *Khrestom i mechem, Tvory* (Toronto: Liga Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, 1965), 394-95.

and multiethnicity, and of violence and devastation” where “the entwining of the domestic and the international” is “a *defining feature* . . . precisely because this is where competing empires, national movements and states, and profound social grievances met and intersected with a population characterized by great diversity.”⁵³ Dontsov’s home region, the Russian-Ukrainian borderlands of southeastern Ukraine, was certainly a borderland in this sense.⁵⁴ Similarly, prior to the Second World War, western Ukraine (the eastern halves of the historic provinces of Galicia and Volhynia) was a quintessential borderland. As the epicenter of Ukrainian integral nationalism and Dontsov’s base of operation during his most productive years, western Ukraine also gave rise to ideologies and movements determined to turn it into a fortress of ethnic homogeneity, bound by absolute borders and purged of “hybridity” (i.e. the amalgamation of the colonizer with the colonized). Dontsov’s experiences at these points of interethnic and intercultural contact, overlap, hybridization, contestation, forced and voluntary assimilation, made him painfully aware of the problems of nation and empire in an era when Europeans were stretching both concepts to their limits.

Coupled with reliance upon European support in the struggle against Russian imperialism, Ukraine’s demographic and geopolitical situation forced Dontsov and his followers into the roles of transnational actors with extensive exposure to a host of imagined “others.” Moreover, the metropolises that Dontsov inhabited—St. Petersburg, Kyiv, L’viv, and Vienna—were diverse provincial, national, or imperial capitals, and as such nurtured an explosive *mélange* of cosmopolitanism, modernism, traditionalism, and nationalism in the early twentieth century.

⁵³ Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz, eds., *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013), 8, 154.

⁵⁴ Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Freedom and Terror in the Donbass: A Ukrainian-Russian Borderland, 1870s-1990s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Dontsov's writings contain a profound tension between local and cosmopolitan identities typical of intellectuals engaged in the imagining of national spaces and communities fragmented by colonial practices (in this case, cultural Russification and the autocracy's intensive exploitation of Ukrainian agriculture for the sake of industrialization in Moscow and St. Petersburg).⁵⁵ His extreme devotion to a postimperial Ukrainian (and European) identity compensated for the humiliation he experienced as a national minority growing up in the late Russian Empire.

He was loath to admit it and repeatedly attacked for it, but the style and substance of his thought betrayed the influence of Russia's potent, illiberal traditions rather than those of Western Europe, whose democratic and rationalist values he ultimately rejected.⁵⁶ Despite his exaltation of the Ukrainian village and its traditions, Dontsov urged his compatriots to adopt the industrial, authoritarian, militant features of modernity that he found lacking in the rural, "anarchic," and passive Ukrainians. Ukraine's status as a historically stateless, largely peasant nation speaking a denigrated language exacerbated Dontsov's tangible feelings of inferiority as a product of the Russian-Ukrainian borderlands.⁵⁷ He tried to resolve this dilemma by rhetorically

⁵⁵ Dominic Boyer and Claudio Lomnitz, "Intellectuals and Nationalism: Anthropological Engagements," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34 (2005): 105-20. Scholars have recently begun to regard Ukraine as fertile terra nova for postcolonial analysis, but Dontsov's vision of national liberation, given its abhorrence of "hybridity" is better understood as *anticolonial* and reactive. Dontsov promoted the national (and, eventually, racial) purity that he himself felt he lacked, railing against the assimilation of Ukrainians into the "ethnic chaos" of the Russian Empire and its successor, the Soviet Union. He desired not only the expulsion of Ukraine's perceived Russian and Jewish "occupiers" and "exploiters," but also the purging of Russian and Jewish habits from Ukrainians' psyches. Janusz Korek, ed., *From Sovietology to Postcoloniality: Poland and Ukraine from a Postcolonial Perspective* (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2007).

⁵⁶ Generally speaking, liberalism barely took root in the Russian Empire, in an attenuated form at that, and was perpetually assailed from both the stronger forces to its right and left. Laura Engelstein, *Slavophile Empire: Imperial Russia's Illiberal Path* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

⁵⁷ I should add that Dontsov embraced the idea that Ukraine was a borderland—between two civilizations, two racial topographies, and two ideas—which was part of why it was so important to both Europe and Russia. Dontsov's geopolitics (unlike the OUN's prior to World War II) considered the Polish-Ukrainian borderland a distant second in terms of importance. The problem was that this borderland status imperiled and corrupted the country; an existential threat that could be overcome only through full incorporation into Europe.

Occidentalizing Ukraine and setting it in opposition to a hyper-Orientalized Russia,⁵⁸ but the effusion of foreign words and phrases in Dontsov's often excessively ornate prose—replete with vitriol, snobbery, and sarcasm—betrayed the insecurities of a merchant's son from small-town, Russified Ukraine.

Dontsov strived to raise his cultural capital and fashion a heroic Ukrainian subjectivity for himself, but failed to break free from the dominant Russian and Western epistemes. As a result, he tended to disparage everything Ukrainian in favor of foreign models, which opened him up to the criticism that his ideology was devoid of “genuinely Ukrainian” content.⁵⁹ Citing the “preemptory nature of his judgments, intolerance, and the creation of new utopias,” the Ukrainian journalist Bohdan Olamchuk would later charge that Dontsov was racially and spiritually Russian—a “cross between Rasputin and a Tatar Khan” or “a Ukrainian Lenin *à rebours*.”⁶⁰ The allegation of affinity for the late imperial Russian milieu, with its idiosyncratic blend of endemic anticosmopolitanism, dour positivism, state authoritarianism, and ethnic pluralism, dogged Dontsov throughout his life. He angrily denied accusations that he was under any kind of Russian influence, but his national and political identity had not been a foregone conclusion. Irrespective of whether his family was of Ukrainized Russian or Russified Ukrainian stock, his father and two older brothers identified as Russian: unlike them, Dontsov chose to be

⁵⁸ The practice was typical of both cosmopolitan and nationalistic Eastern European and Russian émigré intellectuals and artists of the twentieth century. Natasha Kovacevic, “Anticommunist Orientalism: Shifting Boundaries of Europe in Dissident Writing,” in Costica Bradatan and Serguei Alex Oushakine, eds., *In Marx's Shadow: Knowledge, Power, and Intellectuals in Eastern Europe and Russia* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010), 131-54.

⁵⁹ Some commentators have even argued that Dontsov was in fact a “Ukrainophobic” *provocateur*, responsible for inculcating an “inferiority complex” in Ukrainians. Volodymyr Shelukhin, “Chomu intelektualy ta pravoradykaly proty Dmytra Dontsova? Zamist' dyskusii,” *Krytyka* (February 6, 2016). <http://krytyka.com/ua/community/blogs/chomu-intelektualy-ta-pravoradykaly-proty-dmytra-dontsova-zamist-dyskusiyi> [accessed May 19, 2016]

⁶⁰ Quoted in Marco Carynnyk, “Foes of Our Rebirth: Ukrainian Nationalist Discussions about Jews, 1929-1947,” *Nationalities Papers* 39, no. 3 (2011): 315-52, 319.

Ukrainian, and experienced that choice as a conscious, subversive conversion entailing grave responsibilities and challenges. However much he hated Russian hegemony, his ideology owed a sizable intellectual debt to Russian thinkers—particularly to the Slavophiles and Pan-Slavists with their attacks on Western civilization, materialism, science, democracy, liberalism, socialism, and modernity. Well before Benito Mussolini or the French integral nationalist Maurice Barrès appeared in Dontsov’s writing, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Konstantin Leontiev, Nikolai Danilevsky, Dmitry Merezhkovsky, and Vasilii Rozanov exerted a key influence on his worldview (and the provocative manner in which he expounded it).⁶¹ In the process of exposing and combatting these authors as the propagandists of Russian messianism and the enemies of Europe, Dontsov internalized their philosophies, but turned them back against the great eastern expanse from which they (and he) had originated.

Dontsov’s avowedly pro-Ukrainian teachings denigrated longstanding Ukrainian political traditions—from Cossack constitutionalism to the libertarian socialist populism of Ukrainian political philosopher Mykhailo Drahomanov (1841-1895)—which were pacifistic, federalist, and liberal to the point of anarchism. Instead, Dontsov’s views bore a stronger resemblance to those of prior activists who insisted upon the unity of the “Great and Little Russian branches of the Russian nation.” They grouped around publications like the initially liberal-democratic but ultimately anti-Semitic, conservative-monarchist journal *Kievlianin* (The Kievan). This modern form of Russian nationalism, with its advocacy of a centralized, patrimonial state to advance the collective interests of Orthodox East Slavdom (“Holy Rus”), developed alongside Ukrainian

⁶¹ Distilling this characteristically Russian style of thought to its essence, philosopher Mikhail Epstein describes a bipolar yet holistic neo-Platonism incapable of moderation and perpetually vacillating between a radical metaphysics of the far right and one of the far left. This was foreign to the individualizing, synthesizing epistemology of Aristotle and his ethics of compromise and restraint (more or less predominant in the West since the High Middle Ages). Despite his conscious striving toward Europe, and well aware of this distinguishing mark of Russian intellectual history, Dontsov was clearly an exponent of this tradition. Mikhail Epstein, “Ideas against Ideocracy: The Platonic Drama of Russian Thought,” in Bradatan and Oushakine, *In Marx’s Shadow*, 13-36.

nationalism in Right-Bank Ukraine as a government-sponsored reaction to the threat of Polish separatism over the course of the nineteenth century.⁶² Rejecting the generally tolerant stance toward ethnic minorities of the earlier imaginers of the Ukrainian nation, Dontsov inadvertently sided with the “truly Russian” “Little Russians,” who regarded mercantile Jews and Catholic Poles as parasitic communities to be suppressed or removed from the Russian Empire’s western borderlands through state intervention. Dontsov moved ethnic Russians to the top of the list of groups allegedly oppressing and exploiting Ukrainians on their own soil, but embraced a statist, xenophobic worldview closer to protofascist Russian nationalist movements (such as the Black Hundreds and the Union of Russians) than to anything coming from contemporary Ukrainian intellectual circles. Although he was mired in an imperial Russian discourse rife with anti-Semitic and anticosmopolitan tropes, Dontsov’s life and politics also exhibit striking parallels with early Jewish nationalism, particularly in the figure of the renowned Zionist militant Vladimir (Ze’ev) Jabotinsky (1880-1940)—another Russified, Europhile journalist from southern Ukraine, who also came from the fringes of the ethnic community which he claimed to love and represent, yet often despised and berated, and who also developed into a cosmopolitan ultranationalist during the first two decades of the twentieth century.⁶³

There is an apparent contradiction between Dontsov’s patently cosmopolitan aspirations, lifestyle, interests, and even values on the one hand, and his virulently nationalistic politics on the other. A polyglot world traveler who spent the greater part of his life outside of Ukraine, often publishing in languages other than Ukrainian, he nonetheless insisted upon the dire need

⁶² Faith Hillis, *Children of Rus’: Right-Bank Ukraine and the Invention of a Russian Nation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).

⁶³ I borrow the phrase and concept “cosmopolitan ultranationalist” from Michael Stanislawski, who applies it to the mature Jabotinsky. Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siecle: Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism from Nordau to Jabotinsky* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 203-38.

for Ukrainians to speak “pure” Ukrainian and live in a unified Ukraine, quarantined from a hostile outside world in a war of all against all. He also demanded concrete action from his adherents, regarding the cloistered musings of effete intellectuals as a waste of time. Of course, Dontsov was a publicist, not the “nationalist of the deed” that he exhorted his countrymen to become, but he inspired tens of thousands to militancy, activism, crimes, and sacrifices. His life as an urbanite intellectual striving to export national zeal to Ukrainian peasants a world away should not be dismissed as farce or hypocrisy. It was, after all, the deracination, powerlessness, and loneliness wrought by political exile that fueled the fire of his nationalist convictions and resentment. Like his followers in the Ukrainian diaspora, Dontsov compensated for the severing of his physical connections to the fatherland with a creed of perfect spiritual and moral devotion to it.

In this way, Dontsov’s personal tragedy is typical of the exile experience.⁶⁴ Edward Said’s portrait of the exile is particularly useful for understanding Dontsov’s psychology, beliefs, and style. Exile, according to Said, means painful estrangement from home and heritage and solitude in an alien culture, but it can also be a potent source of inspiration, perspective, and self-awareness. Nationalism, by contrast, promises the comfort of belonging—it soothes the wounds of exile with fantasies of triumph and restoration, but contains the pitfalls of insularity, fanaticism, callousness, distrust toward outsiders, and rigidly binary thinking. Nationalism is born in exile, which is unbearable without it. Under conditions of exile and diaspora, cosmopolitanism and nationalism are complementary yet antagonistic ideas (or ideals) and bodies of practices that coexist in a creative, dialectic tension.⁶⁵ Diverse, international networks

⁶⁴ Edward Said, *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 173-97.

⁶⁵ Susan Lachenicht and Kirsten Heinsohn eds., *Diaspora Identities: Exile, Nationalism, and Cosmopolitanism in Past and Present* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2009), 7-14.

of intellectuals, politicians, institutions, and activists made Dontsov's work possible. He hoped to return Ukraine to the fold of "Europe"—a cosmopolitan, supranational idea—but his notion of Europe was a continent strictly divided into ethnically homogenous nation-states—an archipelago of islands-unto-themselves.

From start to finish and left to right, Dontsov's oeuvre is a bricolage of contradictory ideas and values, but the iconoclastic authoritarianism of his personality, thought, and career was an abiding trait, simultaneously nimble and strict, capable of synthesizing extreme and disparate notions into new political dogmas. It shaped both his cosmopolitanism and his nationalism, which reinforced one another in the crucible of exile. Constellations of influence and experience molded the mature Dontsov's radical formulations and reformulations of Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainianness, which were not latent in him from birth, waiting to be activated by some traumatic event or epiphany, but contingent, context-driven, and subject to review. Deracinated time and again by choice or force of circumstance, the ideologue meandered through identities and political programs, cobbling together a fiefdom of devoted authors and revolutionaries in the first half of the twentieth century. As he aged, however, his mind and persona inevitably ossified, leading many, his erstwhile closest followers among them, to regard the man as a living vestige from a dark and bygone era. His authoritarian megalomania produced resentment, while his cosmopolitan intellectualism inspired accusations of hypocrisy. The younger generation of Ukrainians in whom Dontsov had done so much to cultivate a spirit of collective rebellion against their nation's oppressors either perished during the war, following the integral nationalist imperative of violent struggle and self-sacrifice to the end, or rebelled against the former master himself, who could no longer change with the times quickly enough.

Sources

Apart from the voluminous published, republished, and sometimes bowdlerized writings of Dontsov and the contributors to the journals he edited or worked for, including reportage, feuilletons, monographs, and speeches, this dissertation examines the contents of various archival collections. Chief among these is the Dontsov Archive, held in the Polish National Library in Warsaw, which contains the personal and official papers and extensive correspondence of Dontsov and associated individuals and institutions up to 1939. The extant record for the period of World War II is considerably slimmer, not only because of the general chaos of those years, but also owing to the sensitive and controversial nature of Dontsov's activities in Nazi-dominated Europe; given his willingness to expunge inconvenient facts from his past and legacy, Dontsov either destroyed or failed to preserve much of what he wrote during the war, apart from his work in his short-lived journal *Batava* (Phalanx), based in Bucharest, Rumania, and the book that emerged from this endeavor, *Dukh nashoi davnyny* (The Spirit of Our Antiquity). With regard to the latter it is essential to read the first edition in 1944 to get a sense of what Dontsov was thinking as he moved between Prague, Berlin, Bucharest, and other cities of Hitler's would-be empire because he sanitized the postwar republications of these and related works, removing pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic comments. Between 2014 and 2016 the Dmytro Dontsov Scientific-Ideological Center—a Ukrainian nationalist think tank based in Drohobych, Ukraine—published a ten-volume collection of Dontsov's works. Faithful to the first editions, the collection is valuable to researchers despite the agenda of its creators.⁶⁶

The second large repository of Dontsov's papers (over twenty-five boxes worth) is held in the Library and Archives of Canada (LAC) in Ottawa and mostly consists of letters, notes,

⁶⁶ Dmytro Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory u desiaty tomakh*, ed. Oleh Bahan and Iaroslav Radevych-Vynnyts'kyi (L'viv: Vidrozhennia, 2011).

articles, newspaper clippings, immigration documents, and miscellany from his last thirty years.

I consulted other archival collections dedicated to Dontsov's associates (his wife, key literary and political collaborators, and others), and to key organizations (affiliated periodicals, the OUN, and other political formations [SVU, USDRP, UDKhP, etc.]), which are kept at the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in L'viv (TsDIAL), the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv (TsDIAK), the Central State Archives of the Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (TsDAVO), and the Central State Archives of Public Organizations of Ukraine (TsDAHO).

CHAPTER 1: THE ROOTS OF UKRAINIAN INTEGRAL NATIONALISM: DMYTRO DONTSOV'S FORMATIVE YEARS, 1883-1914¹

“Every revolutionary ends by becoming either an oppressor or a heretic.”
—Albert Camus²

The setting of Dmytro Dontsov's youth was the final, tumultuous decades of the Russian Empire—a state that the future ideologue of Ukrainian integral nationalism grew to loathe from an early age. Hailing from southeastern Ukraine, Dontsov devoted his twenties to the underground Marxist left. As a university student in St. Petersburg he participated in the Revolution of 1905, which led to the establishment of the First Duma (a legislative assembly of delegates from across the empire). The Social Democrats, including Dontsov, and other socialists and liberals successfully mobilized to push for the introduction of universal male suffrage in December of that same year, but these victories were short-lived. In accordance with the Russian Constitution of 1906 promising expanded civil liberties and popular representation, reformers intended the Duma to serve as a check on the power of the autocracy. Reaction soon dashed such hopes for a more liberal and democratic Russia, however, as Prime Minister Petr Stolypin's Coup of June 1907 dissolved the Second Duma and launched a campaign against liberals, radicals, and national minorities as critics and enemies of the state. This coincided with an

¹ Parts of this chapter previously appeared in *Modern Intellectual History* and are reprinted here with permission of Cambridge University Press. Trevor Erlacher, “The Birth of Ukrainian ‘Active Nationalism’: Dmytro Dontsov and Heterodox Marxism before World War I, 1883-1914,” *Modern Intellectual History* 11, no. 3 (November 2014): 519-48.

² Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 249.

intensification of “Russification”—a policy that Tsar Nicholas II’s predecessors, Alexander II and Alexander III, had envisioned as the transformation of the multinational Russian Empire into a more centralized, culturally and linguistically “Russian” state. Accordingly, Stolypin’s crackdown was particularly aggressive on the empire’s ethnically and religiously diverse western frontier, including much of Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic, where authorities arrested and prosecuted political dissidents by the thousands. The atmosphere created by the increasingly fragmented and violent electorate to which these events gave rise left its mark on Dontsov, who was among those targeted and imprisoned during the autocracy’s retrenchment—a brush with authority that taught him to fear and resent Russian power. Dontsov fled for Austria-Hungary in 1908. From safety abroad, he observed and commented on the death throes of imperial Russia, from the assassination of Stolypin in 1911, through Russia’s disastrous experience in World War I, to the February Revolution of 1917.

Dontsov’s reaction to the interceding conflicts, coups d’état, and revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe left him with a philosophy seemingly antithetical to his former Marxism already by the time of the 1921 publication of *Pidstavy nashoi polityky* (The Foundations of Our Politics)—the first monographic exposition of Dontsov’s new worldview after his nationalist *volte-face*.³ He had witnessed the downfall of the autocracy and the birth of a fragile, yet independent, Ukrainian nation-state. But the latter’s collapse under the pressure of Russian-Bolshevik invasions between 1918 and 1922 confirmed his view, first expressed in 1913,⁴ that the free development of the Ukrainian people would remain impossible under the “chauvinistic” aegis of Moscow. Dontsov also came to believe that Ukraine’s independence could not be

³ Dmytro Dontsov, *Pidstavy nashoi polityky* (Vienna: Dontsovykh, 1921).

⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, “Suchasne politychne polozhennia natsii i nashi zavdannia” in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 21-37.

achieved and maintained through the weak-willed governance of the all-too-tolerant “Ukrainophiles”—the liberal-minded, populist scions of Ukrainian national resistance in the late Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. Disillusioned with the scientific pretensions and utopian promises of Marxism, Dontsov replaced materialism with idealism, determinism with voluntarism, pan-Slavic federalism with Ukrainian separatism, and the international struggle of the toiling classes against the bourgeoisie with an imagined civilizational conflict between the enlightened, progressive West and despotic, reactionary Russia. He named his doctrine “active nationalism” (*chynnyi natsionalizm*), conventionally described as a Ukrainian form of “integral nationalism”—a genus of authoritarian rightwing ideology that subordinates individual, class, and humanitarian interests to those of the nation.

Near the end of his life, Dontsov claimed to have espoused the same belief system from the outset of his political career at the turn of the twentieth century, simply making logical improvements to his original worldview of fanatical commitment to the “Ukrainian idea” along the way.⁵ Yet his publications prior to the World War I present a different picture: that of a far-leftwing activist, journalist, and publicist for the cause of internationalist socialism.⁶ If Dontsov’s retrospective assessment of his own ideological trajectory is to be taken seriously, then there must be an underlying continuity between his early period on the extreme “left” and his subsequent career on the extreme “right.” Tracking Dontsov along the conventional left/right political spectrum, this change of heart seems like an impetuous leap, but to his mind it was a minor reorientation, necessitated by circumstance yet not preclusive of his longstanding radical convictions.

⁵ Dontsov, *Khrestom i mechem*, 266.

⁶ Sosnovs’kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 79-85.

What accounts for Dontsov's wartime political shift from Social Democratic internationalism to extreme nationalism? Political scientist Alexander Motyl asserts that Dontsov developed his worldview independently of outside influences, which merely affirmed opinions that he had already developed.⁷ It is nevertheless difficult to believe that Dontsov's ideological about-face owed nothing to an external, intellectual catalyst or the zeitgeist of early-twentieth-century Europe. Historian Frank Golczewski's attribution of the mature Dontsov's amoral nationalism to a "vulgarization" of Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the "will to power" represents a step in this direction, but it ignores the younger Dontsov's adherence to Marxism, within which he had developed his lifelong ethical and political prejudices well before Nietzschean language—let alone citations of Nietzsche—appears in his oeuvre.⁸ According to Dontsov's chief biographer to date, Mykhailo Sosnovs'kyi, the mature Dontsov "did not free himself from the effects of assimilated socialist ideology, the Marxist understanding of social phenomena, and the problems of the Marxist method, which were . . . clearly reflected in his later work and in the ideology of 'active nationalism' in particular."⁹ Moreover, "[in] condemning the Ukrainian socialist movement for its ideational connections to Russian socialism, Dontsov [nevertheless continued to] positively evaluate western European socialism for a long time."¹⁰ Sosnovs'kyi points to Dontsov's adherence to the fundamentals of Marxism for years after his break with Ukrainian Social Democracy, arguing that Dontsov's contempt for Bolshevism and

⁷ Motyl, *The Turn to the Right*, 67-68.

⁸ Frank Golczewski, "Politische Konzepte des ukrainischen nichtsozialistischen Exils (Petliura – Lypynskyj – Donzow)," in Guido Hausmann and Andreas Kappeler, eds., *Ukraine: Gegenwart und Geschichte eines neuen Staates* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), 100-18. Golczewski somewhat mischaracterizes Dontsov (not to mention Petliura) as "nonsocialist" during the 1920s.

⁹ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 124.

¹⁰ Ibid.

the Russia-oriented Ukrainian leadership is more accurately attributed to anticolonialism and Russophobia than a rejection of socialism *per se*. Historian Oleksandr Zaitsev concurs with Sosnovs'kyi on the importance of Marxism in the young Dontsov's thought, noting its closeness to Bolshevism-Leninism as compared to the federalist socialism of his Ukrainian comrades.¹¹ But the process by which this worldview transmogrified into "active nationalism" remains unclear.

As Sosnovs'kyi suggests, Dontsov's anti-Russian sentiments likely found roots (or at the very least confirmation) in the Marxist canon.¹² It is equally plausible, however, that Dontsov's personal antipathy toward Russia and Russians, which he began airing somewhat earlier, just before World War I, fueled his eventual hostility toward Marxism. After 1917 Dontsov associated Russians with the particularly vulgar (as he saw it) form of Marxism that the Bolsheviks used to cynically rebrand Russian imperialism as "socialist internationalism" and the tsarist autocracy as a "dictatorship of the proletariat." An examination of Dontsov's formative years is key to understanding how he went from seeing his Ukrainian identity and pro-Ukrainian politics as compatible with Marxism and the interests of progressive Russians, to rejecting both Marxism and Russian civilization as corrosive influences on Ukraine and Europe as a whole.

This chapter places the young future ideologue into two contexts. The first is geographic, including Dontsov's home region of "New Russia" (*Novorossia*) (modern-day southern and eastern Ukraine), and the cities of St. Petersburg, Kyiv, Vienna, and L'viv. Following Dontsov's journey through these places in the first three decades of his life, I elucidate the development of his national and political identities, emphasizing their contingency in relation to his personal

¹¹ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 158-61.

¹² Karl Marx, *The Eastern Question: A Reprint of Letters Written 1853-1856 Dealing with the Events of the Crimean War* (New York: B. Franklin, 1968).

experience. I argue that Dontsov chose, more or less consciously, to be “Ukrainian” rather than “Russian” (or “Little Russian”), and saw socialism and anti-imperialism as the logical corollary of this choice. The consequences of his decision—imprisonment and exile to East-Central Europe—embittered him against the Russian state, and convinced him of his own and all Ukrainians’ natural and rightful place in Western civilization. These two attitudes shaped Dontsov’s increasingly orientalist (though not yet racist) views on Russia, while his closeness to the latter, through family and upbringing, made his rejection of it a personal and emotional matter.

The second context is intellectual: namely, the *fin-de-siècle* “crises” of Marxism and reason throughout Europe. Dontsov understood the world through the language, concepts, and logic of a turn-of-the-century Marxism that had become riddled with “heterodoxies.” Applying his own increasingly “heretical” version of Marxism to an analysis of contemporary events, Dontsov adumbrated key components of “active nationalism” in his polemics with fellow Marxists well before World War I. Dontsov associated what he considered to be the “wrong” kind of Marxism, which favored empires over nations as a matter of course, with Russians, whom he came to view as inveterate imperialists regardless of their professed political values, liberal, socialist, or conservative. The “right” kind of Marxism, by contrast, was “European” and recognized the legitimacy of national communities as agents of historical progress.



Figure 1.1. Ukraine's guberniias on the eve of World War I. *Source:* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukraine_during_World_War_I

Becoming Ukrainian in “New Russia”

Dmytro Dontsov was born in Melitopol', Tavriia Governate, in southeastern Ukraine—or “New Russia” (*Novorossiiia*) as the imperial authorities called it—on August 17 (O.S.), 1883. The year was an otherwise eventful one in the history of ideas, rich with significance for the future “apostle of Ukrainian separatism”:¹³ Marx died in the spring, leaving his legacy to the stewardship of Engels; Mussolini, the future *duce* of Italian Fascism, was born (just eighteen days before Dontsov); and Nietzsche authored Book One of his posthumously earth-shattering *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. But Dontsov began his life far from these ideas, on the fringes of Europe and the frontier of the Russian Empire. As its name suggests, Dontsov's home region of

¹³ Dontsov, *Pidstavy nashoi polityky*, 212.

New Russia, a province stretching from the Donbas to the Dniester river, was a self-consciously colonial project on the model of New England, New Spain, or New France. Imperial Russian armies conquered the region in the late eighteenth century, displacing the Zaporizhian Cossacks, the last Ukrainians to possess a state of their own, the Hetmanate. The Russian tsars, from Catherine II to Nicholas II, sought to tame this “wild, Asiatic” terrain from St. Petersburg, introducing the norms and practices of the modern European state as they understood it. This meant the enforcement of Russian political, economic, and cultural hegemony in an increasingly multicultural borderland. The discovery of coal and iron in the eastern parts of New Russia, the Donbas region, prompted an influx of migrant workers to the sparsely populated area from as far as Britain to participate in the growing mining and steel industries.

At forty-eight years of age, Dontsov wrote about his youth there: “I was born in Tavriia, and spent the first seventeen years of my life in a country that one might call our America, an ethnographic mix of Ukrainians, Poles, Jews, Bulgarians, Germans, Greeks, Turks and Russians.” His family, he adds, was “Tavriian, that is, mixed.”¹⁴ There were German and Italian colonists on his mother’s side. His friends from the age of three were the children of the Winnings, a Scottish family that rented a house on his father’s land. In the Dontsov home library, the future ideologue read Goethe, Schiller, Hugo, Dickens, Cervantes, and Maupassant in Russian translations, falling in love with foreign literature, as well as the Ukrainian writers Gogol and Storozhenko. Dontsov recounted these cosmopolitan roots in a letter to Ievhen Malaniuk (a prominent Ukrainian poet and devotee of Dontsov’s in the 1920s and 1930s) dated September 13, 1931. He was specifically responding to the Ukrainian émigré historian and political activist Dmytro Doroshenko, who had accused him of being “under Russian influences.” Many of Dontsov’s other critics concurred that he was a “typical Russian

¹⁴ Biblioteka Narodowa (BN), Dmytro Dontsov Archive (DD), Mf. 82671, 115.

intelligent.” It was a characterization that plagued his career in Eastern Galicia (in today’s Western Ukraine, a majority-Ukrainian region of interwar Poland), and it clearly touched a nerve, perhaps because he saw the inconvenient truth in it. “Where are the Russian influences?” he demanded: “The only Russian influences could have come from [my] Jewish comrades in secondary school. I belonged for a short time to a self-education group, but quickly gave it up because one of the girl members had a vile hooked nose, and another colleague always smelled of onions.”

But Dontsov’s denial of the Russian influence on his development, replete with snide anti-Semitic stereotypes indicating what he saw as the combined Russian and Jewish threat to Ukraine, is difficult to believe. The process of Russification had left a clear mark on the public and private worlds of Dontsov’s childhood in Melitopol’. Ukrainians comprised some 70 percent of the surrounding rural population, but the Russian language, culture, and government predominated in urban life, generating interethnic tension and resentment in an environment comparably free (because distant) from authority, but prone to violence.¹⁵ Dontsov recalled the hostility between the Ukrainian and Russian students at his school in Melitopol’, where he and his friends derogatorily referred to the latter as “*katsapy*” (from the Ukrainian word for “goat,” a reference to the beards worn by Muscovite men before Peter I). Still, among each other they typically spoke Russian. This was the case in Dontsov’s home too, though everyone also spoke fluent Ukrainian. Although Dontsov was loath to admit it, the Russian-Ukrainian divide cut right through his own family, which included a Russian father, a Ukrainian mother, two older Russian brothers, and two younger Ukrainian sisters. The latent ultranationalist and his siblings had to

¹⁵ Kuromiya, *Freedom and Terror*, 35-70.

choose their national identity from the two available options, accepting personal responsibility for the political consequences of their conversion one way or the other.

The Dontsovs were an upwardly mobile and relatively privileged, albeit provincial, family with political ambitions. Dmytro's father, Ivan Dmitrevich Dontsov, was born in Russia's neighboring Voronezh region in 1840, but sought the nascent opportunities and relative freedom of the "New Russia" frontier and became a citizen of Melitopol' in the 1870s. Ivan and his wife, Efrosin'a Iosifovna, together owned 1,500 *desiatinas* (4,125 acres) of land, but he disliked farming, choosing instead to sell agricultural machinery for a living. Ivan Dmitrevich rose to prominence as a successful local merchant, and owned a few homes for rent in town. Melitopol' society elected him to the city дума (congress) in 1873. He served for two years in this capacity without salary, then left for Berdiansk (a port city on the nearby Sea of Azov), probably in order to elude amassed enemies or unpaid taxes.¹⁶ In the winter of 1878 Ivan Dontsov returned to Melitopol' and was elected to the *zemskii sobor* (land assembly) of the surrounding *uezd* (county), serving as a juror and engaging in charity work before returning to the city дума. Ivan Dontsov was appointed mayor (*gorodskoi golova*), but collapsed in the street and died of an apparent heart attack on the eve of his inauguration on April 11, 1894. Efrosin'a Iosifovna, Dmytro Dontsov's mother, succumbed to illness the following year.

Dontsov's parents died early, when he was just eleven years old, leaving him, his two older brothers—Sergei and Vladimir—and two younger sisters—Elena and Ekaterina— orphaned. They inherited over 550 acres of land each, but their deceased father's more than 500-ruble debt in unpaid taxes proved burdensome. During this time, Dmytro grew close to his mother's stepfather, a German colonist, who stepped in as the Dontsov children's guardian and

¹⁶ V.N. Kumok, "Tri brata (sud'ba donytskykh)," *Melitopol'skii kraevedcheskii zhurnal* 1 (2013): 61-66.

reportedly exerted an important influence on the development of his and his younger sisters' "national consciousness" as Ukrainians.¹⁷ By contrast, Vladimir and Sergei adopted, or maintained, Russian identities. The latter remained loyal to the tsarist state and followed a more-or-less conventional, apolitical career path. More pragmatic and responsible than his two brothers, Sergei oversaw the care for his younger sisters, about whom less is known, despite the troubles he faced in business and finance. In one noteworthy episode he participated in a small, regional landowner's congress near Melitopol' in 1906, where, thanks to his swarthy complexion and jet-black hair—features that his brother Dmytro shared—an anti-Semitic mob mistook him for a Jew and rudely forced him to leave. Sergei Dontsov studied at the Imperial technical school in Moscow, served in the military, earned an engineer-mechanic's diploma, and rose to the high-ranking post of "deputy chairman" (*tovarishch predsdatel'*) in the imperial Office of Horticulture until 1917.¹⁸

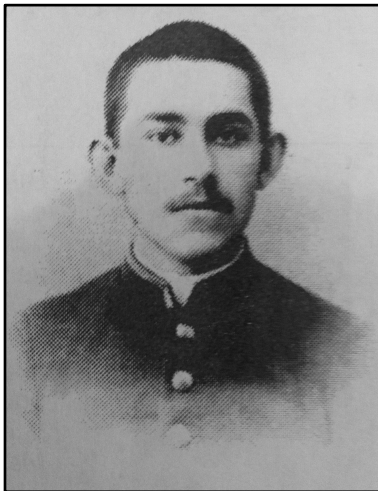


Figure 1.2. Dmytro Dontsov's older brother Sergei. *Source:* Kumok, "Tri Brata," 62.

¹⁷ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 66n.

¹⁸ Kumok, "Tri brata," 62.



Figure 1.3. Dontsov's hometown of Melitopol', Tavriia guberniia, Russian Empire (view of Vorontsovs'kaia Street).

Vladimir Dontsov's path offers a more interesting comparison to Dmytro Dontsov's. A lifelong Russian Bolshevik, the former wrote a brief autobiography recounting his Communist credentials as a supporting document for a 1935 petition for a personal pension from the Soviet government.¹⁹ In it, he describes his involvement in Russian Social Democratic politics from an early age. Expelled from the Technological Institute in St. Petersburg for "taking part in student disturbances" in 1896, Vladimir, an intermittent student and a draft-dodger, was repeatedly arrested for his radical leftwing political activities. He moved to Berlin in 1901 where he studied the natural and social sciences and participated in student circles before returning to Russia, illegally so as to avoid mobilization in the event of a Russo-Japanese war, in the summer of 1904. Failing to find a revolutionary group to serve in Kyiv, he set off for Sevastopol in Crimea,

¹⁹ State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), f. A539, op. 4, d. 3478.

where he joined the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party (RSDRP). He was arrested in connection with a port workers' strike, but released in the spring of 1905 and sent back to Melitopol', which he was forced to flee to avoid arrest for participating in a self-defense organization during a Jewish pogrom (testimony that suggests he was not interested in Russian [or Little Russian] nationalism, which was notoriously anti-Semitic at this time). Vladimir fled to Geneva, smuggled weapons back into the Russian Empire, was arrested again and exiled to Siberia in the winter of 1906. Then he claims to have escaped and bounced around the cities of the empire participating in the disintegrating revolutionary underground before settling in Geneva, where he would remain until 1920. He finished his law degree there, took an active part in the Russian Marxist emigration, and collaborated extensively with Lenin during World War I. Volodymyr Levyns'kyi, a Galician Ukrainian socialist and staunch critic of Dmytro Dontsov, recalled how the latter introduced him to his brother Vladimir during the war, expressing his surprise that Vladimir "considered himself a *moskal'*" (a pejorative Ukrainian term for "Russian"), and "spoke Russian, but was quite unable to in Ukrainian." Moreover, Levyns'kyi notes, "he had a keenly negative attitude toward pro-Ukrainian politics (*ukrainstvo*)."²⁰

Dmytro Dontsov followed in his older brother's footsteps, joining the Marxist underground in the Russian Empire despite the considerable risks, but his identity as a Ukrainian patriot, and, somewhat later, his Russophobic, anti-Semitic, and anti-Communist views, set him apart from his brother, who remained a Russian Marxist with reportedly anti-"Ukrainian" views for the rest of his life. Dmytro Dontsov might have done the same, but by the time he was eighteen he had chosen the Ukrainian camp, and set about proving his Ukrainian-ness like an eager neophyte. Still, his education remained typically "Russian." In 1900, Dontsov moved to St.

²⁰ Volodymyr Levyns'kyi, *Ideoloh ukrainsk'oho fashyzmu: zamikty do ideolohii Dmytra Dontsova* (L'viv: Nakladom Hromads'koho holosu, 1936), 12-13.

Petersburg, completed his classically focused secondary education at a gymnasium in Tsarskoe Selo, and enrolled at Petersburg University to study law.²¹ In his recollection, Ukrainian cultural and political life was much more vibrant in St. Petersburg than it had been in Ukraine, particularly among students.²² He obtained books from Eastern Galicia abroad, and his readings of the renowned poets Taras Shevchenko and Lesia Ukrainka attracted him to Ukrainian nationalism.²³ Dontsov recalled his firsthand experiences with Russian chauvinism during this time: “Everyone who had the chance to move in Russian student circles at the beginning of the twentieth century knows the kind of toxic venom of intolerance with which these circles are infected . . . The intolerance of Russians toward other nationalities is especially astonishing . . .”²⁴ Despite the imperious attitude of his Russian peers, Dontsov was not immune to Russian influences. The peculiar environs, mood, and cultural and political ferment in St. Petersburg clearly left their mark on him. According to historian Mark D. Steinberg, melancholy, despair, an obsession with decadence and civilizational decline, apocalyptic visions, and deep anxieties about urban modernity filled the air of *fin-de-siècle* St. Petersburg.²⁵ Dontsov expressed himself using similar terms and imagery throughout his life, castigating his readers for their fallen nature and gloomily predicting the worst, up to and including Armageddon.²⁶ The St. Petersburg that Dontsov knew was also the setting of the “Silver Age” of Russian poetry, renowned for its

²¹ Sosnovs’kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 62-67.

²² Ibid.

²³ Dmytro Dontsov, *Rik 1918, Kyiv* (Toronto: Homin Ukrainy, 1954), 36.

²⁴ Dontsov, *Kul’tura prymityvizmu (Holovni pidtsavy rosiis’koi kul’tury)* (Cherkasy: Vydavnytstvo Dontsovykh, 1918), 11.

²⁵ Steinberg, *Petersburg Fin de Siècle*.

²⁶ Late in life Dontsov wrote, in all seriousness, about Soviet Russia as the “forces of the anti-Christ,” “the Apocalyptic Dragon,” “the Great Satan,” and so on. See chapter 6.

bizarre and provocative experiments in literature, philosophy, sex, and politics. Leading intellectuals of this milieu, such as Dmitrii Merezhkovskii, Vasilii Rozanov, and Nikolai Berdiaev, wrote vivid, stylistic texts that ranged from ascetic Christian mysticism to erotic blood rituals and the occult, from ecstatic revolutionary prophesies to incendiary anti-Communist tracts. The approach, subject matter, and style of Dontsov's writing from the 1920s to the 1960s betrays their influence, and their names and ideas permeate his most impactful work, *Natsionalizm*.²⁷ Not unlike the luminaries of the Russian Silver Age, Dontsov belonged to a generation of seekers profoundly dissatisfied with their moral, creative, and intellectual inheritance. In both cases a kind of subversive (occasionally self-aggrandizing) religiosity filled the void. The goal was a new gospel that would bring rebirth, purification, and liberation, even (or especially) if it entailed a baptism by catastrophe. Dontsov did not evolve along these lines until the mid-1920s, but the cultural scene of turn-of-the-century St. Petersburg planted seeds that would blossom into the apostolic pretensions of his later work.

It was here in the Russian Empire's northern capital that Dontsov became a founding member of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Labor Party (USDRP) in 1905. The USDRP's platform attempted to accommodate the varied demands of the "nationally conscious" Ukrainian socialists who comprised its ranks. They demanded recognition from their counterparts in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDRP) as the sole representatives of the ethnically Ukrainian proletariat. The RSDRP did not assent to this, denying to the USDRP the status that it had previously granted to the Jewish *Bund* and the Latvian and Polish Social Democrats. The maximal demands of the USDRP included an independent Ukrainian state, but they contented themselves with calls for federation with Russia on the condition of national autonomy. Closer to the Menshevik than to the Bolshevik faction of the RSDRP, the USDRP advocated the

²⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, *Natsionalizm* (L'viv: Nove zhyttia, 1926).

organization of socialist parties along national lines and did not support the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat under the prevailing socioeconomic conditions of imperial Russia. Characteristically attracted to extremes, however, Dontsov advocated a platform closer to the Bolsheviks on everything but the national question for the USDRP.²⁸ Lenin vigorously opposed the USDRP's program, regarding it as a manifestation of divisive "bourgeois nationalism" even if it did purport to represent the interests of an oppressed and colonized peasant nation.²⁹

In the wake of Stolypin's coup and ensuing crackdown on radicals and national minorities, many of the USDRP's members fled to the majority ethnically Ukrainian province of Eastern Galicia, which was then a part of the relatively liberal Austro-Hungarian Empire. Dontsov followed suit, but only after a number of encounters with the imperial Russian police. Tsarist authorities had arrested Dontsov once for participating in a pro-Ukrainian demonstration at the university the previous year, during the 1905 Revolution, and he was fearful of future run-ins with the police, but he continued to work in the semilegal Ukrainian Marxist press. Having served a short sentence in the Lukianiv's'ka prison camp in Kyiv, Dontsov was granted amnesty in November 1905. He returned to Petersburg only briefly before settling in Kyiv, where he began collaborating with Symon Petliura, a future leader of the Ukrainian People's Republic, which existed intermittently between 1917 and 1921. Dontsov contributed news and editorials to the Ukrainian socialist newspaper *Slovo* (The Word) and the liberal, Moscow-based Russian-language journal *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* (Ukrainian Life)—both under Petliura's editorship—and propagated the USDRP's ideas among Kyiv's laboring population.³⁰

²⁸ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 159.

²⁹ Jurij Borys, "Political Parties in Ukraine," in Taras Hunczak, ed., *The Ukraine, 1917-1921: A Study in Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 128-58.

³⁰ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 70.

Kyiv left a deep impression on the young writer. A major hub of trade and industry in the empire, early-twentieth-century Kyiv's cityscape and inhabitants were modernizing rapidly. Kyiv became a Mecca of avant-garde theatre, music, painting, early film, and literature for Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, and Poles alike. A sense of exuberance and "jubilant experimentation" distinguished the distinctly Ukrainian modernism that emerged there from its Western counterparts.³¹ Ukrainian artists and intellectuals drew inspiration from the folkways of the Ukrainian countryside and Kyiv's ancient past—a process that they experienced, not as a confrontation with the "Other," but as a reclamation of the "Self."³² Similarly, Dontsov acquired a lifelong fascination with and admiration for the medieval polity of Kyivan-Rus', which he considered the true heart of Slavic Orthodox civilization, antithetical to the Russian impostors, whether "barbaric," "Tatar" Moscow, or imitative, artificial St. Petersburg.

Dontsov was arrested again in 1907, and after eight months' imprisonment in Kyiv escaped abroad to L'viv in the Austro-Hungarian Empire on April 12, 1908. These experiences left Dontsov brimming with resentment for the imperial Russian state, but not for Russians per se, which after all included his own father and siblings. He regarded himself, not unreasonably, as an "orthodox" Marxist and a committed internationalist, and strongly opposed reformist (as opposed to revolutionary) tendencies in his party, as well as Ukrainian nationalism, the idea of Ukrainian political independence, and religion. In a 1909 letter to Andryi Zhuk, a USDRP member and future competitor on the Ukrainian nationalist intellectual scene, Dontsov wrote:

I personally consider . . . an 'independent Ukraine' absurd. We are Social Democrats, and our organ [the newspaper *Pratsia* (Work)—T.E.] is Social Democratic. And this means that it has social revolution as a goal (not the 'growth' of capitalism into socialism), and

³¹ Makaryk and Tkacz, *Modernism in Kyiv*.

³² Myroslav Shkandrij, "Politics of the Ukrainian Avant-garde," in Makaryk and Tkacz, eds., *Modernism in Kyiv*, 219-42.

class political struggle (not ‘cooperation’ of the classes) as a means. Whoever accepts these precepts is one of ours.³³

Dontsov’s pro-Ukrainian identity and politics, as he understood it, made his struggle against the tsarist autocracy, Russian imperialism, and capitalism all the more radical, adding an anticolonial, but never nationalistic element. Moreover, socialism was the mainstream of pro-Ukrainian politics in the Russian Empire at this time. In part this was because calling oneself “Ukrainian” (as opposed to “Ruthenian” or “Little Russian”) already constituted a subversive act and a potential threat to the state, which was unwilling to accommodate alternate East Slavic nationalities; in part because the ethnic Ukrainian population coincided with the rural peasantry of the various regions they inhabited, and as such felt uniquely exploited by the state and the socioeconomically distinct nationalities of the city—Russians, Poles, and Jews. The declining fortunes of his own family and harassment by the police for voicing pro-Ukrainian opinions made Dontsov’s conviction that the autocracy discriminated against Ukrainians personal. The arrests and emigrations of him and his brother burdened the young Dontsovs financially, forcing them to sell whatever land they had managed to salvage from their father’s debt collectors. In 1908 the court ordered Dontsov to sell a developed plot of land to settle a 4,000-ruble debt; by 1916 the Dontsovs’ inheritance was gone.³⁴ Leaving the oppressive conditions in the Russian Empire for the multicultural cities of East-Central Europe, Dontsov, though still a doctrinaire Marxist, discovered and absorbed challenging new ideas—a cosmopolitan experience that would paradoxically engender extreme nationalism.

³³ Ihor Hyrych, “Ukrains’ki esdeki: Mizh natsional’nym i klasovym vyborom (Lysty V. Vynnychenka, M. Zalizniaka, V. Stepankivs’koho, L. Iurkevycha do A. Zhuka (veresen’-zhovten’ 1912 roku)),” *Ukrains’kyi arkhеоhrafichnyi shchorichnyk* 18 (2010), 304.

³⁴ Kumok, “Tri brata,” 62.



Figures 1.4-5. Mug shots of Dontsov, 1907. *Source:* Serhii Kvit, “Dmytro Dontsov u knyzhkakh unikal’nykh zhandarms’kykh fotohrafiiakh,” *Ukrains’ka pravda* (February 8, 2012).

Becoming a Heretic in East Central Europe

During his second incarceration in Kyiv, Dontsov had developed a chronic illness (probably tuberculosis), which he sought in 1908 to remedy in Zakopane—a resort town in the Tatras Mountains on what is today Poland’s southern border. Here, Dontsov became acquainted with the leading theorist of Ukrainian conservatism and originator of the “statist school” of Ukrainian historiography, Viacheslav Lypyns’kyi. Although the latter was the same age, he clearly influenced Dontsov, drawing him into the Ukrainian monarchist movement during World War I and setting him on the path to the authoritarian, elitist, and traditionalist worldview for which he is known today. The two eventually broke off ties in 1926, but in the polemics leading to their break Lypyns’kyi reminded Dontsov of his earlier rejection of the idea of Ukrainian

independence, which the former was advocating by 1908 while the latter yet considered anything beyond a federation of the Russian and Ukrainian nations “naive.”³⁵



Figure 1.6. Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi. *Source*: Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine

Later in 1908, Dontsov moved to Vienna, where he studied economics, law, and history at Vienna University until 1911. The environs of early-twentieth-century Central Europe, and Vienna in particular, shaped the young journalist. In Carl Schorske's telling, Vienna was at the epicenter of the crisis of European values that preceded World War I—a continental rejection of liberalism, rationalism, and universalism—an assault on the most essential doctrines of the Enlightenment.³⁶ Vienna's “post-Nietzschean” cultural and intellectual climate, Schorske argues, provided the irrationalist and voluntarist content for this unique proliferation of antiliberal ideas and movements, but it was the anxiety and resentment generated by the disintegrative encroachment of industrial modernity that provided its original impetus. In the political sphere,

³⁵ Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi, *Povne zibrannia tvoriv, arkhiv, Tom 1: Lystuvannia (A-Zh)* (Kyiv: Institut skhidnoievropeis'kykh doslidzhen' Natsional'noi akdemii nauk Ukrainy, 2003), 572-75.

³⁶ Schorske, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna*, introduction.

the declining social status and rising economic insecurity of Austria's agrarian, aristocratic, and artisan classes—to which Dontsov had belonged in Russian Ukraine—drove them into the hands of the stridently nationalistic alternatives offered by Georg Ritter von Schönerer's Pan-Germanism, Theodor Herzl's Zionism, and Karl Lueger's Christian Social party. Rejecting the individualism, natural rights, and secularism of preceding generations, this “politics in a new key” struck at the heart of classical liberalism—the rational, freely willing ego. Similarly, in the realm of science, Sigmund Freud and his school of psychoanalysis challenged the self's purported supremacy over instinct, pointing to the decisive power of the sub-rational, unconscious mind in determining all human behavior.³⁷ The resultant “ahistorical culture”—Vienna's “collective oedipal revolt” against the preceding generations' values—was both the crucible for an outpouring of bold innovations in art, music, literature, and architecture, and a prelude to the catastrophes of the twentieth century.

The Christian Socials—who displaced the Liberals as the predominant party in Viennese and Austro-German politics in 1897 and remained so until its replacement by the Austrian Social Democrats at the end of World War I—certainly left a mark on Dontsov's generation of East Central European radicals, blending “emancipatory” petit-bourgeois populism, “socialistic” (or at least anti-industrialist) urban and welfare policies, Christian conservatism, aesthetic radicalism, German nationalism, and anti-Semitism into a dynamic cultural, social, and political movement that bested Marxists at their own game. They opposed the utopian, rationalist, and anticlerical thinking of the Enlightenment, and used rhetoric designed more to trigger emotional responses than to convince intellectually. And yet, as historian John W. Boyer observes, the Christian Socials and the Social Democrats, despite representing opposing class and cultural

³⁷ See Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), chaps. 7 and 11.

agendas, “tended toward sameness” in the “mythically cosmopolitan and ethnically ‘universalist’ yet hermetically sealed world of fin-de-siècle Vienna.”³⁸ Both sides switched focus to the *Kulturkampf* (culture struggle) between nation and nation, town and country, bourgeoisie and proletariat, becoming more ideologically rigorous and uncompromising.³⁹ These features of Christian Socialism and Social Democracy in Austria prefigured or paralleled Dontsov’s thinking in crucial ways.

Not unlike Dontsov’s transformation into a Ukrainian and a socialist at once during the Russian Revolution of 1905, the attainment of universal male suffrage in 1905-7 in late imperial Austria was an explosive moment in the merging of socialism and nationalism, as well as the rapid diffusion of the latter among social nonelites and the politicians who claimed to represent them.⁴⁰ Like their Russian counterparts, Austrian Social Democrats, mostly Czech and German speakers from the empire’s most industrialized regions, had their first major electoral breakthrough as a unified multiethnic party in the elections of May 1907, but they interpreted the victory in national terms, as vindication of their claim to represent their respective nations despite their principled internationalism.⁴¹ Through grassroots radicalism, mass demonstrations, rousing orations, and real or symbolic violence, the expansion of the voting franchise emboldened and empowered workers to wrest their national identity from the grip of the bourgeoisie and endow nationalism with a radically different cultural, social, and political content. Austrian Social Democrats developed an image of the authentic, committed nationalist

³⁸ John W. Boyer, *Cultural and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897-1918* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), xiv.

³⁹ Ibid., 458.

⁴⁰ Jakub S. Beneš, *Workers and Nationalism: Czech and German Social Democracy in Habsburg Austria, 1890-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 4.

⁴¹ Ibid., 2.

as a proletarian, not a member of the middle classes with which nationalism was generally associated. After 1907, however, the leftwing working-class populism of Austrian German and Czech Social Democrats and workers increasingly favored national autonomy over international centralism, splitting up the party and affiliated trade unions into national sections. They did not abandon the idea that the working classes of all nations were cooperating in the pursuit of common revolutionary goals against the ruling classes of their respective ethnicities, but by 1911 the Czech autonomist faction broke with the predominantly German “all-Austrian” faction and began contesting local and parliamentary seats. The Austrian Social Democratic leader Otto Bauer (1881-1938)—a major influence on Dontsov, as we shall see—blamed the disastrous rift on the inadequacy of legal protections, representation, and cultural autonomy for Austria-Hungary’s national minorities as distinct political bodies. As historian Jakub S. Beneš observes, “the Czech-German split set the tone for other cases of national friction in the socialist workers’ movement of Austria-Hungary,” including between the Poles and Ukrainians (Ruthenians) in Eastern Galicia.⁴²

Dontsov expressed great fondness for prewar Vienna, but made L’viv his hometown until World War II. Situated in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains, L’viv (or Lemberg, as it was known to the Austrian state), the administrative capital of Eastern Galicia, looked the part of a provincial Habsburg city. At its center stood the town hall, surrounded by the market square, cobblestone streets, cafes, cathedrals for the Orthodox, Catholics, Uniates, and Armenians, a fine opera house, and a large synagogue (destroyed during the Holocaust). L’viv was an island of urban diversity and imperial cosmopolitanism in a sea of relatively impoverished Ukrainian villages and Jewish shtetls. Of the city’s three largest groups, Poles outnumbered Jews, who

⁴² Ibid., 15.

outnumbered Ukrainians. Prior to World War I, they generally settled their conflicts in peaceful deference to the imperial police, courts, and parliament (the end of the Habsburg Empire radically changed the dynamic, opening the way to interethnic violence). The greater rights and liberties afforded to national minorities under Austrian rule made L'viv attractive to Ukrainians from the Russian Empire. Eastern Galicia enjoyed a reputation as the Ukrainian “Piedmont”⁴³—a place where Ukrainians could do the collective political and cultural work necessary for the liberation from tsarist tyranny of their conationals to the east. Dontsov hoped to find such a place in his newly adopted empire. In his search for novel ideas, opportunities, and collaborators, he did not limit himself to fellow Ukrainians, but took advantage of Austria-Hungary’s polyphony of nation-building projects. Dontsov was especially interested in the Polish movement because it was more developed than the Ukrainian one, yet closely related to it and therefore instructive.

Accordingly, the maverick Polish Marxist philosopher Stanisław Brzozowski had the strongest impact on Dontsov after the two met in Vienna in 1908.⁴⁴ According to West Ukrainian literary critic Mykhailo Rudnyts'kyi:

It was none other than Brzozowski who begat the famous critic and publicist Dmytro Dontsov. Word for word, Dontsov followed the very same evolution as Brzozowski—from a passionate Marxism to a no-less-passionate nationalism and traditionalism—constantly borrowing, in his own name, the ready quotes, images, and thoughts already found in the tenets of Brzozowski’s ‘lectures.’⁴⁵

In Brzozowski one finds the most immediate inspirations for Dontsov’s later attitudes on ethics, nationality, and the primacy of will, ideas, and power in human history. Brzozowski’s major works, published between 1901 and his death in 1911, anticipated the antipositivist cultural turn

⁴³ Paul R. Magocsi, *The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism: Galicia as Ukraine’s Piedmont* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

⁴⁴ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 76-77.

⁴⁵ Mykhailo Rudnyts'kyi, “Muchenyk neprymyrennykh idealiv Stanislav Bzhovovs'kyi,” *My* (1934), quoted in Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 76-77.

in Marxist thought first represented by Georgi Lukacs and Antonio Gramsci⁴⁶, offering a version of Marxist heterodoxy suffused with subjectivism, antinaturalism, and idealism that drew heavily on Nietzsche, as well as the French philosophers Georges Sorel and Henri Bergson. This entailed a rejection of the natural sciences as the sole, objective, and superior foundation of the social sciences, and a newfound fascination with “irrational” emotions, such as nationalism, as well as speculation about the intangibles of humanity, the “spirit” and “vital force” within groups and individuals. Although Brzozowski originally was one of the most effective and outspoken opponents of the integral nationalist, anti-Semitic National Democratic Party (Endecja) in the world of Polish socialism, in 1908 he avowed: “*Je suis nationaliste et presque national-démocrate.*” At the same time, he expressed his disdain for the leftwing patriotic Polish Socialist Party (PPS), which he considered impotent and sanctimonious: “[The PPS] favors what I think are the most abominable features of European socialism: it is optimistic, altruistic, Beecher-Stowe-like.” Advocating a “tough historical realism” that approached Dmowski’s doctrine of “national egoism,” Brzozowski declared, “the worst government of one’s own is better than the best alien rule.” He felt the Endecja should be praised for “maintaining, albeit in reactionary forms, the postulate of national independence, as well as representing, sincerely and deeply, the instinct of national self-preservation.”⁴⁷ Brzozowski’s Marxian *Realpolitik* entered Dontsov’s repertoire almost unchanged.

As early as 1909, Dontsov was also expressing a principled amoralism—which he would only later build around a “realistic” assessment of geopolitics as a zero-sum struggle between

⁴⁶ Andrzej Walicki, *Stanisław Brzozowski and the Polish Beginnings of “Western Marxism”* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

⁴⁷ Stanisław Brzozowski, *Listy*, ed. M. Sroka, vol. 1 (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1970), 660; Brzozowski, *Listy*, vol. 2, 236; Stanisław Brzozowski, *Legenda Młodej Polski: Studia o strukturze duszy kulturalnej* (L’viv: Nakładem B. Połonieckiego, 1910), 106.

nations in which sheer power served as the final arbiter of all struggles. In a speech to the Galician Ukrainian Students' Congress in June 1909 entitled *Shkola a relihiia* (The School and Religion), later published as a separate brochure, Dontsov first presented this view in a typically Marxist antireligious diatribe. In it, he embraces the classical Marxist tradition of rejecting the notion of a universal moral order in favor of historicizing moral codes and sentiments *vis-à-vis* the mode and relations of production within a given epoch. "There are the ethics of Aristotle's era, the ethics of serfdom, the ethics of the capitalist era, the ethics of cannibals, the ethics of these and other classes," he writes, but Social Democrats know no "general-human (*zahal'noliuds'koi*) ethics."⁴⁸ Taking a manifestly Nietzschean stance, he writes in favor of "*Kampfeslust*" (the love of struggle), expressing contempt for easy forgiveness and the average Christian laborer's lack of a sense of his own dignity:

Above all, the ethics of obedience, slavish patience, non-resistance to violence, love for enemies and other asinine virtues, the ethics that considers the renunciation of everything earthly the highest virtue—an asceticism that teaches the working masses to bear in silence, without protest, their misery, and to believe in a reward in heaven—this ethics, in the existing social conditions, is damaging for the working masses.⁴⁹

Dontsov argues that religion is incompatible with science and socioeconomic emancipation, extols the virtues of rationalism, and ridicules superstition. (Dontsov's take on the Russian Orthodox and Catholic Churches—"like comparing *el Diablo* and Beelzebub!"—⁵⁰is noteworthy in light of his later view that the former is immeasurably worse than the latter, which has allegedly exerted a beneficent influence on European civilization.) In place of all this, Dontsov prescribes the "British genius" Charles Darwin and the ruthless ideology of Social

⁴⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, *Shkola a relihiia* (*Referat vyholoshenyi na z'izdi Ukrains'koi Akademichnoi Molodi u L'vovi v lypni 1909 r.*) (L'viv: Nakladom Ukrains'koho Students'koho Soiuzu, 1910), 33.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 22-27.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

Darwinism (albeit with a leftwing slant). The brochure's introduction, written by fellow USDRP member Mykola Zalizniak, notes that Dontsov places "truth" above "nationality"; while advocating the Ukrainization of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's schools and universities in Eastern Galicia, he sees it as a question of "form," not "content" (*zmist*). Although Dontsov would eventually reject atheism as a betrayal of nationalism in the mid 1920s, advocating the union of church and state and a proudly medieval conception of Christianity, he did so, Sosnovs'kyi argues, to meet the demands of practical politics, and never abandoned the belief that moralities are binding only to the extent that they are useful for a particular aim in a particular context.⁵¹

Classes and nations with conflicting interests would, therefore, ascribe to different conceptions of right and wrong, and disputes between them could not be settled by reference to a common moral framework. Just as the proletariat could rely only upon its own strength and the force of arms to secure its well-being against antagonistic classes, so too would Ukrainians fail to attain national sovereignty through appeals to abstract notions of justice. Having returned to L'viv in 1911, Dontsov took a particular interest in the controversy surrounding the establishment of a Ukrainian national university in L'viv, which was opposed by the city's politically dominant Poles. He declared: "These paper resolutions about the rights of the nation become a fact only insofar as a given nation possesses the requisite energy and will to life. Moreover, the history of the struggle for a Ukrainian university proves for the hundredth time that in politics it is the argument of force, not the force of argument, that matters."⁵² Similarly, according to Brzozowski, Poland had a "right" to exist only insofar as it had the martial

⁵¹ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 88.

⁵² Dmytro Dontsov, "Za ukrainskii universitet," *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* 6 (1912), in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 180.

wherewithal to assert itself against other, hostile nations; and it could hope to achieve that strength only by harmonizing its national movement with its workers' movement: "To argue that the workers' movement can be independent of the nation's life and destiny is to say that it does not matter what range of forces and means of action it has at its disposal."⁵³ Dontsov later came to fully share Brzozowski's views on nationality, and the central role of ideas, will, and power in human history, but only after he had become convinced, in 1913, that a war between the German and Russian worlds was fast approaching.

Prior to 1913, Dontsov rejected the idea that the whole of Ukrainian society should be united on a national basis, and favored what he considered to be an incompatible proletarian solidarity. In 1910 he wrote: "The ideology of all-Ukrainian politics (*vseukrainstva*)⁵⁴ is the most hostile outrage to the proletarian movement. We will be certain that, in the struggle of Ukrainian society for national liberation, the Ukrainian proletariat acts not under the blue-yellow banner of all-Ukrainian nationalism, but under the red flag of revolutionary social democracy."⁵⁵ Holding to an essentially federalist position, Dontsov believed that "the overthrow of absolutism [would take the form of] a democratic Russia with an autonomous Ukraine." To his fellow USDRP members Dontsov argued:

We should always and everywhere explain to the proletarian Ukrainian masses that our position on the national question emanates from our firm, principled commitment to the interests of the Ukrainian proletariat; we should struggle against the chauvinism of certain groups of Russian and Polish society, [and] also against 'all-Ukrainian nationalism' and the consequence of its essence, against the attempt to obscure the class consciousness of the Ukrainian working class, against its hostility toward social

⁵³ Stanisław Brzozowski, *Idee: Wstęp do filozofii dojrzałości dziejowej* (L'viv: Nakł. Księgarni Polskiej B. Połonieckiego, 1910), 225.

⁵⁴ Like the term *ukrainstvo*, *vseukrainstvo* refers to Ukrainian nationalism in the broadest, value-neutral sense, with the addendum that it is explicitly inclusive of Ukrainians living in both the Russian and Austrian Empires.

⁵⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, "Na cherzi: Do pyttannia pro nashu natsional'nu polityku," *Pratsia* 1 (L'viv, 1910), 5-8.

democracy, against its unprincipled, one-sided, and chauvinistic infatuation (*zasliplenist*').⁵⁶

Dontsov still seriously believed in the possibility of mutual aid and coordination between the USDRP and the RSDRP, on the condition that the latter assent to the federalist principle and the “national organization of the proletariat,” as the Mensheviks advocated.⁵⁷

Strategic considerations rather than principle determined the Bolshevik faction of the RSDRP’s official position on the national question in the Russian Empire. On the one hand, they recognized in their program the political importance of guaranteeing the empire’s national minorities right to self-determination. On the other, they exhibited a classical Marxist preference for large, centralized polities and “historical nations,” which they expected to survive into the socialist future, swallowing up doomed “unhistorical nations” and smaller, decentralized states through a global process of political, economic, and cultural homogenization. Once the conditions for socialist revolution had become ripe, Lenin thought, nationalism could be only a reactionary impediment to class consciousness and proletarian solidarity. But prior to that point, nationalism ought to be regarded as progressive wherever it encouraged industrial growth. Convinced that the conditions for socialism had in fact appeared—even in backward tsarist Russia—Lenin argued that only proletarian internationalism was appropriate for socialist parties, and accordingly opposed the Jewish *Bund*, the USDRP, and other Marxist revolutionary organizations that claimed to represent a particular national group. Lenin and Josef Stalin—the Bolshevik faction’s Georgian authority on the nationalities question—nevertheless adopted a conciliatory policy of granting “national self-determination” to the “oppressed nationalities” of the Russian Empire, which they regarded as too “backward” to be fully disabused of their

⁵⁶ Dmytro Dontsov, “Politychnyi moment v Rosii i zavdannia sotsial-demokratii,” *Pratsia* 1 (L’viv, 1909), 6-7.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

nationalist sentiments. Their intention, however, was for the right of nations to secession and self-determination to be granted only *after* the revolution had been carried out, and even then, only on the condition that it is the “progressive” will of a given nation’s proletariat—a logical impossibility insofar as Lenin and Stalin believed that nationalism could serve only the bourgeoisie that had called it into existence.

Lenin and Stalin crafted their solution to the national question in explicit opposition to the theories of leading Austro-Marxist Otto Bauer, who argued that nationalist sentiments had persisted among industrial workers despite Marx’s prognosis, that nationalism would therefore play an important role in the proletarian revolution, and that Marxists needed to develop a more sophisticated understanding of nationalism and its potential uses.⁵⁸ Bauer also eschewed the concept of the “unhistorical nation,” citing as examples the Serbs and Czechs—countries that Marx and Engels had predicted an expanding Germany would inexorably assimilate. For Bauer, nationality was not simply a “false consciousness” malevolently inculcated into the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, but a “real” and “legitimate” force for historical change that was not likely to disappear anytime soon, if ever. Nations, Bauer maintained, emerged, not through the subterfuge of capitalists, but from breeding circles of kindred blood (*Blutsgemeinschaft*), representing communities with a common past, a common character (*Charaktergemeinschaft*), and a common destiny. Nations preceded and transcended merely economic associations. Socialism, Bauer argued, would herald the full flowering of national differences on free and equal terms, not their inevitable withering away. He thus regarded any struggle for the principle of nationality on the part of the exploited classes to be inherently revolutionary. Adumbrating crucial aspects of what Dontsov would later dub “active nationalism,” the Austrian Social Democrats under Bauer’s

⁵⁸ Otto Bauer, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

leadership made theoretical and practical modifications to Marxist historical materialism, placed greater focus on the power of culture and emotion, embracing mythic narratives of heroism and redemption, rousing orations, and symbologies.⁵⁹ Combatting the destruction of cultures, the fragmentation of communities, and the other social ailments of modernity, Austrian Social Democrats sought not only to “revolutionize minds,” but also to emotively and emotionally bind the broad masses to their movement. They considered ethnic ties and national ideas essential for the cultivation of working-class solidarity and functioning modern democracies. Beneš describes this phenomenon as an “aestheticization of politics in the sense of a collective *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art),” and a “civilizational critique rooted in undogmatic and unorthodox Marxism, a ritualized canon of celebrations and commemorations, and an emotion-laden ‘poetic politics.’”⁶⁰ Despite the anticlericalism and atheism of classical Marxism, Austrian workers’ spiritual beliefs and sentiments pervaded the Social Democratic movement, which harnessed them to develop a quasireligious, national, and working-class popular political culture, promoting messianic ideas of social and national liberation.⁶¹ Social Democratic leaders such as Bauer challenged economic determinist explanations of national conflict, highlighting the power of popular (national) cultures, emotions, and religiosity to shape history. Instead of opposing the “embourgeoisment” of workers through national false consciousness, he advocated the proletarianization of nationalism.⁶²

⁵⁹ Beneš, *Workers and Nationalism*, 5.

⁶⁰ Ibid. The term “poetic politics” comes from William McGrath. We will explore the concept of “aestheticized politics” and its relation to Dontsovism in chapter 3.

⁶¹ On the centrality of the sacred to national identity from the ancient to the modern world, see Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁶² Similarly, historians since the “cultural turn” since the 1980s, such as E.P. Thompson and Geoff Eley, have argued that class, though it speaks to “demonstrable social facts,” is a function of discourse, “structures of feeling,”

Dontsov first expressed his admiration for Bauer's thought, which he extensively incorporated into his subsequent writing on Marxism and nationalism, while writing for *Ukrainskaia zhizn'*.⁶³ Prior to his gradual break with the USDRP over the course of the First World War, Dontsov preferred to direct his accusations of hypocrisy, ignorance, and evil intentions concerning the Ukrainian question against Russian liberals rather than Social Democrats, chastising them for their "unforgivably feeble-minded" understanding of the problem.⁶⁴ In another article published in *Ukrainskaia zhizn'*, Dontsov argued that Russian liberals, despite their high-minded, constitutionalist rhetoric, had plans to use Ukrainian souls and soil as a bargaining chip to win Polish loyalty and build a "neoslavist" bulwark against Germany.⁶⁵ For their part, the Polish bourgeoisie depended on Russia's might to defend them against the presumably more aggressive assimilatory policies of the German Empire. Dontsov cites Roman Dmowski's *La question polonaise* (The Polish Question) and *Myśli powoczesnego polaka* (Thoughts of a Modern Pole) as evidence of Polish nationalism's "Russophilia" and intentions of reclaiming and Polonizing the historical provinces of Eastern Galicia and Volhynia (modern-day western Ukraine), which had been parts of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Russian liberals, Dontsov alleges, regularly indicated their willingness to relinquish these regions to a reconstituted, autonomous Poland in exchange for Polish cooperation in the struggle against Germany. They exhibited an "imperialist tendency" and desire to achieve a "mononational" (*odnonatsional'ne*) government through the centralization, homogenization, and regimentation of

and culture as much as economic conditions. See Geoff Eley and Keith Nield, *The Future of Class in History: What's Left of the Social?* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007).

⁶³ Dmytro Dontsov, "O. Bauer o natsional'noi assimilatsii," *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* 4 (1912), in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 164-66.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, "Russkii liberalizm i ukrainskoe dvizhenie," *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* 5 (1912), in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 167-73.

the national cultures, laws, and markets of the Russian Empire. He accused them of suffering from the “infection of nationalism,” signaling his disapproval, even as late as 1912, of nationalism as such. All of this led Dontsov to conclude that the achievement of Russian liberalism’s dream of a constitutionally governed Russian Empire would actually leave Ukrainians worse off than they already were: at the mercy of a bourgeois-capitalist regime ruled by Ukraine’s two greatest national enemies.

Ukrainskaia zhizn' published a letter to the editor from Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky (1880-1940), the renowned Zionist writer and activist from Odessa, who sharply disagreed with Dontsov’s prediction that the Russian liberals would soon become openly hostile to the movements of the non-Russian nationalities of the empire, and would therefore fail to gain their support, losing control of the imperial periphery.⁶⁶ He argued that the Kadets would not do so for many years to come, when national minorities finally began taking their place at the helm of cultural and political life in the regions where they predominate. Jabotinsky doubted that this would happen for a long time to come—a position that later proved to be false, when the Provisional Government chose to fight the movements for national autonomy and outright secession that appeared in the wake of the February Revolution, alienating its potential allies among the non-Russians and thereby hastening its own downfall in late 1917. He agreed, however, that the national question would not be resolved peacefully until purportedly progressive Russians accepted and defended the equality and right to national self-determination of all the empire’s peoples. Like Dontsov, with whom he typically disagreed,⁶⁷ Jabotinsky noted that the “Lands beyond the Moscow River” (*Zamoskvorech'e*) dreaded the word “nationalism,”

⁶⁶ Vladimir Zhabotinskii, “O russkom liberalizme,” *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* 2 (1913).

⁶⁷ Israel Kleiner, *From Nationalism to Universalism: Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky and the Ukrainian Question* (Toronto Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2000), 70-73.

thinking it outmoded in Europe, when in reality it was ascendant—the wave of the future.⁶⁸ He doubted Dontsov’s prediction that Ukrainians would soon begin clamoring for greater independence, but urged the latter to intensify their own and others’ national movements in imperial Russia:

We nonnatives (*inorodtsy*) . . . have had the responsibility foisted upon us to prove what we have known for ages and what all political parties in Russia will sooner or later be forced to recognize: that the nationality question in this empire is primary, not secondary. Moreover, it is the most important of all problems, much more important than the agrarian or labor questions. For us nonnatives, the entire liberation movement, the whole prospect of Russia’s renewal, has meaning and value only to the extent that it brings us national freedom.⁶⁹

If anything, Jabotinsky’s position was more radical than Dontsov’s at this point, and had been since at least 1903, when he began propounding an anthropological theory of nationalities as racial types, calling for the break up of all the world’s empires into their national components, decrying the assimilation of minority groups (especially of the Jewish diaspora) and the mixing of blood.⁷⁰

The biographic and intellectual parallels between Jabotinsky and Dontsov are striking. Idiosyncratic yet iconic, controversial and influential, they both represent the most radical versions of their respective nationalisms. At the same time, they were perhaps the most cosmopolitan, Europeanized, internationally savvy, and (ironically enough) Russified thinkers

⁶⁸ Vladimir Zhabotinskii, “Demokratizm i natsionalizm,” *Odesskie novosti* (August 19, 1912).

⁶⁹ Zhabotinsky, “O russkom liberalizme,” 54-55. Quoted in Kleiner, *From Nationalism to Universalism*, 71.

⁷⁰ Unlike Jabotinsky and many of the physical anthropologists of imperial Russia, Dontsov did not embrace “scientific” racist ideas until the 1930s, under the influence of Nazi German writers (which we will explore in Chapters 5 and 6). Marina Mogilner, “Defining the Racial Self: Russian Contexts of the anti-Imperial Nationalism of Vladimir Jabotinsky,” (paper presented at the Carolina Seminar: Russia and Its Empires, East and West, Chapel Hill, NC, February 25, 2016). On nationalist and imperialist interpretations and utilizations of racial theory in late imperial Russia, see Marina Mogilner, *Homo imperii: A History of Physical Anthropology in Russia* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013).

that Zionism and Ukrainian nationalism ever produced.⁷¹ Both were the sons of “New Russian” merchants who had died young. Both had formative experiences in the cosmopolitan metropolises of the Russian Empire (Odessa and St. Petersburg, respectively) and of Europe (Rome and Vienna), but chose to deny the imperial Russian identities open to them, especially to Dontsov, for whom religious conversion presented no obstacle. Speaking of religion, both were largely indifferent or hostile to it until after they had evolved toward militant nationalism, at which point Judaism and Christianity (respectively) became cornerstones of their ideologies and political prescriptions. Jabotinsky and Dontsov both struggled to reconcile their cosmopolitan desire to join the European family of nations with their loathing of multinational polities and the intermingling of cultures and blood that they engender. Both embodied the extremes to which the dialectic tension between cosmopolitanism and nationalism could go. Both struggled to rid their respective nations of passivity, hybridity, and defeatism in the face of colonial oppression. Yet both approved of instances of colonialism or imperialism that seemed to favor the establishment of an independent Ukraine or Zion (Israel).⁷² Their political philosophies promoted martial discipline and social hierarchies, unflinching violence against the nation’s internal and external enemies, racial and civilizational purity. The construction of an independent Ukraine or Zion was a life-and-death imperative for Dontsov and Jabotinsky, and both saw the need for a revolution in consciousness and a new type of person—harder, crueler, and single-mindedly zealous—to carry out this struggle to a victorious conclusion.

⁷¹ Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, xiii-xv.

⁷² Dontsov took a rosy view of Teutonic designs on Eastern Europe from World War I to World War II, regarding it as the kind of civilizing, anti-Russian, anti-Bolshevik influence that would bring Ukraine back into Europe, and thereby hasten its liberation and advancement. Jabotinsky called for the exodus of Jews from Poland to Palestine, the establishment of a heavily armed Jewish state there, and the expulsion of the native Arab population from its borders.

As of 1912 Dontsov was well settled in L'viv, establishing himself as a publicist at the center of Galician Ukrainian cultural and political life, and adopting a new, cosmopolitan, Central European identity. Dontsov's relationship with Mariia "Mariika" Bachyns'ka (1891-1978), whom he married in L'viv's main Orthodox Dormitian Church on May 27, 1912, accelerated his acculturation westward. The pair had met in Vienna as students in 1909. Mariia's father—Mykhailo Bachyns'kyi, a Uniate Greek-Catholic priest and poet—opposed her marriage to Dontsov. The reasons for Mykhailo's disapproval of the union are unclear, but likely had something to do with the fact that Dontsov was an outsider from Russia, Orthodox by birth and atheist by choice, and therefore morally suspect. Mariia evidently defied her father's wishes, however. The couple's early romance was quite affectionate. They exchanged amorous postcards coordinating discreet meetings in L'viv and the small Galician town of Drohobych throughout 1910.⁷³ The two wedded immediately after Mariia's father's death in 1912. The ceremony was held in the Orthodox Dormition Church in central L'viv. Mariia Bachyns'ka-Dontsova, as she came to be known, belonged to a wealthy and prominent Western Ukrainian family with noble and priestly roots. She was well educated and fluent in German, a skill that would later prove invaluable to the diplomatic and publicistic work that she and Dontsov collaborated on from World War I to the late 1930s. Mariia was a pro-Ukrainian activist, writer, and a public intellectual in her own right. A feminist, she also headed the *Soiuz Ukrainok* (Union of Ukrainian Women), the largest Ukrainian women's rights organization of the interwar period from 1926 to 1927. Her talents, connections, and access to the Bachyns'kyi family fortune would make it possible for Dontsov to reach a much wider audience with his ideas during the interwar period, while their marriage confirmed him as a "Central European," despite his eastern, Russian origins.

⁷³ TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 16, ark. 1-8.



Figure 1.7. Mariia Bachyns'ka-Dontsova, Dmytro's first and only wife. *Source:* Dzvinka Vorobkalo, “‘Mystetstvo dlia nastii’ vs ‘Mystetstvo dlia mystetstva,’” *zbruc.eu*. <http://zbruc.eu/node/60625> [accessed March 10, 2017]

Hereafter Dontsov began to transition away from a belief in “the nation as an instrument of progress” and “Ukraine as an agent of revolution” toward “the nation as the state” and “Ukraine as a part of *Mitteleuropa*,” according to historian Tomasz Stryjek’s periodization.⁷⁴ Dontsov chose to write “Central Europe” in German for a reason: if the common interest that bound the Polish *Endecja* and Russian liberals together in their conspiracy to annihilate the Ukrainian nationality were the threat of a German *Drang nach Osten*, then the Germanic world would be a natural ally to Ukrainians in their struggle against Poland and Russia, with its “*Drang nach Westen*.”⁷⁵ This is precisely the conclusion that Dontsov arrived at in 1913 and defended, through the two World Wars, for the remainder of his career. Dontsov regarded his own pro-

⁷⁴ Tomasz Stryjek, *Ukraińska idea*, 123-26.

⁷⁵ This is a recurring expression in Dontsov’s prose. See, for example, Dontsov, “Suchasne polityczne polozhennia natsii i nashi zavdannia,” in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 27; and Dmytro Donzow, *Die ukrainische Staatsidee und der Krieg gegen Russland* (Berlin: C. Kroll, 1915).

German orientation and Germanocentric prescriptions for Ukrainian geopolitics as an affirmation of “Western civilization” and its values, which, he alleged, stood in glaring opposition to the chaotic “oriental despotism” of “horde-like Muscovy.” Even as a protectorate and colony of Berlin or Vienna, Dontsov believed, Ukraine would fare better than it had under Russian hegemony because the West championed democracy, socialism, and the free development of individuals and nations. He nevertheless expected the German and Austrian empires to be interested in annexing Ukraine not out of altruistic concern for the rights of the people living there, but out of their own interests as expanding states in a geopolitical contest with Russia.

Dontsov first expressed this idea in his brochure, *Moderne moskvofil'stvo* (Modern Moscophilia), a bold and original work when it appeared in 1913. The publication of *Modern Moscophilia* secured his fame and notoriety in L'viv among politically active Ukrainians and Russians. It sparked widespread controversy and derisive accusations of “Mazepism” (*mazepynstvo*)⁷⁶—a term that derives from the name of the Ukrainian Hetman Ivan Mazepa, who famously sided with the Swedes against Peter I during the Great Northern War in an abortive attempt to assert the Ukraine's independence from Russia. After Russian Constitutional Democratic Party leader Pavel Miliukov read it, for example, he warned the Duma on February 19, 1914: “Again we see the germination of separatist sentiments, [and] I present to you Dontsov's brochure as evidence. To you I say: fear him! If you continue your politics, Dontsovs will not be numbered by the ones and tens, but by the hundreds, thousands, millions.”⁷⁷ Placing Ukraine at the center of an age-old conflict between European civilization and “Muscovy,” Dontsov contended that the latter has exerted and continues to exert the most pernicious

⁷⁶ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 95.

⁷⁷ Quoted in Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 109.

influence on Ukrainian politics and culture. For Dontsov, Moscovophilia was “the widespread [condition] among certain quarters of our intelligentsia of boundless reverence for Russian civilization and an astonishing dependence upon domineering and progressive Russian circles.” “This dependence,” he argued “does not allow the Ukrainian movement to leave the diaper and stand on its own feet, [and] weakens its strength of resistance in the struggle against alien forces.”⁷⁸ Slavish, colonial imitation of Russia in the realms of culture and politics laid over Ukrainian society like a “thick, heavy fog,” emaciating its national vitality. Dontsov especially reproached Ukrainians for their “national hermaphroditism”:

Our duty is to discard on the side of theory analytic-cultural-sentimental *ukrainstvo* and to outline a clear program of Ukrainian politics that relies upon an analysis of the nature of national movements [and] of national relations within Russia, [and that] is free from the influence of those alien concepts that are undesirable to us and do not correspond to our needs. *Ukrainstvo*—even [of the] philistine (*mishchans'ke*) [sort]—needs a new orientation!⁷⁹

Dontsov directed his attack against the Ukrainian liberal-democrats and “bourgeois nationalists” of the “philistine camp,” whom he accused of having sold out Ukrainian society for petty economic gains. Still writing as a representative of the Ukrainian “Marxist intelligentsia,” Dontsov did not extend his opprobrium to fellow Social Democrats.⁸⁰

Dontsov wasted no time in drawing up a radical new political program for the Ukrainian movement that made “separation from Russia” its central motto. He presented it in a speech to the Second All-Ukrainian Students’ Congress in L’viv, July 1913, entitled, “*Suchasne politychne polozhennia natsii i nashi zavdannia*” (The Present Political Situation of the Nation and Our

⁷⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, “Moderne moskvofil’stvo,” in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 2, 18.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁸⁰ Dontsov’s comrades in the USDRP emerged entirely unscathed even though, as Sosnovs’kyi suggests, they were some of the worst Moscovophile offenders among Dontsov’s contemporaries. Sosnovs’kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 95.

Tasks), which he published later that year in a separate brochure.⁸¹ Several Ukrainian authors on the left had conceived of Ukrainian independence prior to 1913, but they dissented from the mainstream of the Ukrainian national movement, which, prior to the Fourth Universal of the Central Rada,⁸² was overwhelmingly committed to a federalist reorganization of imperial Russia's nationalities and did not contemplate separatism. Arguing from Marxist premises, the West Ukrainian radicals Viacheslav Budzynovs'kyi and Iulian Bachyns'kyi both made cases for an independent Ukrainian nation-state within the Austrian-Galician context as early as 1891.⁸³ The more conservative Ukrainian political activist Mykola Mikhnovs'kyi's brochure *Samostiina Ukraina* (Independent Ukraine), published in 1900, called for an independent Ukrainian nation-state on the legal and historical grounds of the provisions of the Treaty of Pereiaslav. (The Treaty of Pereiaslav (1654) created the Ukrainian Cossack Hetmanate, and placed it under the military protection of imperial Muscovy in exchange for political fealty to the Russian state.) Prominent Ukrainian poet, scholar, and publicist Ivan Franko's "*Poza mezhamy mozhlyvoho*" (Beyond the Limits of the Possible), published the same year, made a fervent plea for the *dream* of Ukrainian independence, however far-fetched, that clearly anticipated the older, radically idealistic Dontsov's worldview.⁸⁴

Dontsov's focus on geopolitics and a concrete political program that did not make appeals to justice or the utopian possibilities of an unforeseeable future, but to *Realpolitik*, set his

⁸¹ Dmytro Dontsov, "Suchasne politychne polozhennia natsii i nashi zavdannia" in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 21-37.

⁸² The Fourth Universal of the Ukrainian Central Rada declared the UNR's independence from Bolshevik Russia on January 25, 1918, reversing the Rada's former policy of federation with the Provisional Government in response to the aggressive posturing of the Bolsheviks and their denial of the Rada's legitimacy.

⁸³ John-Paul Himka, "Young Radicals and Independent Statehood: The Idea of a Ukrainian Nation-State, 1890-1895," *Slavic Review* 41 (1982): 219-35.

⁸⁴ Ivan Franko, "Beyond the Limits of the Possible," in Ralph Lindheim and George S. N. Luckyj, eds., *Towards an Intellectual History of Ukraine: An Anthology of Ukrainian Thought from 1710 to 1995* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 200.

speech apart from these precedents. In “The Political Situation of the Nation,” Dontsov advocates Ukrainian separatism, not independence (*samostiinist’*), which he regarded as impossible under the prevailing circumstances. The speech was nevertheless exceptionally radical in its call for Ukraine’s complete severance from Russia. Foreseeing an inevitable and fast-approaching war between Russia and the Germanic world, Dontsov believed that he had identified an opportunity for Ukraine to enter the orbit of the “civilized West” as a protectorate of the Austrian Empire. Dontsov regarded the latter as patently more amenable to the idea of Ukrainian autonomy, especially since this would entail a dramatic enfeeblement of Russia’s geopolitical position. To Dontsov’s mind, Ukraine’s alignment with *Mitteleuropa* against Russia in the coming conflict could serve as a practical first step on the path to total independence: “We must fulfill our task *faithfully and to the end*, remembering that history knows no instance, where an enslaved nation liberated itself from under a foreign yoke with only its *own forces*.”⁸⁵

Dontsov distinguished his own “realism” from the “provincialism” of his compatriots, who foolishly place their trust in Russian liberalism’s noble-sounding lip service to “national self-determination.” He dismissed the latter as mere subterfuge, designed to obscure the inherently colonialist, anti-Ukrainian aims of the Russian bourgeoisie, insisting that his analysis took into account only “objective conditions,” and snubbing his opponents’ “hypocritical” talk of rights.

Dontsov set out to provide a “scientific,” “nonutopian,” and Marxist justification for his program of Ukraine’s separation from Russia in his 1914 article, “Engels, Marx and Lassalle on ‘Unhistorical Nations.’” Marx and Engels themselves, as Dontsov was well aware, had never expressed anything but disdain for Ukrainians, expecting that they would perish along with the

⁸⁵ Dontsov, “Suchasne politychne polozhennia natsii i nashi zavdannia,” in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 35. [Dontsov’s italics]

other “reactionary peoples” of the Slavic East in the great revolutionary conflagration to come.⁸⁶ The Ukrainians—as an “unhistorical nation” of smallholding peasants on the wrong side of progress—were destined for extinction. Against this view, Dontsov proffered a Marxist account of the interceding half-century of historical development and escalating national movements among the Slavic nationalities of East-Central Europe, arguing that the opinions of Marx and Engels concerning the national question east of the Danube had ceased to be applicable and ought to be relegated, in the spirit of Marxism, to their historical context (i.e. the mid-nineteenth century). Their beliefs, Dontsov maintained, were “already long ago refuted by history—some by such general recognized socialist authorities as K. Kautsky, O. Bauer, and Franz Mehring—others again by Marx and Engels themselves.”⁸⁷ The Ukrainian nation did have a future as an independent entity, but for no other reason than its own strength and will to survive, as determined by the “historical process”:

[The] widely disseminated sentimental-high-minded (*santymental'no-prekrasnodushnyi*) view of national rights recognizes a ‘right to self-determination’ for every nation, [and] even for every half-cultured tribe. This quasi-liberal view found an extremely harsh evaluation from the quarter of Marx and Engels, who approached the national question from an entirely different, healthy criterion. . . . As we’ve already seen, our authors subordinate the business of liberating unhistorical nations to the interest of the great, civilized peoples. Only those national movements that did not collide with the revolutionary strivings of the great nations obtained *placet* [an affirmative vote—T.E.]. Hence this *Quos ego!*—thrown by Engels against the Balkan ‘boys’ (*khlopchakiv*), who were so inconsiderate as to not be taken in by this highest principle. . . . All told, [we have] arrived at a modification of the initial starting point with which the national strivings of modern nations were evaluated: [it is] not their conformity or divergences from high civilizational interests, but only their *revolutionary* or *reactionary* role in the historical, irrespective of anything else; the standard became: is a given national movement in favor of civilization or not? Are the problems that it will necessarily create colliding with the *direction of historical development*?⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Friedrich Engels, “The Magyar Struggle,” *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (1849).
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1849/01/13.htm> [accessed Nov. 16, 2012]

⁸⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, “Engel’s, Marx i Liassal’ pro ‘neistorychnyi natsii,’” in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 75.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

Dontsov's answer to this question as it concerns Ukraine is a resounding "no," and he castigates Russian socialists for using the concept of the "unhistorical nation" to combat national movements within the empire "in the name of defending their own hitherto position."⁸⁹ History alone would be the judge, and the signs pointed to the Ukrainian national movement's confluence with the trends of European democracy. Dontsov argued that this conclusion followed from a Marxist analysis of the prevailing situation and was already conceived by some of the most respected names in Marxism:

When speaking about the views of Marx and Engels on unhistorical nations, it would be desirable if Russian Marxists who do not want to consider these modifications of [Marx's and Engels's] views—which they themselves and their great disciples made in their lifetimes—paid attention to the *method* that guided our authors in the problems of interest to us. Then they would see that uncritically repeating in the twentieth century that which Marx and Engels wrote and said on the national question in the second half of the nineteenth means lowering oneself to the role of a scholarly parrot; to be faithful not to the spirit of their science, but only to their letters.⁹⁰

Despite his best efforts to demonstrate his fealty to Marxist orthodoxy, Dontsov's publications on the eve of the First World War stirred up much controversy among Russian and Ukrainian Social Democrats, who widely censured his call for the separation of Ukraine from Russia as a discordant "heresy"—a betrayal of the international workers' movement. Russian liberals and conservatives, for their part, heaped unmitigated scorn upon Dontsov in the press.⁹¹

The USDRP leader, future prime minister of the short-lived Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR), and Ukrainian émigré writer, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, claimed that Dontsov's subsequent "enmity toward Ukrainian socialism was not a principled, but personal matter," and

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 92.

⁹¹ For a typical example see Mikhail Mogilianskii, "Uzory lzhi," *Rech'* 331 (1913).

that he “obviously harbored a deep hatred for socialists,” alleging that Dontsov was expelled from the party for “betrayal” (*zrada*) for having published in the conservative anti-Ukrainian Russian newspaper *Russkie vedomosti*.⁹² But the USDRP’s records do not indicate that Dontsov was ever accused of this offense and dismissed from the party, and there is no evidence that he submitted anything to this journal.⁹³ Dontsov did publish some Ukraine-related pieces in the liberal, pro-business Russian paper *Utro Rossii* (Dawn of Russia), but under his own name and largely in order to make ends meet under the difficult circumstances as an exiled Ukrainian student in 1911. (He received several small payments from *Utro Rossii* that fall.)⁹⁴ It is unclear whether Dontsov left the party willfully or was excommunicated from it, but the ease and speed with which his erstwhile comrades publicly turned against him left him with a lifelong distrust and contempt for Ukrainian socialists as conformists, opportunists, and cowards. Nevertheless, some Ukrainian socialists voiced their sympathies for him: in 1913 Petliura wrote him a letter, half-jokingly (yet presciently) reassuring Dontsov that he would one day become “the editor of a journal made especially for you, where you will have a free hand to express whatever heresies and reject whatever native sanctities you like.”⁹⁵

Russian liberals and Marxists commented on the controversy as well. Lenin entered the fray both as a defender and a detractor of Dontsov’s speech, “The Present Political Situation of the Nation”:

For a long time, mention has been made in the press and from the Duma rostrum . . . of the absolute indecency, the reactionary character and the impudence of statements made

⁹² Volodymyr Vynnychenko, *Vidrodzhennia natsii. Zapovit bortsiam za vyzvolennia* (Kyiv: Krynytsia, 2008), 732-33.

⁹³ Shlikhta, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 50-52.

⁹⁴ BN, DD, Mf. 82672, ark. 5-9.

⁹⁵ *Literaturno-Naukovyi Vistnyk* 12 (1931), 1068.

by certain influential Kadets (headed by Mr. Struve)⁹⁶ on the Ukrainian question. A few days ago we came across an article in *Rech'*, the official organ of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, written by one of its regular contributors, Mr. Mikhail Mogilianskii, an article that *must not* be ignored. This article is real chauvinist badgering of the Ukrainians for “separatism.” . . . Mr. Mikhail Mogilianskii himself points out that at the All-Ukraine Student Congress in L’vov some Ukrainian Social Democrats, Ukrainian émigrés from Russia, also spoke against the slogan of political independence for the Ukraine; they spoke against the Social Democrat Dontsov, who proposed the resolution on “an independent Ukraine” that was adopted at the congress by a majority of all present against two. It follows, therefore, that there is no question of all Social Democrats agreeing with Dontsov. But the Social Democrats disputed the matter with Dontsov, put forward their own arguments, discussed the matter from the same platform and attempted to convince the same audience. Mr. Mikhail Mogilianskii lost all sense of elementary political decency when he hurled his coarse invective drawn from the lexicon of the Black Hundreds against Dontsov and against the entire congress of Ukrainian students, knowing full well that it was impossible for his opponents to refute the views of *Rech'*, that it was impossible for them to speak to the Russian audience from the same platform and just as resolutely, openly and freely.⁹⁷

Thus, despite Lenin’s characterization of Dontsov’s worldview as “quasi-democratic” “nationalist philistinism,”⁹⁸ he offered him a patronizing defense by way of an attack upon Russian liberals for their display of contempt for Ukrainian national aspirations, accusing them of having spurned the right of national self-determination that Lenin himself regarded as a mere tactical concession.

Dontsov harbored no illusions about the RSDRP’s or the Kadets’ magnanimous intentions, and accordingly denied that the right to self-determination existed or mattered. Ukraine would be free and independent, not because democratic Russians would benevolently permit it to do so, but because impartial circumstances were militating in favor of Ukrainians and

⁹⁶ Pyotr Struve (1870-1944)—a leading Kadet. Like Dontsov, Struve was a seeker who underwent a series of ideological shifts in his lifetime, going from Marxism to liberalism, to the anti-Bolshevik White Movement.

⁹⁷ V. I. Lenin, “Kadety ob ukrainskom voprose,” *Rabochaia pravda* no. 3 (July 16, 1913) in vol. 23 of V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow: Progress, 1961), 337-8. See also the December 1913 editions of *Proletarskaia pravda* (in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 24, 209), and *O prave natsii na samoopredelenie* (in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 25, 281).

⁹⁸ V. I. Lenin, “Kriticheskie zametki po natsional’nomu voprosu,” *Rabochaia pravda* (1913) in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 24, 125-9.

against the imperial Russian regime. Lenin misunderstood Dontsov's speech when he accused him of having placed the Ukrainian nation before the international proletariat.⁹⁹ Dontsov started from the premise that the most salient enemy of labor, progress, and democracy was the autocratic Russian Empire and the tyrannical "Muscovite" civilization more broadly. Ukraine's separation from Russia would therefore serve the cause of revolution throughout the "spiritually socialistic" West by crippling the reactionary menace to the East. He regarded as purely secondary the benefits that would accrue to Ukraine itself as a result of its *historically necessary* secession westward. Thus, for Dontsov, the interests of *ukrainstvo* and those of the proletariat were identical in practice, but the latter still held primacy.

Increasingly isolated within his own party and confined to exile in West Ukraine, Dontsov began moving in different circles and publishing in different venues between the summers of 1913 and 1914. He penned a scathing rejoinder to Mogilianskii and published it in *Shliakhy* (Pathways)—the L'viv-based journal of the nationalistic Ukrainian Students Union between 1913 and 1917.¹⁰⁰ He responded to his critics at the USDRP organ, *Dzvin* (The Bell)—a publication to which he had previously made numerous contributions. Dontsov's move from "democratic" newspapers such as *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* (Ukrainian Life), *Nash holos'* (Our Voice), *Slovo* (The Word), and *Dzvin* to an outfit like *Ukrains'ka khata* (Ukrainian House) further signaled his ongoing estrangement from the USDRP. Under the editorship of the antipopulist Ukrainian literary critic Mykola Ievshan, the monthly *Ukrains'ka khata* promoted a new national liberation ideology for Ukraine based upon a blend of Nietzscheanism, antimaterialism,

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Dmytro Dontsov, "Rossiis'ka presa pro ostannii z'izd," *Shliakhy* 12 (1915) in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 201-2.

antipositivism, individualism, Occidentalism, voluntarism, aristocratism, neoromanticism, and the purging from Ukrainian culture of any “external,” but especially Russian, influences.¹⁰¹

It was from this new milieu in L’viv that Dontsov published his ripostes—*“Dzhentl’menam iz Dzvonu”* (To the Gentlemen from *The Bell*) and *“Z privodu odniei eresy”* (On the Subject of a Single Heresy), among others—to the Ukrainian liberal and Social Democratic press in Kyiv. He summarizes the charges against him as follows:

What have my opponents hurled at me? Firstly—this ‘heresy’ is a utopia based upon assumptions that cannot be calculated in advance. Secondly—it is antidemocratic and anti-Marxist; thirdly, it can only pull us away from real, useful work. Thus speak my countrymen, those—living yet again by the utterance of the second priest of *Rada*—who¹⁰² ‘sit like a mouse beneath the broom,’ [and] for whom looking out onto the wide world from [behind] this broom is a dangerous utopia.¹⁰³

Dontsov then contended that his program was, in fact, far less “utopian” than those of his opponents because it took into account geopolitical developments beyond the faltering Russian Empire, reminding them of the centrality of the *Western* proletariat in any properly Marxist political program. Ukraine’s separation from Russia, Dontsov maintained, was a strategy in the spirit of Marxism, even though it may take the outward form of “national conservatism,” because it would serve the cause of revolution throughout Europe by dismembering the reactionary Russian state. Recalling his thesis in *Modern Moscovophilia*, Dontsov accused his Ukrainian opponents of base, “provincial” subservience to Russian liberalism and antidemocratic imperialism. He asserted that his own ideas fell within the mainstream of contemporary Marxism from Engels to Max Weber, charging his detractors with the sin of isolation from the historical

¹⁰¹ “Ukrains’ka khata,” *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages\U\K\Ukrai5nshDAkakhataIT.htm> [accessed, November 17, 2012].

¹⁰² *Rada* was the only Ukrainian-language daily in the Russian Empire. Originally the official organ of the liberal nationalist Ukrainian Democratic Radical Party, it ran in Kyiv from 1906 until the summer of 1914.

¹⁰³ Dmytro Dontsov, “Z pryvodu odniei eresy,” in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 40.

and intellectual trends in Europe, and a bevy of other deviations from Marxist orthodoxy.¹⁰⁴ In the final analysis, both camps to the dispute were at least partly correct: Dontsov's ideas on the eve of the First World War were indeed becoming more nationalistic and antidemocratic, but then so were those of Marxists throughout Europe.

Nationalism and Marxism in the Late Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires

In order to understand the roots and meanings of Dontsov's "turn to the right," which was not atypical for radicals of his generation, it is necessary to take a broader view. Benito Mussolini, the Belgian politician Henri de Man, and the German racial theorist Ludwig Woltmann, among others, followed similar life paths. Like Dontsov, they started out on the Marxian far left, became disillusioned with it, then embraced ideologies that preserved the goal of revolution, but rejected the ethics of democratic egalitarianism and insisted on the primacy of the irrational in humanity. At root the shift consisted of an adjustment to classical Marxism's theory of "historical materialism" that allowed revolutionaries to make appeals to the tenacious national-patriotic sentiments of industrial laborers. This revision permitted them to place the mobilizing "false consciousness" of national identity in the service of their struggle against capitalism, imperialism, and "bourgeois values." By ascribing historical change in the realms of law, art, religion, philosophy, and science to the economic base or the "mode and relations of production" rather than "mind" or "spirit," Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels claimed to have "put Hegel on his feet." Until then, they argued, Hegel had been "standing on his head," propounding an idealistic inversion of the true, objective dialectic of progress. Heterodox Marxists of the turn of the century took one step further and stood Marx on his head, producing a neo-Hegelian

¹⁰⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, "Dzhentl'menam iz 'dzvonu'," in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 191.

idealism alloyed with the vision of revolutionary socialism.¹⁰⁵ This ideology was equipped to harness the “irrational,” however defined, in the service of the “rational” (i.e. the international workers’ movement).

Historian Zeev Sternhell considers this “antimaterialist revision of Marxism” the short-term intellectual (as opposed to long-term cultural) basis of “fascist ideology,” tracing it back to the works of Sorel.¹⁰⁶ Most instances of integral nationalism by the above definition, including the Ukrainian, would fit easily into Sternhell’s broad category of “fascist ideology” as a synthesis of nationalism and socialism (although he excludes Nazism due to its privileging of biologicistic racism over German nationalism). Sternhell does not go as far as historian A. J. Gregor, who considers fascist ideology a *variant* of Marxism. Instead, fascism was the consequence of a particular, nationalism-infused revision of Marxism by the radicals of late-nineteenth-century France, from which it spread to the rest of Europe. Sternhell’s account goes a long way toward explaining why (former) revolutionary leftists first articulated the ostensibly far-rightwing ideology of fascism, but his diffusionist model is inadequate given the independence, idiosyncrasies, and simultaneity of the protofascist ideas and movements of East-Central Europe and Russia, which followed their own logic of development and reacted to problems unique to the region. The reactionaries and revolutionaries of imperial Russia and Austria were inventive and sophisticated in their adumbrations of fascist ideology, not simply

¹⁰⁵ A. J. Gregor, *Marxism, Fascism, and Totalitarianism: Chapter in the Intellectual History of Radicalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 88-102 and 297-98.

¹⁰⁶ Zeev Sternhell, *The Birth of Fascist Ideology: From Cultural Rebellion to Political Revolution*, trans. David Maisel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

imitating French fashion. Indeed, as Faith Hillis shows, the rise of the radical, antiliberal right in *fin-de-siècle* France originally owed much to Russian sources.¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless, for most of Europe's long nineteenth century, nationalism and liberalism went hand in hand. The first generations of French, German, and Italian nationalists were liberals who saw national self-determination and individual freedom as complementary and analogous. Similarly, early Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian nationalists—despite overlapping and conflicting understandings of what people, territories, and histories their respective nations encompassed—¹⁰⁸ often shared liberal critiques of the Russian autocracy and socioeconomic injustice. Consequently, the imperial Russian state and its conservative backers approached even Russian nationalism with extreme caution. Reacting to the failed Polish uprisings of 1830 and 1863 against Russian rule, the tsarist regime nevertheless felt the need to incorporate those aspects of modern nationalist ideology that would allow it to mobilize a loyal population on a mass scale in defense of the empire. The “official nationalism” of the Russian Empire first propounded under Nicholas I (1825-55) had as much to do with political tsarism and Orthodoxy as it did with Russian language and ethnicity. It imagined all Orthodox East Slavs, emphatically including “Little Russians” (i.e. Ukrainians) and Belarusians, as branches of a single “Russian” nation, whose purportedly simple, morally pure peasant folk had long suffered exploitation and oppression by Polish barons and Jewish merchants. Supporters of this idea deployed the concept of “Rus’, holy and indivisible” in the hopes of resolving the tension between Russia as a cohesive nation and Russia as a multinational empire. They opposed any form of Ukrainian

¹⁰⁷ Faith Hillis, “Russian Émigrés, European Intermediaries and Fin-de-Siècle Europe’s ‘Politics in a New Key,’” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Boston, Massachusetts, November 21-24, 2014).

¹⁰⁸ Serhii Bilenkyi, *Romantic Nationalism in Eastern Europe: Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian Political Imaginations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

separatism, but claimed to be protectors and promoters of the unique and imperiled “Little Russian” culture. From the 1860s on, Russian officialdom increasingly supported a growing movement of Little Russian activists in Right-bank Ukraine whose politics moved in the direction of aggressive xenophobia, violent anti-Semitism, and discriminatory, tsarist, patrimonial statism—the origins of the early-twentieth-century protofascist Black Hundreds movement.¹⁰⁹ Russians were thus among the first Europeans to synthesize the mass mobilization politics of the socialist and liberal left with the right’s rejection of democratic, cosmopolitan, and bourgeois values. Though Ukrainian nationalism emerged from the same milieu, its champions—from the libertarian socialist thinker Mykhailo Drahomanov to the populist historian Mykhailo Hrushevs’kyi—were committed to liberal, progressive, and federalist platforms throughout the imperial period. Under the influence, rather, of the Little Russian activists, Dontsov belonged to the first generation to break with this tradition.¹¹⁰

Precedents and analogues for Ukrainian integral nationalism appeared in late-nineteenth-century partitioned Poland while Dontsov was still in gymnasium. Despite the ultimate divergence of their rhetoric and practice, the PPS and the Endecja emerged from common circles in the 1880s and shared a commitment to both national and social emancipation.¹¹¹ Both camps had grown weary of the previous generation’s “Warsaw positivism”—a long-term national liberation program that emphasized the evolutionary development of Polish society and culture through “organic work” rather than doomed revolutionary “action.” As Marxists, the PPS kept the liberal positivists’ faith in linear progress, but they rejected what they saw as the materialist

¹⁰⁹ On the origins of Russian (and Ukrainian) nationalism in Right-bank Ukraine, see Hillis, *Children of Rus’*.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 283.

¹¹¹ Brian Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 120-24.

fatalism and failure to appreciate the mobilizing power of national sentiment in Rosa Luxemburg's party, the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania, which broke away from the PPS in 1893. The PPS's most important early leader, but subsequently nonsocialist nationalist dictator of the Second Polish Republic (1918-1939), Józef Piłsudski, saw the path to Polish independence in military struggle against the Russian autocracy alongside the other oppressed nationalities of the empire, including Ukrainians. By contrast, the Endecja under Roman Dmowski's leadership directed its efforts against the German Empire and the threat of Germanization rather than against Russia and Russification. Unlike Piłsudski, Dmowski envisioned an ethnically homogeneous Poland, backed by Russia, and did not sympathize with the national aspirations of Ukrainians, whom he regarded as fated for double assimilation by the more powerful Russians and Poles. Historian Brian Porter argues that the social Darwinian Endecja's "abandonment of historical time" in favor of a synchronic, nonteleological conception of the world, wherein nations struggled for survival in an eternal present, is what ultimately separated it from the PPS.¹¹² A close follower of Polish politics, Dontsov later embraced a similar blend of pessimism about the future with veneration of "the deed."¹¹³

The modern European phenomenon of antirational illiberalism that Sternhell calls the "anti-Enlightenment tradition" reached its apogee in the course of Dontsov's lifetime.¹¹⁴ At the same time, the self-consciously positivist and rationalist tradition of "orthodox" Marxism was in the throes of a closely related moral, political, and philosophical crisis. Under Engels's influence the tradition of "classical Marxism" turned into a coarser economic determinism, grounded in

¹¹² Ibid., 129-34

¹¹³ Wysocki, *W kręgu integralnego nacjonalizmu*.

¹¹⁴ Zeev Sternhell, *The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition*, trans. David Maisel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

Darwinian evolutionary theory.¹¹⁵ Soon after the death of Engels in 1895, Marxist theorists Josef Dietzgen and Karl Kautsky both made attempts to elaborate a collectivist, “proletarian,” “scientific” ethics of Marxism on the basis of popular Darwinian watchwords: the “struggle for survival,” the “survival of the fittest,” and “progressive evolution,” all of which would soon find a prominent place in future fascisms and Dontsov’s own “active nationalism.” The national question weighed heavily upon debates within the early-twentieth-century Social Democratic circles of Central and Eastern Europe. In this regard, the incorporation of Darwinian anthropology into Marxism that Engels had first initiated would have significant consequences. Coming to grips with the social structures of primitive man, many Marxists—both “orthodox” and “revisionist”—came to believe in biologically determined categories of identity that existed prior to and outside of class.¹¹⁶ Tribes, races, and nations—inasmuch as they were manifestations of human evolution through genetic inheritance—seemed no less rooted in material reality than classes, and therefore had to be taken into consideration and explained by the “science” of Marxism.

During the decade prior to Dontsov’s journalistic debut in 1905, only Rosa Luxemburg among the major figures of early-twentieth-century Marxism in Eastern Europe held to the position of “national nihilism” that Marx and Engels had first hinted at in *The Communist Manifesto*. Luxemburg opposed any intrusion of national politics, sentiments, and identities into the international workers’ movement. The members of the PPS were among her most adamant opponents. Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz mounted a particularly strong case for the compatibility of Polish national aspirations with Marxism. Kelles-Krauz held that nationalism’s political salience

¹¹⁵ Friedrich Engels, *Anti-Dühring: Herr Eugen Dühring’s Revolution in Science* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1959).

¹¹⁶ Gregor, *Marxism, Fascism, and Totalitarianism*, 163.

rendered socialism realizable only within democratic nation-states.¹¹⁷ He rejected the distinction between “historical” and “unhistorical” nations, as Dontsov later would, and predicted the disintegration of Europe’s multinational empires into their national components. Echoing the French political philosopher Georges Sorel—a key influence on Dontsov’s thinking—Kelles-Krauz believed in the importance of “historical myths” as the justification and mobilizing impetus behind national and social upheavals. Sorel had supported Kelles-Krauz’s motion, subsequently struck down, to place Polish independence on the agenda at the Second International. Kelles-Krauz argued that industrial capitalism created and was in the process of creating nations and national languages (including Ukrainian), not destroying them, and he insisted upon the power of ideas and culture to shape history.¹¹⁸ Kelles-Krauz died in 1906 and does not appear in Dontsov’s antebellum works, but his arguments anticipated Dontsov’s own attempts to reconcile Marxism with national identity.

Well before socialist parties across Europe caved under the pressure of nationalism in the summer of 1914, violated their former ideals, and voted in favor of their respective states going to war, Dontsov had also arrived at the conclusion that, under the prevailing conditions, socialism could manifest itself only within a national framework. Simultaneously and independently following a path of intellectual development similar to those of Benito Mussolini and Vladimir Lenin, Dontsov came to believe that only a disciplined vanguard of “professional revolutionaries”—an “initiative minority”—could inspire the masses to carry out their historic mission. Whereas the late Marx and Engels had argued that the “working men have no country,” and could therefore be expected to spontaneously revolt in global solidarity on the basis of their

¹¹⁷ Timothy Snyder, *Nationalism, Marxism, and Central Europe: A Biography of Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz (1872-1905)* (Cambridge: Ukrainian Research Institute of Harvard University, 1998), 242.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 247-49.

common class interests, Dontsov's generation of Marxian radicals had grown cynical about the efficacy of appeals to an omnibus "universal human welfare," and began doubting the explanatory power of economic reductionism. Too impatient to continue passively waiting for the crisis and death of capitalism to materialize, the new breed of radical to which Dontsov belonged began looking for the keys to a better future in mass culture and charismatic leadership, rather than the purportedly immutable laws of historical materialism.

Conclusion: The Fervor of the Convert and the Narcissism of Small Differences

By 1914, Dontsov had gained a reputation for staking out extreme, emotive positions and presenting them, orally and in writing, with a captivating intensity. His early life in the Russian-Ukrainian borderlands left him with a combative mentality and seething resentment in search of an outlet. Unlike the Galician Ukrainians whom Dontsov addressed in his articles and speeches on the eve of World War I, the young nationalist from Tavriia had experienced his Ukrainian identity as if it were a religious conversion. To become a Ukrainian in the Russian Empire, Dontsov felt, was to join a minority faith besieged by official and unofficial forms of Russification, which denied the existence of Ukrainians as anything more than confused or traitorous Russians. His closeness to the "Russian camp" by blood and upbringing made the decision to break with it in favor of a Ukrainian, European identity especially acute for him; he spent the rest of life emphasizing anything that might set him and his chosen nationality apart from the Russian world that he had left behind in disgust. In this regard, Dontsov exhibited hallmark symptoms of the "narcissism of small differences"—a concept Freud coined in 1917 meaning "the phenomenon that it is precisely communities with adjoining territories, and related to each other in other ways as well, who are engaged in constant feuds and ridiculing each

other.”¹¹⁹ Accordingly, Dontsov abhorred few things more than the national “hybridity,” “hermaphroditism,” and “schizophrenia” of Ukrainians vis-à-vis Russia, and made it his mission to exorcise them of everything “Muscovite.” Dontsov’s liminal origins may have made him feel particularly well qualified to render such diagnoses and prescriptions for Ukraine.

Most contemptuous of all to Dontsov were the Ukrainians who recognized their nationally oppressed status, but refused to acknowledge the Russian people, and not just the Russian autocracy, as their enemy. All Russians, no matter their politics, were guilty of this colonial, assimilatory, and condescending attitude toward Ukrainians. Russian liberals, socialists, and conservatives alike negated the selfhood and agency of Ukrainians as such. Dontsov’s older brother Vladimir dismissed his Ukrainian identity as illegitimate: if anti-Ukrainian opinions could divide their own families, then what should Ukrainians expect from distant politicians, the Miliukovs and Lenins who spoke disingenuously of the “right to national self-determination?” Dontsov had become convinced that Russian hegemony would lead to the spiritual and cultural death of the Ukrainian people, so in order to survive Ukrainians must spurn Muscovy and embrace Europe.

Dontsov met World War I with the Marxist conviction that morality inhered in the historical process itself—that the winners of history were, *ipso facto*, the *rightful* winners of history, or at least the only ones worthy of consideration. The “natural rights” of individuals, nations, and classes—much bandied about by the adherents of liberalism—struck Dontsov as inconsequential illusions. Human beings were nothing more than the expendable raw material by which progress is achieved. No god could be counted upon to guarantee the salvation of humanity, captive to deterministic laws beyond its control, but an ineluctable process of

¹¹⁹ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization, Society, and Religion: Group Psychology, Civilization and Its Discontents, and Other Works* in *Penguin Freud Library*, ed. Albert Dickinson, vol. 12 (London: Penguin, 1991), 131, 305.

biological and socioeconomic evolution ensured that groups and individuals would kill or enslave one another until the end of history, when the dialectic of class struggle, coupled with the advancement of the means of production, would finally resolve itself into communism. In the interim, all morality is provisional—tolerable only insofar as it hastens the arrival of this final, blessed state. An astute follower of the latest deviations from classical Marxist theory, Dontsov believed that national identities and formations could be utilized toward this telos, particularly if they were arrayed alongside the peoples of Europe—the epicenter of universal progress—in a crusade against the Russian Empire—the quintessence of reaction. He placed Ukraine at the center of this historic confrontation. If Ukraine aligned itself with (Central) Europe, then it had a place in the future and the construction thereof; but if Ukraine remained within Russia, then it would drown to death in the “all-Russian” sea, reduced to an appendage of the “undifferentiated Muscovite horde” and abused as a battering ram against the revolutionary occident. These basic geopolitical, philosophical, and ethical ingredients of “active nationalism” were all present in Dontsov’s thought before his complete apostasy from Social Democracy in the following years. His Marxism—like that of so many of his contemporaries—contained the seeds of its own destruction qua fascism.

CHAPTER 2: “THE *GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG* OF UKRAÏNOPHILIA”: DMYTRO DONTSOV AND THE ENTANGLED EASTERN FRONT, 1914-1918

Dontsov’s political activities and writings, from the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 to the defeat of the Central Powers in the winter of 1918-19, reveal a decisive rupture in his thinking. The intervening storm of steel put his prewar notions of geopolitics, international conflict, and revolution to the test. From émigré propagandist, researcher, and journalist in the secret employ of the German Foreign Office, to ambassador and head of the press bureau and telegraph agency of the German-backed Ukrainian State (or Hetmanate), Dontsov was an influential participant in the various efforts to build and govern a Ukrainian nation-state known collectively as the Ukrainian Revolution.¹ Initially, he placed his trust in the peace process, the rule of international law, historic treaties, and the strength and beneficence of Berlin, Vienna, and the German-speaking public of Central Europe toward Ukrainians’ aspirations to self-government, but the defeat of the Central Powers and the slow death of Ukrainian independence in its infancy convinced him of the need for a new strategy and worldview. The First World War and its catastrophic aftermath on the Eastern Front left Dontsov more warlike, authoritarian, and statist, setting him on the path to becoming the “spiritual father” of Ukrainian integral nationalism and preparing the ground for the widespread acceptance of this and similarly militant ideas in Ukrainian politics and society.

¹ One of the best overviews of the subject remains John S. Reshetar, *The Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1920: A Study in Nationalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952).

Three interrelated aspects of World War I transformed the Ukrainian national movement and the ethnos that it sought to mobilize, decisively shaping Dontsov's thought in the process:

1) It was a "total" war, or at least the first attempt to sustain one. The common objective of the belligerent states and their generals, secondary to victory, was the perfection of a new kind of warfare, mechanized and all-encompassing, capable of harnessing and directing the energy of entire nations for the purpose of war and its corollary—the survival, empowerment, and expansion of the state. Ideally, total war makes no distinction between combatants and noncombatants, regarding everyone it encounters as an acceptable target.² On the Eastern Front, total war subjected civilian populations to previously unthinkable levels of violence and dislocation. The clash of the Central Powers and Imperial Russia meant mass mobilization, food rationing, grain requisitions, famine, forced labor, martial law, pogroms, refugee migrations, ethnic cleansing, surveillance, propaganda, espionage, and the militarization of societies and ethnic relations in Eastern Europe. The practices and consequences of total war unwittingly furnished the seeds of the belligerents' own destruction, offering their internal enemies—nationalists and socialists alike—the weaponry, technical knowledge, and hardened, megalomaniacal mentalities necessary to carry out revolutions against the once formidable empires.³ Just as the old regimes vainly hoped to marshal the "furies of revolution" for the

² The first theorist of total war was General Erich Ludendorff—leader of the German war effort from August 1916 to October 1918. A radical nationalist and proponent of the "stab-in-the-back" legend attributing Germany's defeat to leftist treachery on the home front, Ludendorff advocated the mobilization of the nation's entire physical and moral force. During the First World War he was one of the chief advocates of a German civilizing mission in the East to include state-building in Lithuania, Kurland, much of present-day Belarus, and Poland (together comprising military-government under Ludendorff's direction known as "Ober Ost"), as well as Ukraine, at Russia's expense. Erich Ludendorff, *Der totale Krieg* (Munich: Ludendorffs Verlag, 1937).

³ Numerous recent works have explored the complicated interplay of the mobilizing and disintegrating experience of the First World War, imperial collapses, social revolutions, civil wars, and nation building along the Eastern Front. See Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914-1923* (London: Routledge, 2001). On the "Russian" case, see Jon Smele, *The "Russian" Civil Wars, 1916-1926: Ten Years That Shook the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Joshua Sanborn, *Imperial Collapse: The Great War and the Destruction of the Russian Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Mark

business of war, so too did veterans of the conflict apply their transformative combat experiences to the business of revolution, forging modern national and supranational identities and political communities through conscription and collective violence.⁴ The war paved the way for grandiose ideologies of state power and militarism throughout Central and Eastern Europe.⁵ It also created national audiences traumatized, brutalized, and radicalized enough to embrace this new, more visceral, emotive, and violent mode of politics in large numbers.⁶ This includes Ukraine, a country made “modern” in the image of the first total war, and Dontsov’s doctrine of Ukrainian “active nationalism,” whose tutelage was the conflict and the chaos it engendered.⁷

2) The Great War on the Eastern Front was a cataclysmic event in the already “entangled” histories of Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the lands between them.⁸

von Hagen, “The Great War and the Mobilization of Ethnicity in the Russian Empire,” in Barnett R. Rubin and Jack Snyder, eds., *Post-Soviet Political Order: Conflict and State Building* (London: Routledge, 1998), 34-57; and Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign Against Enemy Aliens During World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁴ See, for example, Joshua Sanborn, *Drafting the Russian Nation: Military Conscription, Total War, and Mass Politics, 1905-1925* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003).

⁵ The Bolsheviks infamously created “War Communism” out of a synthesis of ideology and pragmatism in high-stress wartime circumstances, but the East European nationalists who opposed them changed in an analogous way, developing what Erich Lohr has termed “war nationalism.” The radically intolerant ideologies propounded by the Dontsovs and Dmowskis of this period can be thought of as crisis-driven “events,” immanent and experiential, rather than the results of a long-term evolution. Erich Lohr, “War Nationalism,” in *The Empire and Nationalism at War*, ed. Eric Lohr, Alexander Semyonov, and Mark von Hagen (Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, 2014), 91-108. On the importance of contingency to the theory nationalism, especially as it relates to the experience of the First World War in Eastern Europe, see Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), chap. 1: “Nation as Form, Category, Event.”

⁶ As Myroslav Shkandrij remarks, the macabre content and aggressively affective style of Dontsov’s postwar writing is a good example of what Dominick LaCapra calls “traumatic writing or post-traumatic writing in closest proximity to trauma.” Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 83; Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 23.

⁷ George O. Liber, *Total Wars and the Making of Modern Ukraine, 1914-1954* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), Chaps. 2-3.

⁸ I refer here to a method in comparative history that attempts to go beyond the binary opposition of two traditionally “national” narratives or perspectives. On *histoire croisée* (entangled histories) see Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, “Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity,” *History and Theory* 45, 1 (February 2006): 30-50. For an introduction to the entangled histories of Russia, Germany, and Eastern Europe during this period, see Mark von Hagen, “The Entangled Eastern Front in the First World War,” in *The Empire and Nationalism at War*, 9-48; Michael David-Fox, Peter Holquist and Alexander M. Martin, eds.,

Mutually interdependent and interconnected at every level, this reciprocal influence only grew with the intensification of the Russo-Germanic rivalry that culminated in the First World War. The borderlands between Russia and Germany paid the heftiest price because they served both as a battleground for the encounter and as a (perceived) tabula rasa for unsparing utopia-builders. Russians and Germans competed for supremacy over the patchwork of largely agrarian ethnonational communities of Poles, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Jews, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians between them, learning from one another's blunders and successes, exchanging methods of colonization, nation-building, and nation-dismantling.⁹ Although the smaller nationalities caught in the middle were sometimes the hapless pawns of this confrontation, they also played an active role within it, taking one side, opposing both sides, or playing each off the other, all the while developing under the influence of the same interimperial transfers.¹⁰ Dontsov was both a product and an agent of this Russian-German entanglement, as were the organizations and fledgling Ukrainian nation-states that he served. As we have seen, before 1914 he had begun to attribute Ukraine's agonizing "hermaphroditism" to an oppositional binary—Asiatic Muscovy vs. (Romano-) Germanic Europe, barbarism vs. civilization. In course of the First World War, he found practical, well-funded opportunities to rid Ukraine of the former and fortify it with the latter, proposing that Ukraine join *Mitteleuropa*—the goal of an autarkic political and economic

Fascination and Enmity: Russia and Germany as Entangled Histories, 1914-1945 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012); Phillip Ther, "The Transnational Paradigm of Historiography and Its Potential for Ukrainian History," in Georgiy Kasianov and Phillip Ther, eds., *A Laboratory of Transnational History: Ukraine and Recent Ukrainian Historiography* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009), 81-114.

⁹ Alexander V. Prusin, *The Lands Between: Conflict in the East European Borderlands, 1870-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

¹⁰ "Historical destiny placed Eastern Europe between Russia and Germany. Hence, the most popular form of East European traveling is to escape either from the Russians to the Germans, or from the Germans to the Russians." Yuri Andrukhovych and Andrzej Stasiuk, *Moia Evropa: dva esei pro naidyvnyshu shastynu svitu* (L'viv: Klasyka, 2001), 100-1.

union of Central and Eastern European nations under German hegemony.¹¹ Accordingly, Ukrainization entailed Germanization as well as de-Russification. The same logic applied to Bolshevism, which Dontsov came to regard as an insidious reincarnation of Russian imperialism, distilled to its demonic essence. Nevertheless, Russian ideas, practices, political culture, and literature continued to define him at least as much as German ones did. Ukrainian political culture, by contrast, repulsed Dontsov because it was too servile toward “Muscovy.” Unlike the Russians and the Germans, Ukraine’s would-be leaders were too meek, moderate, and decadent for the business of making war and revolution.

3) World War I was bound up with the national and social revolutions that racked Central and Eastern Europe, offering political exiles new “arenas of action” as propagandists, spies, saboteurs, diplomats, warlords, and statesmen.¹² It also disrupted and militarized the previously peaceful, though by no means idyllic, relations among the diverse and intermixed ethnic and confessional groups of the borderlands between Russia and the Central Powers—a process that encouraged and enabled nationalists to rally support behind more radical, even genocidal, programs for independent statehood.¹³ Fatally weakened by the strains of war and the very national and social movements that they had promoted in hopes of destroying their enemies from within, the old monarchies disintegrated one by one amid the chaos of 1914-1918. The principle of national self-determination, in either its Wilsonian or Leninist formulation, triumphed by default, catapulting radicalized East Central European nationalists, whose demands had previously been limited to cultural autonomy, into positions of power.

¹¹ Tomasz Stryjek regards Dontsov’s notion of Ukraine as a part of *Mitteleuropa* as one of the central features of this period (1914-1918) of his ideological evolution. Stryjek, *Ukraińska idea*, 123-59.

¹² Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism*, chap. 5.

¹³ Prusin, *The Lands Between*, Chaps. 2-3.

During the First World War, Dontsov briefly headed the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (*Soiuz Vyzvolennia Ukraine*, or SVU) at the conflict's outset, and then worked for the League of Russia's Foreign Peoples (*die Liga der Fremdvölker Russlands*, or LFR). Think tanks comprised of non-Russian nationalist émigrés from the Russian Empire, both organizations operated with the resources and under the aegis of the German and Austro-Hungarian Foreign Offices. Increasingly antisocialist, anti-Russian, and pro-German, Dontsov damaged his reputation among the leftwing federalist old guard of the Ukrainian national movement—the “Ukrainophiles”—who remained loyal to the Russian Empire. They declared themselves the leaders of an independent Ukrainian People's Republic in late 1917, but soon faced a losing war with the Bolsheviks and turned to the Central Powers for assistance. In exchange for the Ukrainian People's Republic's (UNR) promises of food, the German and Austro-Hungarian Imperial armies marched into the Ukrainian heartland and occupied the country, from the Donbas in the east to Galicia in the west. In late April 1918 the German authorities moved to install a more compliant, authoritarian, and efficient vassal regime in Kyiv, assisting in the orchestration of a coup d'état by Hetman Pavlo Skoropads'kyi and his supporters, the “Hetmanites”—a radicalized group of conservative Ukrainian nationalist monarchists that had recently accepted Dontsov into the ranks of its leadership. Subordinated to the military governorship of the Imperial German Army, the Hetmanate's purpose was to assist the exploitation of Ukraine for the Central Powers' ongoing war effort, but it was also expected to at least appear sovereign, independent, and popular among its subjects. Having already cultivated alliances with sympathizers of the Ukrainian national movement in Central Europe during the war, Dontsov assumed responsibility over the Hetmanate's press and telegraph agency, half-hearted Ukrainization efforts (intended to give the regime a broad base of support), public

relations, and international diplomacy. Dontsov was tasked with managing the Hetmanate's strained relationship with the Ukrainian intelligentsia and peasantry, the Germans and Austrians, and the nascent Russian Soviet state to the north. Skoropads'kyi's declaration of Ukraine's federation with a restored "White" Russia, shortly after the defeat of the Central Powers in November 1918, precipitated Dontsov's break with the Hetman and the Hetmanites. He returned to life as an émigré activist in Central Europe in early 1919, as civil war again engulfed Ukraine.

The Ukrainian National Movement at the Outset of the First World War

War arrived in August 1914, a year after Dontsov had predicted its approaching inevitability. The conflict presented an opportunity for the realization of the geopolitical strategy outlined in his speech, *The Political Situation of the Nation and Our Tasks*—the creation of a self-governing Ukrainian crownland under the aegis of the Habsburg dynasty that would permanently repel the Russian imperialist menace to Central Europe and restore to Ukrainians the blessings of freedom and progress unique to European (as opposed to Russian) civilization. Such ideas did not find a receptive audience among the leaders of the Ukrainian movement in the Russian Empire during the first weeks of the First World War. Even as the Russian authorities revived pre-1905 bans on publications in Ukrainian, the editors of *Ukrainskaia zhizn'* (Ukrainian Life)¹⁴ assured its readers of the unwavering loyalty of the Ukrainian population to the Russian state and army, dismissing fears of "the so-called 'Austrian orientation'," championed by Dontsov, as a "myth."¹⁵ The leaders of the Ukrainian national movement in imperial Russia remained loyal subjects of Petrograd until the revolutions of 1917. Even then they remained, by

¹⁴ The Russian-language, Moscow-based periodical for which Dontsov wrote before the war.

¹⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, "Voina i ukrainsti," *Ukrainskaia zhizn'*, no. 7 (August 12, 1914): 3-7.

and large, proponents of an East Slavic federation comprised of autonomous, democratically governed Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian republics. This included the Ukrainian populist historian Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi (1866-1934)—one of the future presidents of the UNR. Hrushevs'kyi left his professorship at Lwów University and returned to Kyiv in November 1914, breaking with his colleagues in Galicia who had taken pro-Austrian, anti-Russian positions. The Russian authorities repaid the professor's loyalty by promptly exiling him to Siberia for the duration of the war. Dontsov's former mentor Symon Petliura and the Ukrainian Social Democrat, writer, and activist Volodymyr Vynnychenko (1880-1951)—both of whom later occupied leading positions in the UNR—also avoided taking pro-independence positions until 1918, when the Soviet-Ukrainian War forced the Central Rada to declare Ukraine's independence outright.¹⁶

Dontsov disparaged Hrushevs'kyi, Petliura, and Vynnychenko as the high priests of “Ukrainophilia” (*ukrainofil'stvo*)—the purportedly stifling blend of pacifism, federalism, socialist internationalism, excessive focus on cultural (as opposed to political) matters, and, most damaging of all, trust in the good intentions of Russian liberals and leftists. Ukrainophilia, Dontsov felt, had crippled the Ukrainian national movement for decades, but the new conflict portended its *Götterdämmerung* (or “twilight of the gods”)¹⁷—i.e. the end of the illusion that Russian liberals or socialists had any sympathy for the national aspirations of Ukrainians, or that Ukraine's salvation would come in the form of democracy. Despite the Ukrainophiles' loyalty to

¹⁶ Wiktor Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during World War I: From Foreign Domination to National Independence* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1984), 111-15, 485-97.

¹⁷ A reference to Richard Wagner's famous 1876 opera of the same title, later parodied by Friedrich Nietzsche as *Götzen-Dämmerung, oder, Wie man mit dem Hammer philosophirt* (Twilight of the Idols, or, How to Philosophize with a Hammer) (1889).

the Russian state, Pavel Miliukov and the other Kadets of the Duma attacked even modest demands for Ukrainian cultural autonomy as a “dangerous and damaging affair for Russia.”



Figure 2.1. Dmytro Dontsov in middle age. *Source:* Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine.

As Dontsov saw it, this proved the need for a new approach that would place Russian liberals in the same camp as Russian rightwing nationalist Anatoly Savenko (1874-1922) and his followers.¹⁸ A love of Ukraine was not sufficient alone; a hatred of the “Great” and “Little” Russians who opposed its independence was also needed.

Austrian Ukrainian leaders, by contrast, were more likely to support the excision of the much larger territory of prewar Russian Ukraine from the Romanov Empire and the simultaneous creation of a new Ukrainian state within the Dual Monarchy (preferably including East Galicia, though the relatively powerful Polish minority living there also claimed it). They tended to be more culturally and politically conservative, and thus less likely to support socialist reforms in agriculture and industry. These differences plagued efforts to create a unified

¹⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, “Götterdämmerung ukrainofil’sstva,” *Ukrains’ka khata*, no. 3-4 (1914) in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 186-89.

Ukrainian political force of east and west throughout the crisis. In general, the Ukrainians were less organized on their own turf and less popular on the world stage than the Poles, who benefited from the energetic international diplomatic efforts of the integral nationalist leader Roman Dmowski, as well as the military acumen of Józef Piłsudski, the future president (and eventual dictator) of the Second Polish Republic. Seeking to bridge the divide between the Western and Eastern Ukrainians, Dontsov joined fellow exiles from Russia in Austria who combined the platforms of national independence with populist land reform, insisted that tsarism was Ukraine's greater enemy, and turned to the Central Powers for help.

The German, Ottoman, and Austro-Hungarian empires proved to be cautiously interested in exploiting the Ukrainian question to undermine their common Russian enemy. Initially, Germany's official war aims in the east recognized the status quo antebellum as legitimate and desirable, but entered a state of flux, ambiguity, and radicalization in the course of the conflict.¹⁹ Military and political successes on the Eastern Front bred hubris and a growing acceptance of ambitious schemes for eastward expansion and colonization, especially after the downfall of the Russian autocracy in March 1917.²⁰ Only after the Russian war effort began collapsing under the

¹⁹ This was Imperial Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg's position until 1916, when he assented to the goal of annexing the Baltic countries from Russia, thus strengthening Germany, ostensibly, for the sake of European security. Oleh S. Fedyshyn, *Germany's Drive to the East and the Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1918* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1971), 18-20.

²⁰ The radical annexationist programs of the German far right envisioned the mass expulsion of the non-German inhabitants of "Western Russia" (i.e. the former territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) to the east, to be replaced by German colonists. The poet and historian Adolf Bartels—an exponent of the *Deutschvölkischer* movement (a highly anti-Semitic fringe party and predecessor to Nazism)—published an influential memorandum on the question in 1914. "We need all the land up to the Dvina and Dnieper, and up to the Black Sea; we must push Russia into Asia and set up the possibility of a German State a hundred million strong." Adolf Bartels, *Der Seigespreiss (Westrussland deutsch)* (Weimar: n.p., 1914), 16.

weight of revolution and civil war, and the UNR had appeared, did Berlin begin the ad hoc formulation of plans for a Ukrainian state under German “protection.”²¹

Prior to this point, the collaboration between Ukrainian nationalists and German and Austrian officialdom gave rise to various schemes, from the formation and indoctrination of Ukrainian military units drawn from the POWs of the Russian army, to direct military intervention in the Ukrainian heartland and the construction of a Ukrainian client state. Dontsov took part in virtually all of these plots, which were the beginnings of an asymmetrical yet mutually exploitative German-Ukrainian partnership—chiefly comprised of rightwing activists with a shared hostility toward Russians, Poles, Bolsheviks, and Jews—that would last until at least the Second World War.²² Dontsov, who was by this point an experienced journalist, an aspiring ideologue and publicist, and a consummate Austrophile and Germanophile, leapt at the chance to make his case for a Ukrainian nation-state to the circles of power in Vienna, Berlin, and the other cities, as well as the reading publics of the Entente and neutral countries. Dontsov prepared and researched his geopolitical, historical, legal, and moral arguments for Ukrainian liberation from “Russian despotism,” broadcasting them to as many politicians, academics, officers, soldiers, journalists, and students as he could reach with the resources at his disposal. He joined diplomatic networks of activists and publicists from the stateless nationalities of Central and Eastern Europe, who gathered on the neutral territory of Switzerland to petition all the belligerent powers for the best possible outcome for their respective nations at war’s end.

The Union for the Liberation of Ukraine

²¹ On the improvised, opportunistic nature of the German gambit on Ukrainian independence see Fedyshyn, *Germany’s Drive to the East*, 254-62.

²² Frank Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer, 1914-1939* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2010).

Dontsov put his ideas into action in the first days of the war by becoming a founding member of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (*Soiuz vyzvolennia Ukrainy*, SVU), a nationalist organization of socialist Ukrainian exiles from the Russian Empire dedicated to using the war to create a Ukrainian nation-state. Andrii Zhuk (1880-1968),²³ Mykola Zalizniak (1880-1950),²⁴ Roman Smal'-Stots'kyi (1893-1969),²⁵ and Oleksandr Skoropys'-Ioltukhovs'kyi (1880-1950)²⁶ were among its leading members. Dontsov had met Zhuk and Zalizniak, along with the future leader and founder of the veterans' Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO) and the OUN, Colonel Ievhen Konoval's' (1891-1938), as law students in L'viv before the war. All four shared a faith in the Dual Monarchy's power to liberate and unite the two Ukraines at Russia's expense. The Union's opening congress took place in L'viv in August 1914, but the Russian invasion and occupation of East Galicia forced it to relocate headquarters to Vienna. Judging from its style and wording, Dontsov almost certainly drafted the first anonymous appeal of the SVU "To the Ukrainian People in Russia," declaring the Austrian military, "which our hundred thousand Galician brothers" serve, a liberator of the Ukrainian people.²⁷ Dontsov and the SVU

²³ Like Dontsov, Zhuk was a founding member of the USDRP exiled to Galicia in 1907. The party expelled him in 1912 for holding increasingly nationalistic views and acting on his own initiative to publicize the Ukrainian cause in Europe as secretary of the Ukrainian Information Committee. He cofounded the SVU in Vienna and directed its publications. He served the Hetmanate government and the UNR's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Vienna from 1918 to 1920.

²⁴ A Socialist Revolutionary activist and diplomat, Zalizniak shared Dontsov's hometown of Melitopol' in Tavriia. He participated in the Brest-Litovsk negotiations as a representative of the UNR, serving in its embassy in Finland, and founded a Ukrainian Information Bureau in Stockholm, Sweden, in spring 1918.

²⁵ A scholar and politician from the southwestern Ukrainian town of Chernivsti (then a part of Romania), Smal'-Stots'kyi represented the UNR's government-in-exile after his time working for the SVU. For the latter he worked as an organizer and teacher of Ukrainian POWs in Germany.

²⁶ A political activist and historian Skoropys'-Ioltukhovs'kyi emigrated from Kyiv to L'viv before the Revolution of 1905, where he represented the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP) abroad. He returned to Russia in 1907 to participate, illegally, in the elections to the Second Duma, but was arrested and exiled to Siberia. He fled from there back to Austria, where he joined the SVU and converted to liberal Ukrainian nationalism. He returned to Ukraine to serve in the UNR and the Hetmanate.

²⁷ "Do ukrains'koho narodu v Rosii," *Vistnyk Soiuzu Vyzvolennia Ukrainy*, no. 1 (August 2, 1914), 8.

promised a solution to the land question and the freedoms of religion and speech in the wake of the anticipated Austrian advance into Ukraine. These promises struck Russian Ukrainian critics of the SVU's collaboration with the Entente's enemies as naive. Undaunted, Dontsov argued that if Ukrainian patriots capitalized on Vienna's actions to increase Ukrainian national autonomy (on the path to full independence), then the official war aims of this new "ally" (or any other) were irrelevant. Moreover, as he had insisted in his 1913 speech, foreign intervention would be necessary to achieve Ukraine's liberation from Russia. Moral concerns should not enter the calculus—a notion that Dontsov developed into one of the axioms of Ukrainian integral nationalism: "amorality" (*amoral'nist*).²⁸

The SVU's second statement, "To the Public Opinion of Europe" (published in German), also bore Dontsov's imprint, calling for the defense of "the old civilization [of Ukraine] from the Asiatic barbarism of the Muscovites."²⁹ Speaking on behalf of the "Ukrainians of Russia," the appeal proclaims their striving for independence and the establishment of a "bulwark against Russia on the wide steppes of Ukraine."³⁰ With the wavering support of Austria-Hungary and Germany, the SVU spent the war engaged in propaganda and enlightenment (*prosvita*) efforts among the Ukrainian POWs of the Russian Army, who numbered about 50,000 in Germany and 30,000 in Austria, shaping them into nationally conscious soldiers for the war against Petrograd.³¹ In exchange for pledges of loyalty to the Ukrainian (as opposed to imperial Russian)

²⁸ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 91-93.

²⁹ "An die öffentliche Meinung Europas," *Vistnyk Soiza Vyzvolennia Ukrainy*, no. 1 (October 10, 1917), 1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ It published dozens of books, brochures, and newspapers in multiple languages. On the SVU, see Mark von Hagen, *War in a European Borderland: Occupations and Occupation Plans in Galicia and Ukraine, 1914-1918* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007), 54-71; Oleh S. Fedyshyn, "The Germans and the Union for the Liberation of the Ukraine, 1914-1917," in Hunczak, ed., *The Ukraine, 1917-1921*, 305-22; and, I. Mikhutina,

cause, the SVU offered the prisoners schools, hospitals, theaters, libraries, and reading rooms, as well as courses in Ukrainian history and literature, German language, and cooperative economics. In exchange for funding and access to the POW camps, the SVU promised to support the Central Powers' war effort and to moderate relations between the German and Austrian armies and the Ukrainian people in East Galicia, as well as the ethnically Ukrainian territories of the Russian Empire. The SVU dispatched representatives to all the Central Powers and numerous neutral European countries, and carried out "Ukrainization" work in Volhynia and Podlachia during their respective Austrian and German occupations. After the February Revolution of 1917, the SVU successfully organized two armed Ukrainian divisions—the Bluecoats under the German Army, and the Graycoats under the Austro-Hungarians—which were later incorporated into the Army of the UNR. Declaring its mission accomplished after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (February 9, 1918), which constituted legal recognition of Ukrainian independence by the signing states, the SVU dissolved on May 1, 1918.

Dontsov, however, took part in almost none of these activities. Ever restive, ambitious, and cantankerous, he left the predominantly leftwing SVU in September 1914, just weeks after its formation, citing financial, personal, and ideological disputes with his older comrades. The SVU had rejected Dontsov's motion to disclose the Union's finances, which were notoriously irregular,³² but financial scandals appear to have been of secondary importance to interpersonal conflict. One year later Zhuk publicly denounced Dontsov as tactless, uncooperative, and "unsuited to organized political activity."³³ Responding to an inquiry from Viacheslav

"Separatisty iz l'vovskogo kafe: O deiatel'nosti Soiuzu osvobozhdeniia Ukrainy, 1914-1915 gg.," *Rodin*, a no. 11 (1999): 75-77.

³² Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 204-5.

³³ Andrii Zhuk, "Soiuz vyzvolennia Ukrainy," *Vistnyk Soiuzu Vyzvolennia Ukrainy* 37-38 (10 October 1915), 1.

Lypyns'kyi about his memories of Dontsov's brush with the SVU, Zhuk further impugned Dontsov's character and integrity, providing insight into how the latter's erstwhile USDRP and SVU comrades perceived him:

In emigration in L'viv, Dontsov led a rather cloistered life, but belonged to our foreign Social Democratic group there, although he in no way distinguished himself. He was a very 'orthodox' Marxist [who] terribly scolded the Ukrainian 'petty-bourgeoisie' in *Nash holos*.³⁴ At this same time he considered himself the inventor of Ukrainian 'separatism,' imposed his invention on everyone in the century, and was awarded for this with a caricature [of him] drawn by [Volodymyr] Vynnychenko³⁵ . . . Prior to this the Ukrainian Social Democratic Group, which published *Nash holos* and represented the party abroad, . . . removed Dontsov from their midst. When I founded the SVU in the first days of the outbreak of war . . . I also recruited Dontsov . . . though I did not personally support relations with him at this time. We even made him the head of the Union. And it went to his head that he truly was the founder of Ukrainian separatism too, and of Ukrainian independence. Moreover, he began to carry himself very 'independently,' going behind our backs with [Mykola] Vasyl'ko and company,³⁶ so we were compelled to remove him from the leadership. And then he went into the service of Vasyl'ko and [Kost'] Levyts'kyi³⁷ . . . and dishonored the Union and every one of us individually. In 1918, as is well known to you personally, Dontsov made himself a great Hetmanite, and you know his further evolution better than I. Although as I did get to know Dontsov well, never living with him closely, this is a person with unrestrained ambition—to be the first! Thus such stunning transitions occurred. He rushed to where he hoped to make a 'career,' to be the first, but since this was not successful he now gallops just as quickly away, condemning that which he served yesterday.³⁸

³⁴ "Our Voice," a monthly of the USDRP published in L'viv from 1910 to the end of 1911.

³⁵ Unfortunately, Zhuk was unable to remember the publication in which this caricatured portrait of Dontsov appeared, and I have not been able to locate it. Vynnychenko's three-volume memoir of Ukraine's independence struggle 1917-1920, is a valuable source for the history of this period. Volodymyr Vynnychenko, *Vidrodzhennia natsii, U 3-kh ch.* (Kyiv: Politytydav Ukrainy, 1990).

³⁶ Zhuk refers to the Ukrainian Parliamentary Club in the Austrian Reichsrat in Vienna, which included Mykola Vasyl'ko (1868-1924) and Kost' Levyts'kyi (1859-1941). All the major national minorities of the Dual Monarchy maintained "clubs" in the Austrian parliament through their national representatives.

³⁷ A prominent Galician Ukrainian politician and deputy to the Austrian Reichsrat, Kost' Levyts'kyi founded the Ukrainian National Democratic Party (UNDO) in 1885, and played a major role in the formation of both the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) and the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR). During the First World War he also served as a prosecutor for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, overseeing the suppression of Russophile activists in East Galicia, and promoted the SVU as a tool for fomenting a Ukrainian national revolution in Russia.

³⁸ Zhuk to Lypyns'kyi on March 2, 19126, in Lypyns'kyi, *Lystuvannia*, vol. 1, 842-43. This correspondence took place in 1926, after Lypyns'kyi's falling out with Dontsov; the two had been on good working terms during the First World War, but in the early 1920s Dontsov polemicized with the Hetmanites and Lypyns'kyi. The latter was preparing a rebuttal to Dontsov's attacks of inclusion into his seminal ideological work—*Letters to Brother-Farmers*

Thus, according to Zhuk, sheer arrogance and careerism explain Dontsov's changing loyalties during the war. For his part, Dontsov went public with the purported reasons for his break with SVU in June 1915 in an article, "To My Political Adherents," which also finalized and advertised his rejection of the USDRP.³⁹ Apart from denouncing the SVU as a body of comically impotent amateurs, "turncoats" who had opposed Ukrainian independence as a "dangerous utopia" before the war, and known Russophiles with no right to represent their country, Dontsov accused them of working with "Russian Social Democrats who deny the very existence of the Ukrainian nation"⁴⁰ and lacking any contacts with genuine separatist groups operating illegally inside the Russian Empire. He concludes with an appeal to Ukrainian nationalists to focus on "real work" and avoid the SVU altogether. But Dontsov's charge that the "whole of their activity for the 'liberation' of Ukraine is confined to press propaganda" and "work among prisoners [of war]" could just as well have been leveled at himself,⁴¹ since at no point in the First World War or the struggles for Ukrainian independence that emerged from it did he take up arms and fight. He remained an influential propagandist who served and observed the unfolding Ukrainian revolution from safer vantage points.

The recriminations between Dontsov and the SVU turned on the interrogation of one another's avowed or hidden allegiances to the Central Powers, to Russia, to socialist

on the Idea of Ukrainian Monarchism. See Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi, *Lysty do brativ-khliborobiv pro ideiu i organizatsiiu ukrains'koho monarkhizmu, pysani 1919-1926* (Vienna: Carl Herrmann, 1926), xx-xxiv.

³⁹ Dmytro Dontsov, *Do moikh politychnykh odnodumtsiv (z pryvodu t. zv. Soiuz vyzvolennia Ukrainy)*, (L'viv: n.p. 1915).

⁴⁰ This accusation was at least partially true; documents in the Austrian State Archives indicate that the SVU funded Lenin. Stefan T. Possony, *Lenin: The Compulsive Revolutionary* (Chicago: Henry Regency, 1964), 169-70.

⁴¹ The charge was not true in any case, given the SVU's successful efforts to organize a Ukrainian Legion made up of 12,000 volunteers, some of whom later participated in the wars for Ukrainian independence between 1918 and 1921 in various military and paramilitary formations.

internationalism, or to the Ukrainian people alone. Few today would doubt their commitment to the Ukrainian national cause, but both sides of the conflict also relied heavily on support from the Central Powers during the war, and they all had backgrounds in the socialist parties of the Russian Empire, from which they fled or were exiled for political reasons. Rather hypocritically, given the SVU's German-Austrian patronage throughout its existence, Skoropys'-Ioltukhovs'kyi accused Dontsov of being under Berlin's control in 1917.⁴² Decades later, after the Second World War had put collaboration with expansionist Germans in an entirely unsavory light, Dontsov changed his purported reasons for breaking with the SVU, recalling that it was in fact Skoropys'-Ioltukhovs'kyi who wanted to turn the SVU into a "German-Austrian agency."⁴³ In the 1960s Dontsov denied having any contacts with the Austrian or German governments as of August 1914—a claim confirmed by his wife Mariia in a 1969 interview—and he insisted that only the SVU cultivated these ties.⁴⁴ Elsewhere he asserted, somewhat perplexingly, that the SVU members had rejected him "because he was not a socialist anymore."⁴⁵ This sort of inconsistency, alas, is typical of Dontsov's autobiographical clarifications.

Epistles to the Germans

In fact, Dontsov began working directly with the German government almost immediately after his break with the SVU, which was also obliged to pivot toward Berlin after

⁴² Oleksandr Skoropys'-Ioltukhovs'kyi, "Vid vydavtsiv," in *Samostijna ukrajina R.U.P.* (Wetzlar: Soiuz vyzvolennia Ukrainy, 1917), 32, 39-42; Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 95.

⁴³ Dmytro Dontsov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 119.

⁴⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, "Emigrants'ki i soviets'ki marksysty proty natsionalizmu," *Visnyk*, no. 3 (New York, 1966), 6.

⁴⁵ They went on to become "Sovietophiles" after the war, according to Dontsov. He fails to explain why they had become tired of him within weeks of the war's beginning. Dmytro Dontsov, "Emigrants'ki shasheli i natsionalizm," *Visnyk*, no. 8 (New York, 1965): 17-23, 21; Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 94.

the Austrians began withdrawing their support from Ukrainian nation-building projects.⁴⁶

Residing in Berlin (on Bayreuther Strasse 8) from 1914 to 1916 and provided with an Austrian passport “for secret political reasons,” Dontsov headed the local office of the information service and press bureau of the Ukrainian Parliamentary Club in Vienna—led by Reichsrat members Kost’ Levyts’kyi and Mykola Vasyl’ko and heavily funded by the Central Powers—which sent him 300 marks a month (about 1500 USD today) to edit its weekly press bulletin, *Ukrainische Korrespondenz*.⁴⁷ Dontsov’s task was to extoll the advantages of Ukrainian independence for Central Europe’s wellbeing to the German government and society, as well as to produce and distribute anti-Russian, pro-Central Powers, and pro-Ukrainian propaganda. While in Berlin he cultivated ties with German officials and academics, including Paul Rohrbach, Germany’s most prominent advocate of Ukrainian independence and an agent of the German Foreign Office, who reportedly helped him get an article past the German censors.⁴⁸ During this time Dontsov published a series of German-language brochures on the Ukrainian and Polish questions in relation to the war and the interests of the Central Powers, making the case that the Germans and their allies should take full advantage of the multiethnic composition and discontent nationalities of the Russian Empire in order to destroy it.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 106-8.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Dontsov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 22, 120. Dontsov claims to have met with Rohrbach in Kyiv in 1918, and again during World War II. He notes Rohrbach’s distance from Nazism and criticism of the Second World War as “unnecessary.”

⁴⁹ This pro-German position was antithetical to that of the analogous Polish integral nationalist Roman Dmowski—one of Dontsov’s chief role models, though he refused to admit it—who considered Germany, not Russia, to be Poland’s mortal enemy, and the true threat to European (and world) stability. See Dmowski’s 1908 work, *Niemcy, Rosja i kwestia polska* (Germany, Russia, and the Polish Question) in Roman Dmowski, *Wybór Pism Romana Dmowskiego*, vol. 1 (New York: Instytut Romana Dmowskiego, 1988).

Although Dontsov, the Ukrainian Parliamentary Club, and the SVU were in conflict, their propaganda materials differed little.⁵⁰ German historian (and future SS-Hauptsturmführer) Hans Joachim Beyer (1908-1971) summarized the five central theses of the pro-Ukrainian texts that circulated among the German-speaking public during the First World War: 1) Ukrainians are not Russians, but a distinct nation with a distinct language; 2) the Ukrainian national movement and cultural revival began in the eighteenth century, followed European norms of development, and had grown into a formidable political force even in Ukraine's Russian-governed regions; 3) Ukraine's national movement sympathizes with the Central Powers and favors separation from Russia; 4) the Poles are, like the Russians, inherent enemies of Ukraine (according to both émigré commentators, such as Dontsov, and to Galician Ukrainians); 5) a Ukraine made independent from Russia is the economic and strategic keystone to German victory in the east.⁵¹ Dontsov would have enthusiastically concurred with historian Dominic Lieven's observation that, "as much as anything, World War I turned on the fate of Ukraine. . . . Without Ukraine's population, industry, and agriculture, early twentieth-century Russia would have ceased to be a great power. If Russia ceased to be a great power, then there was every possibility that Germany would dominate Europe."⁵² This, precisely, was the intended outcome.

Dontsov's German-language writings hammered on all five of Beyer's points, reaching a large readership of powerful and influential people. Otto Hoetzsch (1876-1946), for example—professor of Eastern European history in Berlin, member of the ultranationalist Pan-German League (*Alldeutscher Verband*), and one of the founding fathers of German studies of Eastern

⁵⁰ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 203.

⁵¹ Hans Beyer, *Die Mittelmächte und die Ukraine, 1918* (Munich: Isar, 1956), 24-25. Fedysyn, *Germany's Drive to the East*, 26.

⁵² Dominic Lieven, *The End of Tsarist Russia: The March to World War I and Revolution* (New York: Viking, 2015), 1.

Europe (*Ostforschung*)—considered Dontsov’s brochure, *The Idea of a Ukrainian State and the War against Russia*, to be “the most meticulous in Ukrainian agitation literature.”⁵³ The German embassy in Vienna funded the work with a 1000-crown grant.⁵⁴ According to a police report requested by the German Foreign Office, Dontsov spent several hours a day at the Royal Library in Berlin researching the brochure. While acknowledging that German interests in Ukraine were purely strategic and that Ukraine boasted fewer supporters in Germany than imperial Russia did, he traced German interest in his homeland; from the partially successful efforts of the antisemitic activist, Ukrainian Cossack, and playwright Vasili Kapnist (1758-1823), to build an alliance with Prussia, to the German philosopher Eduard von Hartmann’s (1842-1906) idea of a “Kingdom of Kyiv” to free Europe from “the hard pressure of Tsarism.”⁵⁵ “Now,” writes Dontsov, “[the Ukrainian question] is firmly bound up with the fate of Austria-Hungary and Germany, upon whose victory we, Russian Ukrainians and our brothers in Austria-Hungary, will build our future.”⁵⁶ Dontsov describes “Muscovy,” driven to westward expansion in search of a warm-water port, as a perennial threat to European stability and an oppressor of the small nations east of Germany. Poland, Sweden, Germany, Austria, and Turkey thus find a natural ally in Ukrainian separatists, whose relevance has grown during the war. Claiming a strict adherence to “political realism” (*Realpolitik*), Dontsov underscores the historicity and feasibility of Ukrainian statehood, the economic viability of an independent Ukraine, Kyiv’s traditional ties to the West, the discontent of Ukrainians living under Russian hegemony and abusive tsarist regimes, and the

⁵³ Otto Hoetzsch, *Russische Probleme* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1917), 37.

⁵⁴ This is according to Kost’ Levyts’kyi, who visited Dontsov in Berlin in April 1915. Kost’ Levyts’kyi, *Istoriia vyzvol’nykh zmahan’* (L’viv: Nakladom vlasnym, 1930), 108-109, 131-32.

⁵⁵ Donzow, *Die ukrainische Staatsidee*, 31-47.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 67.

accelerating development of Ukrainian national consciousness. On the latter point, Dontsov emphasizes the importance, not only of the 1905 Revolution, but also of the dismemberments and occupations of the Ukrainian territories between imperial Russia and Austria-Hungary. Still more decisive is the heightened activity of the Ukrainian press, the existence of independent religious, cultural, and educational organizations for Ukrainians, and their desire for participatory government (entirely foreign to Russians), all of which makes them a tragically stateless *Kulturnation* whose liberation would permanently check Russian power and demonstrate to world opinion the Central Powers' good will in Eastern Europe.⁵⁷

Using the same financial support from Vienna and translating assistance from Paul Rohrbach,⁵⁸ Dontsov published another German-language brochure in 1915, *Greater Poland and the Central Powers*, in which he weighs in on the crucial Polish question as a “neutral observer.”⁵⁹ Rejecting “hackneyed” accounts of Poland as belonging wholly to the West or wholly to Russia, he gives an “objective” assessment of Poland’s agricultural capacity and the outlook of its minorities, who already resent Polish domination and who would likely face oppression and forced assimilation in a “Greater Poland.” Though not opposed to a “small Austro-Polish solution” that would unify Congress Poland with the Polish regions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Dontsov argues that, “thanks to [Poland’s] social and national makeup, it cannot be a bulwark against Russia.”⁶⁰ Such a bulwark can be achieved, of course, only by wresting Ukraine from Russia, raising it “up to a high level of development,” and transforming it into a German or Austrian protectorate. The Central Powers’ proclamation on November 5,

⁵⁷ Ibid., 65-67.

⁵⁸ Dontsov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 22.

⁵⁹ Dmytro Donzow, *Groß-Polen und die Zentralmächte* (Berlin: C. Kroll, 1915).

⁶⁰ Ibid., 7, 62-63

1916, of support for an independent Poland, inclusive of East Galicia, annoyed Dontsov, but he preferred the Polish domination of Galicia to the Russian domination of the rest of Ukraine, conceding that “we absolutely must declare ourselves against Russia. . . . In Poland we would at least have the right of association and the possibility of a constitutional struggle. In Russia, never under any circumstances.”⁶¹ Dontsov continued to prioritize the fate of Central and Eastern Ukraine over the fate of East Galicia throughout the interwar period, accusing those who took the opposite view of “sacrificing the whole for a part” and “narrow provincialism.” Yet, given the choice between the Catholicism of the Uniates (concentrated in Polish-dominated East Galicia) and the Orthodoxy adhered to by most Ukrainians, Dontsov insisted that “we should declare ourselves in favor of the former, since we are behind aristocratic-clerical Austria in its struggle with tsarism.”⁶² He felt that questions of religion, morality, and the proper relationship between church and state must be subordinated to the national principle and international politics.

He approved of any alliance or compromise, no matter how unpalatable, so long as it undermined Russia’s foothold in Ukraine. It is thus no surprise that Dontsov began forging ties with the German far right during the First World War. In 1916 he contributed to an anthology of anti-Russian essays, *The Colossus on Clay Feet*, compiled by Axel Ripke (1880-1937)—German journalist, publisher of the prowar annexationist paper *Der Panther*, early leader of the Nazi Party, and mentor to Joseph Goebbels.⁶³ In his contribution to the volume, “The Changing Russia,” Dontsov describes Russia as the prime untapped market of German industry and the

⁶¹ From a letter to the editor of *Shliakhy*, Fedir Fedortsiv. Quoted in Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 216.

⁶² Dmytro Dontsov, “Sprava Unii” *Shliakhy* 5 (1916) in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 2, 132-39.

⁶³ Axel Ripke, ed., *Der Koloß auf tönernen Füßen* (Munich: Lehmanns Verlag, 1916).

average Russian as “a natural opponent of the German Reich.” If Russia modernized, he warns, then Germany could face military defeat and end up a playing the “role of a second-rate state.”⁶⁴

For the keys to victory in the present conflict, Dontsov again turned to history, writing a pamphlet on the Swedish-Ukrainian alliance against the Tsardom of Muscovy in the Great Northern War (1700-1721), which he considered to be analogous to the Eastern Front of the First World War.⁶⁵ Extracting the strategic and geopolitical lessons of this ill-fated crusade, Dontsov calls for a reevaluation of the campaign of King Charles XII of Sweden (1682-1718) and Ukrainian Hetman Ivan Mazepa (1639-1709), not as a foolhardy adventure, but as a geopolitically necessary act of self-defense against Muscovite barbarism. The failure of their collective attempt to stop Russian expansion into the lands between the Baltic and Black Seas was not preordained, but an unfortunate accident of history attributable to the error of underestimating the importance of the Ukrainian factor. Charles XII had every reason to believe that he could defeat Muscovy, which was an obscure and uncivilized country so far as enlightened Europe was concerned. Sweden, by contrast, had enjoyed supremacy in the north for over a century and was simply protecting its “vital interests” in the Baltic.

Two tendencies prevailed in early eighteenth-century Eastern Europe: the pro-Russian orientation, taken by the Kingdom of Poland (portending its doom later in the century), and the anti-Russian orientation, taken by the Ukrainian Cossack Hetmanate as a matter of self-preservation. The latter, Dontsov maintains, had entered into a military alliance with the Tsardom of Muscovy as a sovereign state, but also had a tradition of fighting Moscow (even alongside the Muslim Turks). Moreover, Ukrainian-Russian relations had been deteriorating since the reign of Hetman Bohdan Khmel’nytskyi in the mid seventeenth century. According to

⁶⁴ Dmytro Donzow, “Das veränderte Rußland,” in Ripke, *Der Kolof*, 55-69.

⁶⁵ Dmytro Donzow, *Karl XII: Feldzug nach der Ukraine* (Vienna: Gerold, 1916).

Dontsov, Ukrainians were the original source of whatever was European in the “half-Asiatic” Muscovite culture. They already possessed constitutional, monarchic, and republican institutions and values, whereas Peter I sought only the merciless centralization of the Russian state. Dontsov also describes the decisive advantages Ukraine’s fertile land and pro-Swedish, anti-Russian population would have offered to Charles XII’s armies—had they campaigned south and joined Mazepa in 1708 instead of waiting in vain for the arrival of his Turkish and Polish allies. The Swedish-Ukrainian defeat at the Battle of Poltava in 1709 sealed the fate of the whole campaign; Russia triumphed, bringing two centuries of chaos and ruin to Eastern Europe in its wake. Nevertheless, Dontsov concludes, what was not accomplished in the eighteenth century—namely, a satisfactory solution to the “Eastern question”—might be accomplished in the twentieth if modern Germans learn from Charles XII’s blunders. Only by taking full advantage of Ukrainian agriculture, national aspirations, and resentment for Russian domination can the Central Powers win on the Eastern Front. Dontsov’s pamphlet on the Great Northern War was republished for Ukrainian audiences during the 1918 occupation of Ukraine by the Central Powers, which followed the propagandist’s advice by exploiting the country’s vast supply food for the war effort, inciting its people against their erstwhile Russian masters, and cultivating Ukrainian national consciousness and pro-German sentiment among the peasantry.⁶⁶

Dontsov’s German-language brochures evidently hit their mark, circulating widely among diplomats, activists, and academics concerned with the Ukrainian question. Karl Heinz, the German Reich’s consul in L’viv/Lemberg, for example, wrote Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg about his admiration for Dontsov’s “superbly written” brochures. The latter, Heinz remarks, “demonstrate the historical and political knowledge of their author,” and deserve “the

⁶⁶ Dmytro Dontsov, *Pokhid Karla XII na Ukrainu* (Kyiv: Tovarystvo shyrennia narodnoi kul’tury, 1918).

broadest recognition and dissemination among the educated layers of our people.”⁶⁷ Others were less enthusiastic, including Leon Wasilewski (1870-1936)—a prominent activist in the Polish Socialist Party, close collaborator of Piłsudski’s, and, after the war, one of the main architects of “Prometheism.”⁶⁸ Wasilewski opposed the Polonization of Galician Ukrainians and supported Piłsudski’s wartime vision of an “Intermarium” alliance (a democratic federation that would include, at a minimum, the independent states of Poland and Ukraine), but in 1916 he wrote that the Ukrainians of Russia had “degenerated into a crude ethnographic mass” whose separatism “exists [only] in the fantasies of Russian informers,” naming Dontsov, “whose theses are beginning to be found in certain youth circles.”⁶⁹ But the appearance of the UNR the next year refuted Wasilewski’s dismissive remarks on the Ukrainian national movement in Russia, while Dontsov’s “theses” reached audiences well beyond the Galician Ukrainian students who constituted his home base of support.

Nevertheless, the pro-Ukrainian independence propaganda efforts of Dontsov and others met with little success in the first year and a half of the war. Of the Central Powers, only the Turks were eager to take this course of action at first.⁷⁰ Austrian officialdom generally thought of the Ukrainian question as an internal (Galician) problem, and did not wish to offend its Polish subjects, who regarded Lwów/L’viv/Lemberg and the surrounding region as rightfully Polish

⁶⁷ Quoted in Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 204.

⁶⁸ Prometheism was the Second Polish Republic’s flagship policy in the east. It aimed at the succor and coordination of the non-Russian national independence movements of the (former) Russian Empire and Soviet Union.

⁶⁹ Anonymous [Leon Wasilewski], *Die Ukrainer in Russland und die politischen Bestrebungen derselben* (Krakow: n.p., 1916). Quoted in Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 214.

⁷⁰ Two Pashas of Ottoman Turkey’s dictatorial triumvirate, Ismail Enver and Mehmed Talaat, expressed their support for an independent Ukraine as an ally and bulwark against Russia. Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during World War I*, vol. 1, 230.

territory.⁷¹ The Dual Monarchy thus began withdrawing its support from the SVU as early as January 1915, demanding that it cease its work among Austria's Ukrainians ("Ruthenians") and relocate to Constantinople. Hereafter the Germans took a greater role in the SVU's activities, allowing it set up an office in Berlin and encouraging it to cultivate contacts with Lenin, the Bolsheviks, and the Turks.

However, certain Habsburg circles began toying with the notion, in the event of a catastrophic defeat for Russia, of setting up a Ukrainian crownland with the ardent Ukrainophile, Archduke Wilhelm von Habsburg (1895-1948), as monarch.⁷² While Berlin's strategists were considerably more adventurous when it came to nation-engineering in the east, they did not develop specific plans for a future Ukrainian state until January 1916, when an up-and-coming generation of German politicians, academics, and diplomats finally met with success in their push for a more aggressive wartime *Ostpolitik* that would exploit Russia's alien nationalities politically as well as militarily. They had hopes of appealing to liberal opinion in the (still neutral) United States under President Woodrow Wilson by representing Germany as a true champion of the right to national self-determination in Europe and a guardian of Russia's

⁷¹ Von Hagen, *War in a European Borderland*, 57-59.

⁷² Perhaps the most colorful character of Austria's Ukrainian adventure, Archduke Wilhelm assumed the nom du guerre Vasyl' Vyshyvannyi ("Basil the Embroidered"—a reference to his traditional Ukrainian attire) and fought at the head of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, which clashed with Bolshevik forces in southern Ukraine in 1918, successfully (albeit temporarily) driving the latter out of the country. Wilhelm became the focal point of a German-Austrian conflict over Ukraine's fate during the two allies' joint occupation of the country; Germany supported a dependent Hetmanate, not an independent monarchy. After the First World War, Wilhelm continued his efforts to form a Ukrainian army—the Free Cossacks (numbering 40,000 at its peak)—capable of invading Soviet Ukraine and placing him on the throne of new kingdom. The German pioneers of "total warfare," Erich Ludendorff and Max Bauer, as well as Pavlo Skoropads'kyi (Wilhelm's former rival), supported the endeavor, which nevertheless failed. Wilhelm corresponded with Dontsov, and was later falsely rumored to be organizing a rebellion of Ukrainians against Soviet power with him in the mid 1920s. In any event, Wilhelm gave up on his ill-fated Ukrainian ambitions for a stint as a hedonistic poet in Paris, but resumed collaborating with Ukrainian nationalists from the 1930s to World War II, siding with the Nazis until it became clear that they would not support Ukrainian independence. See Timothy Snyder, *The Red Prince: The Secret Lives of Habsburg Archduke* (New York: Basic Books, 2008).

oppressed non-Russians.⁷³ German agents famously smuggled a disguised Lenin from Central Europe into Petrograd in the wake of Tsar Nicholas II's abdication, but imperial Germany also aided and encouraged nationalist movements on Russian territory, ultimately including the attempted co-optation of the Ukrainian Revolution—the Reich's final and most ambitious *Drang nach Osten* (“drive to the East”) of the war. With the more reluctant collaboration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, whose tenuous dominion over the nations of the Slavic majority within its borders had been one of the primary causes of the war, imperial Germany represented itself as the liberator of smaller, weaker nations (called *Randvölker*, or “borderland peoples”) from Russian oppression.

In practice, however, Germany's ambitions in the East were colonial in nature, amounting to a quest for German *Lebensraum* at the expense of the “barbaric” Russian Empire.⁷⁴ Many German officers, diplomats, politicians, and soldiers generally regarded the indigenous peoples of Eastern Europe as inherently backward.⁷⁵ Some, such as Heinrich Class (1868-1953), president of the ultranationalist Pan-German League, coveted the land, preferably with its mostly Slavic inhabitants Germanized or removed, for the development of Teutonic agrarian utopias.⁷⁶ Class had called for the creation of an independent Ukraine closely aligned with Germany as

⁷³ Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during World War I*, 230-31.

⁷⁴ Von Hagen, *War in A European Borderland*, 61. Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967), 162-63.

⁷⁵ The Germans' experience on the Eastern Front reified longstanding Romantic notions of the East as a wild frontier of boundless, untapped opportunities for civilizing conquerors such as themselves. But the chaos, filth, disease, and human suffering that they encountered in countries that most of them were seeing for the first time were more a result of the war and the retreating Russian army's “scorched-earth policy” than an endemic primitiveness. These attitudes toward and visions of “the East” took an even more extreme form in the Third Reich and World War II. See Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and the German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *The German Myth of the East, 1800 to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁷⁶ This idea eventually won adherents among Germany's governing circles, military class, and industrial magnates. Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during World War I*, 142-46.

early as September 1914 in a memorandum to Bethmann Hollweg that the chancellor rejected. This was a major point of contention between the wartime chancellors (Hollweg, Georg von Hertling, and Max Prince von Baden) and the Pan-German League, which unsuccessfully attempted to induce General Erich Ludendorff, who sympathized with the Pan-Germanists' on many points, to engineer a coup and carry out their annexationist plans as dictator.⁷⁷ Others, above all the Baltic German specialist on the "Eastern question" in Russia and the Middle East Paul Rohrbach, counseled against imperious attitudes toward the *Randvölker*, and advocated Ukraine's removal from "Muscovy" and incorporation (alongside Poland) as an independent state into a German-dominated economic union—the "*Mitteuropa* project."⁷⁸ An ally of Dontsov's, Rohrbach led the "*Osteuropa* school," which helped to popularize the Ukrainian question as the key to a permanent victory against Russia in wartime Germany. Rohrbach's influence was limited, but he did win support for his idea of collaborating with the Ukrainians to make Ukraine independent from Russia. The German economists Max Sering, Friedrich Ernst von Schwerin, and Dr. Eric Keup—leaders of the Society for the Advancement of Inner Colonization (*Gesellschaft zur Förderung der inneren Kolonisation*), whose mission was to promote the settlement of Eastern Europe by Germans—also took a special interest in the Ukrainian question. Executive officials in the German Foreign Office and Imperial Chancellery, such as Foreign Minister Gottlieb von Jagow, his successor as Secretary of State, Arthur Zimmerman, and even Emperor Wilhelm II were at least open to the idea.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht; Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland, 1914-1918* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1961), 114-15, 351.

⁷⁸ Paul Rohrbach, *Russland und wir* (Stuttgart: J. Engelhorn, 1915). For the most influential contemporary statement of the geopolitics of *Mitteuropa*, see Friedrich Naumann, *Mitteuropa* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1915).

⁷⁹ On Germany's war aims with regard to Ukraine and Rohrbach's influence thereupon, see Fedyshyn, *Germany's Drive to the East*, chap. 2; Fischer, *Germany's War Aims*, 120-26, 132-54.

The League of Russia's Foreign Peoples

Ultimately, arguments in favor of using Ukrainian nation building in the Reich's war against Russia proved irresistible. In spring 1916 the German Foreign Office, acting with the reluctant consent of the military (especially of General Erich Ludendorff), approved the idea of the "League of Russia's Foreign Peoples" (*die Liga der Fremdvölker Russlands*, LFR), which claimed to represent the Lithuanians, Belarusians, Poles, Finns, Ukrainians, Georgians, Muslims, and Jews of Russia.⁸⁰ Coordinated from Berlin, the League worked through the German embassy in Bern, Switzerland, utilizing the private apartment of Dr. Hermann Gummerus (a prominent Finnish nationalist) as a headquarters—a location chosen because it was safe for political exiles and ideal for conspiratorial activity.⁸¹ Like the Bolsheviks, including Lenin and Dontsov's older brother Ivan, both of whom made Switzerland their home base during the war, the various nationalists and German agents of the LFR set up shop in the neutral country. In addition to sharing a sponsor—the German Foreign Office—the Bolsheviks in exile and the LFR collaborated against their common enemy, the tsarist state.

The LFR's first move was to issue an appeal to President Woodrow Wilson, "the most ardent defender of humanity and justice" and, by extension, to "the nations that are today the allies of Russia."⁸² Using the language of national self-determination championed by Wilson (prior to the US entry into the war), the appeal describes the plight of Russia's ethnic minorities

⁸⁰ The only monograph on the League of Russia's Foreign Peoples is Seppo Zetterberg, *Die Liga der Fremdvölker Russlands, 1916-1918: Ein Beitrag zu Deutschlands antirussischen Propagandakrieg unter den Fremdvölkern im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Helsinki: Finska Historiska Samfundet, 1978). Also see, Alfred Erich Senn, *The Russian Revolution in Switzerland, 1914-1917* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), chap. 14.

⁸¹ Zetterberg, *Die Liga*, 157.

⁸² The appeal was published in the pro-German, Berlin-based newspaper for Americans, *The Continental Times*, May 15, 1916.

and ends with a cry of desperation to the civilized world: “Help us! Save us from extermination!” Dontsov was among the appeal’s nineteen signatories, all of whom relocated to Lausanne, Switzerland, to participate in a formal “Congress of the League” on June 25, 1916, the day after which they took part in the so-called Third Conference of the Nationalities.⁸³ Enjoying the financial support and interest of the German government, the resultant Congress of Nationalities brought together 400 representatives from 23 nationalities, serving as a tool of anti-Russian German politics throughout Dontsov’s tenure there, with the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the German Empire until his resignation in August 1917, Arthur Zimmerman, personally participating in the deliberations of the congress.⁸⁴ Advertised by its sponsors as a spontaneous gathering of delegates of the oppressed nationalities of Russia rather than a meeting directed in secret from Berlin via the LFR, the Third Congress of Nationalities presented itself as pro-Entente, disguising the anti-Russian orientation and German patronage of its membership, which included the German-Lithuanian Baron Friedrich von der Ropp, the Estonian socialist Aleksandr Kesküla, the Polish monarchist Michał Lempicki, and the Ukrainian nationalist Volodymyr Stepankivs’kyi (1885-1957), and Dontsov.⁸⁵ The demands of the latter two at the “pro-Entente”

⁸³ Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during World War I*, 232. The first two Conferences of Nationalities—which were organized in 1912 by the *Union des Nationalités* (another international lobby for the independence of the non-Russian nationalities of imperial Russia) on the initiative of the Lithuanian nationalist and diplomat Juozas Gabrys (1880-1951)—had taken place in Paris under the auspices of the French government in 1912 and 1915, but the infiltration of pro-German elements into the *Union des Nationalités*, which pressed for the Lithuanian and Ukrainian causes against both imperial Russian and Polish nationalist claims, convinced the French to withdraw their support from it during the war. See Juozas Gabrys, *La nation lithuanienne; son état sous la domination russe et allemande* (Paris: Imprimerie de la Cour d’Appel, 1911).

⁸⁴ Arthur Zimmerman (1864-1940) is best known for his involvement in fomenting the Irish, Indian, and Russian Communist rebellions, and for writing the “Zimmerman Telegram,” which called for the creation of German-Mexican alliance in the event of the USA’s entry into the conflict. Abba Strazhas, *Deutsche Ostpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg: Der Fall Ober Ost 1915-1917* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), 129-30.

⁸⁵ Stepankivs’kyi came from the central Ukrainian province of Podillia and was a member of the USDRP. He headed of the Ukrainian information bureau in Stockholm—where he also later founded the UNR’s embassy to Sweden. During the war he edited the weekly *L’Ukraine* (published in Lausanne), and was one of the most influential members of the LFR. Stepankivs’kyi migrated to the USA in the 1920s. See J. H. Hoffman, “V.

conference were accordingly modest, referring to Ukrainian national independence as a maximal ideal not an immediate demand.⁸⁶ Gabrys considered the conference a success, with the world press reporting extensively and favorably on the documents declaring the “Rights of Nationalities” and the necessity of a “union of the weak.”⁸⁷

That September the German Foreign Office recruited Dontsov as a secret agent and dispatched him to Bern with instructions to assist Stepankivs’kyi, chief of the LFR’s office there. Once in Bern, Dontsov was charged with heading the League’s publishing activities and promised a salary of 500 francs.⁸⁸ He also formed and directed the “Bureau of the Nationalities of Russia” (*das Büro der Nationalitäten Russlands*), coordinating propaganda with the *Union des nationalités* and the LFR.⁸⁹ Disagreements over his role materialized shortly after his arrival. The LFR was willing to give him a free hand in his propaganda work, provided that he secure Stepankivs’kyi’s approval in advance of publication. But the Foreign Office insisted on having final say over everything and, in secret, without Dontsov knowing its editorial and financial role. Necessary funds from the Foreign Office were to be transferred to Dontsov through Stepankivs’kyi, who would receive them from the German diplomat in Bern, Carl von Schubert. Schubert insisted that Dontsov not become aware of the origins of this money—an untenable

Stepankovsky, Ukrainian Nationalist and German Agent,” *Slavonic and East European Review* (London) 50, no. 121 (October, 1972): 595-602.

⁸⁶ Dontsov and Stepankivs’kyi demanded that “Galicia not lose its constitutional rights, and the entire Ukrainian people have the right—if not to form an independent state, at least to develop their national individuality, and that they would profit by religious tolerance, the freedom of language in the schools and at the University, and all political rights that are guaranteed in the Austrian part [of Ukraine] and have been guaranteed by Russia in the Pereiaslav’ Treaty.” From no. 16 of the official publication of the *Union des Nationalités: Les Annales des Nationalités*. Quoted in Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during the First World War*, 235.

⁸⁷ These were drafted by the Belgian scholar and self-proclaimed theorist of a “new international law,” Paul Otlet. Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during World War I*, 232.

⁸⁸ Zetterberg, *Die Liga*, 157-58.

⁸⁹ Stazhas, *Deutsche Ostpolitik*, 128-30.

condition that Golczewski regards as an insult to Dontsov's intelligence, arguing that the notion that he would have been unaware of such assistance is "laughable."⁹⁰ The League's presidium did not wish to comply with it, proposing instead that Dontsov be placed in charge of financial matters and made aware of the money's source. Himself no stranger to the Germans, Dontsov questioned Stepankivs'kyi about the origins of these funds.

Although Dontsov corresponded with German diplomat Gisbert von Romberg about conspiratorial matters sensitive enough to be hidden even from Germany's Austrian allies, Romberg evidently distrusted him, fearing that he might blow the League's cover and make its German sponsorship known to the world.⁹¹ Romberg wrote Bethmann Hollweg about the matter, expressing concern that Dontsov might become aware that the LFR was a project of the German government. According to the instructions of Arthur Zimmermann, only Stepankivs'kyi was to handle the money. He should lead Dontsov to think that the funds came from private and anonymous individuals and organizations.⁹² Romberg believed, probably erroneously, that Dontsov never learned the truth about the money.⁹³ Ultimately, Dontsov was limited to the role of editor of the League's official publication, *Korrespondenz der Nationalitäten Russlands*, which (funded via Stepankivs'kyi at 2,000 francs per month)⁹⁴ also appeared in French as *Bulletin des Nationalités de Russie* and in English as *Bulletin of the Nationalities of Russia*. The first edition of the biweekly went out to readers on September 23, 1916. Each issue consisted of

⁹⁰ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 149-50. For the opposing view, see Senn, *The Russian Revolution in Switzerland*, 198-99.

⁹¹ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 150-51.

⁹² Zetterberg, *Die Liga*, 163.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 160.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 159.

four columns and short editorials dealing with Poland, Finland, Lithuania, and Ukraine, as well as an ethnographic map of Russia showing the claimed territories of these nationalities. A paraphrased Victor Hugo quote, “There is civilization among the peoples, and barbarism among the rulers” (“*Die Kultur ist unter den Völkern, die Barbarei ist unter den Herrschenden*”) served as the paper’s motto.⁹⁵ The LFR dispatched *Korrespondenz* in runs of 1,000 copies per language to major newspapers, politicians, and private persons across Western and Central Europe.

But problems stifled the LFR’s efforts to shape world opinion from the inception of *Korrespondenz*, which carried some of these internal controversies on its pages. Perhaps most damaging were the personal and professional quarrels between Dontsov and his collaborators in the League. Two Baltic German members of the LFR, Barons Friedrich von der Ropp and Bernard von Uexküll, criticized the League’s organ for being “uninteresting and incomplete,” and for exhibiting too obvious an anti-Russian bias. Ropp threatened to cut off the League’s funding of the publication altogether. Romberg echoed their concerns in a letter to Bethmann Hollweg, remarking that *Korrespondenz* failed to disguise its anti-Russian prerogative.⁹⁶ Other critics decried the paper’s excessive focus on Ukrainian and Polish matters, at the expense of the other nationalities. The Estonian Bolshevik-turned-nationalist Aleksandr Kesküla refused to cooperate with Dontsov outright, claiming that he was guilty of “betraying his countrymen” (in all likelihood because of the total breakdown in his relations with the SVU and USDRP).⁹⁷ Kesküla resented the lack of coverage on the Estonian question in *Korrespondenz*, and seconded Ropp’s criticisms, complaining to Stepankivs’kyi that the publication’s propagandistic intent was too obvious. Dontsov responded to these charges by blaming the paper’s shortness and

⁹⁵ Ibid., 170-71.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 81.

emphasizing the corresponding need for brief synopses of only the most importance news.

Longer, more in-depth articles occasionally appeared in *Korrespondenz*, but Dontsov usually wrote them himself.⁹⁸ He explained that even anti-Russian contributions “of course” needed to take a “respectable tone”:

It would already mean a lot if we brought an Entente audience (and we write for it, after all, when we edit *Korrespondenz* here [in Bern] and not in Berlin) to the belief that we are foreign peoples there [in Russia], that it is bad for us in Russia, and that our fate—of course to the detriment of Russia—must be determined anew. If you wish to inform the Entente public that this fate should of course be changed in the German spirit, then it would appear to be only a hopeless task.

Dontsov insisted that he had kept the pro-Central Powers’ orientation and patronage of the LFR under wraps, outwardly following the conventions of neutral journalism. The other complaint voiced by certain members and sponsors of the LFR concerning *Korrespondenz* was its perceived lack of provocativeness and verve. Ropp felt that Dontsov had “no sense for the sensational. To him the study of sources is more important than the stimulation of attention, though we have founded not an historical, but an active bureau.”⁹⁹ Dontsov—rather ironically given his later penchant for anti-intellectualism, inflammatory propaganda, and demagoguery—wanted the style of the league’s bulletin to at least appear “objective,” “neutral,” and “scholarly.” He spent much of his time in libraries and archives gathering materials for use in the anticipated peace talks, hoping to secure Ukraine’s independence through the mechanisms of international law and historical precedents. Dontsov did not heed Ropp’s instructions to change the paper’s style and content, causing the latter to write *Stepankivs’kyi* and insist that the editor of *Korrespondenz* is “not an historical researcher, but a sensation-journalist.”¹⁰⁰ Ropp went so far as

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Quoted in Zetterberg, *Die Liga*, 172.

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in Zetterberg, *Die Liga*, 173.

to suggest outsourcing the paper's editing to an American journalist, relegating Dontsov's role to the physical setting and printing of the bulletin in Bern.

In his defense, Dontsov pointed to the large number of letters he received expressing appreciation for *Korrespondenz*. Although he recognized the propagandistic aim of his task, Dontsov took the journalistic prerogatives of his work for the LFR seriously. He accused Stepankivs'kyi of doing nothing to help the Bern office, requested more staff, and expressed his readiness to resign as editor. Self-conscious about addressing sophisticated Western audiences and thus committed to an even-handed tone, investigative research, and fact-checking, Dontsov rejected sensationalism, at least in this case, as ineffective. He argued that making preparations for the peace by gathering historical documents in support of the autonomy (at minimum) of Russia's national minorities was of the utmost importance, and thus placed his hopes in a rational, juridical assessment of the facts by responsible international actors. "One of the most essential tasks in this regard would be the compilation of all treaties of a legal importance to the nationalities, which were made in their time between Russia on the one hand and its various foreign peoples on the other, which should justify our claims for a special status in Russia." He had in mind the 1654 Treaty and Constitution of Pereiaslav (renewed in 1728), the Georgian Constitution of 1783, the Finnish Constitution of 1809, and the Polish Constitution of 1815. Dontsov proposed the composition of a memorandum detailing the situation of Russia's foreign peoples and the violations of their rights and treaties, to be dispatched to the diplomats of all nations. The memorandum, which he offered to prepare himself, would take the "proper" tone, avoiding unnecessary agitation and sticking to the facts. Despite everything, Uexküll and Ropp agreed to support Dontsov's project in December 1916, and he began working on it at the outset of 1917, but Ropp withheld the funds for the project without explanation and, wishing to further

reduce Dontsov's role in the LFR, considered delegating the task instead to Stepankivs'kyi. Ultimately the memorandum never materialized. Irritated, Dontsov again threatened to quit the League in January 1917. He finally left for Geneva in March without notifying the German Foreign Office, abandoned the Bern headquarters of the LFR to be closed in his absence, and made plans to return to Ukraine alone and take part in the revolutionary situation just beginning there.

Dontsov's confidence in the power and beneficence of international law and prospective peace treaties did not survive the Great War and the failed Ukrainian Revolution. As of the mid 1920s he had become quite the opposite of a dull "historical researcher," embracing a warlike, action-focused ethos, and an editorial style that was proudly anti-intellectual, nonacademic, hyperbolic, provocative, and sensationalist. His time with the LFR, which ended rather embarrassingly for him, likely contributed to his drift toward the much more visceral style of propaganda writing for which he is best known. The experience did nothing to mitigate Dontsov's Germanophilia, however, but seems rather to have convinced him that Germany was the only great power in the world with an abiding interest in Ukrainian independence. Nevertheless, it would be simplistic to interpret German sponsorship of the LFR as evidence that Dontsov was merely an agent of Berlin masquerading as a patriot of Ukraine. He, not unlike Stepankivs'kyi (who was quick to appeal to the Entente once its victory seemed immanent), and other members of the LFR, harbored suspicions about the German government's true and ultimate intentions in Eastern Europe, but believed that Ukraine had nowhere else to turn. Sympathy for the long-partitioned Polish nation was relatively common in the USA, France, and Britain, but most Westerners knew little to nothing about Ukraine, or thought of it in vague terms as an integral component of their ally Russia.

Germany was a problematic sponsor for different reasons. Although the League's sponsors in Berlin favored the creation of a chain of at least nominally independent buffer states (*Pufferstaaten*) in Russia's western borderlands—a strategy termed "*Dekompositionspolitik*"—they were at odds with the considerably more powerful Ludendorff, who did not trust the League and intended to annex only parts of Poland and the Baltic lands to the German Empire, leaving the bulk of Ukraine at Russia's mercy. (The German Foreign Office remained cautious about exploiting stateless nationalisms in general, refusing to back a worldwide league of nationalities that would have included the anti-British Irish, Egyptians, and others, yet posed the risk of inadvertently undermining Austria-Hungary.) Still, high-placed advocates of Ukrainian independence existed in Germany, and resources badly needed for revolution making were available there. Dontsov, for his part, considered Germany not only a means to an end—Ukrainian statehood—but also the paragon of European civilization and culture.

Sincere though their patriotism doubtless was, the extent to which Dontsov and the other members of the League and its affiliate organizations in Switzerland actually represented their respective nationalities proved to be low. In March 1917, when revolution broke out in the Russian Empire, the League's leaders—acting as émigré double agents, individual eccentrics, and free-lance diplomats—proved out of touch with their countrymen in Russia, and thus unable to locate, let alone coordinate with, the nationalist cells and networks allegedly in existence there.¹⁰¹ (This is exactly what Dontsov had accused the SVU of in 1915.) As of mid 1917, the Central and Eastern Ukrainians to whom Dontsov or Stepankivs'kyi might have appealed remained overwhelmingly in favor of national autonomy and federation with Russia, as opposed to the outright secession advocated by the League. But the prevailing opinion in Kyiv changed rapidly in favor of Ukrainian independence in the course of the following year, which brought

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 257-61.

the replacement of the Provisional Government by Bolshevik-Soviet power in Russia (both regimes were openly hostile to Ukrainian federalists and separatists), the birth of the first modern Ukrainian nation-state (albeit short-lived), and the Central Powers' victory on the Eastern Front, soon to be overshadowed and nullified by their defeat on the Western Front.

The Hetmanate

The February Revolution of 1917 set off a chain of events that led to the appearance of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) and its governing body, the Central Rada—a parliamentary council of Ukrainian intellectuals and activists in Kyiv. They were the liberal socialist Ukrainophiles—Hrushevs'kyi, Vynnychenko, Petliura, and others—whom Dontsov had begun denouncing at the war's outset for what he regarded as their self-defeating and servile fealty to Russia. Facing the hostility of the Russian Provisional Government, the Bolshevik-dominated Soviet regime that ousted it in November 1917, and the Russian imperialist White movement that emerged in opposition to the Communist takeover, this fledgling Ukrainian nation-state evolved from its original calls for a free and equal socialist federation of the Russian empire's nationalities on June 7, 1917, toward a declaration of full independence on January 25, 1918 (the so-called Fourth Universal). The latter came in response to the escalating Ukrainian-Soviet War (1917-1921), conventionally regarded as one of many theaters in the broader Russian Civil War. Scrambling to reassemble whatever it could of the old Russian Empire, yet simultaneously withdrawing from the war with the Central Powers, the new Soviet regime decried the Central Rada as bourgeois, counterrevolutionary, and illegitimate, proffering its own Leninist version of national self-determination and inciting the largely Russian working class of

Ukraine's cities to revolt.¹⁰² The Bolsheviks first attempted to declare a Ukrainian Soviet Republic unsuccessfully in Kyiv, and then, successfully, in the eastern city of Kharkiv (the capital of Soviet Ukraine until 1934) on December 26, 1917. From Kharkiv paramilitary "Red Guard" formations launched a campaign against the UNR, which failed to raise an army capable of resisting the attack and soon began hemorrhaging territory to the Bolsheviks. Besieged in the Ukrainian capital by early February, the leaders of the UNR were compelled to turn to the Central Powers, which they had by and large dutifully opposed (as loyalists to Petrograd) since the beginning of the war.¹⁰³ Meanwhile, the German Foreign Office intensified its pro-Ukrainian propaganda efforts, hoping to further destabilize what remained of the Russian Empire.¹⁰⁴

The peace negotiations between Germany, Austria-Hungary, the UNR, and Soviet Russia took place against this backdrop and culminated in the first (Ukrainian-German) Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on February 9, 1918, and the second (Russian-German) Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918. Taken together, the agreements formalized the German annexation of the Baltic countries, the end of (Soviet) Russia's involvement in the First World War, and the recognition of Ukraine's independence as a German-Austrian protectorate by the Central Powers and Petrograd.¹⁰⁵ The delegates of the UNR (Mykola Liubyns'kyi, Mykola Levyts'kyi, Oleksandr

¹⁰² Which is not to suggest that no ethnic Ukrainians joined the Bolsheviks or supported the establishment of a Soviet Ukraine. The *Borotbists*, a Left splinter of the Ukrainian SR Party, backed the Russian Communists, eventually merging with them and taking an active part in the Ukrainization campaign in 1920s Soviet Ukraine, only to be stamped out in the 1930s as "bourgeois nationalists" and "national deviationists." See, James E. Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1983).

¹⁰³ Fedyshyn, *Germany's Drive to the East*, 43.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹⁰⁵ Up to this point, the German Supreme Army Command and the Imperial Chancellery were not terribly interested in Ukraine, but chiefly concerned with retaining the Reich's acquisitions in Poland, Kurland, and Lithuania, the immediate conclusion of a peace with Russia that would (probably) leave the latter in possession of Ukraine, and the redirection of all resources to victory in the west. Despite the efforts of Dontsov and his collaborators, the German leadership had drafted no concrete plans for Ukraine or a separate agreement with the Central Rada—little trusted by

Sevriuk, and Vsevolod Holubovych) immediately established a good rapport with the Germans—represented at the peace talks by General Max Hoffmann (1869-1927), one of the few German commanders fluent in Russian and sympathetic to the Ukrainian cause, and the industrialist Richard Kühlmann (1873-1948), Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs since Arthur Zimmermann's resignation in June 1917. Outmaneuvered by their Ukrainian counterparts, the Soviet delegates Lev Trotsky and Lev Kamenev were forced into recognizing the UNR despite the unfolding Ukrainian-Soviet War. Enjoying final say in such matters, Erich Ludendorff agreed to a “peace for bread” (*Brotfrieden*), which promised military assistance to the UNR, should the Central Rada publicly request it, in exchange for large tributes of food from Ukrainian agriculture and coal from the Donbas region (supplies desperately needed by the Germans). The even weaker Austrian government, represented by Foreign Minister Count Ottokar Czernin (1872-1932), reluctantly consented to the deal despite misgivings about Ukrainian claims to East Galicia and related fears of upsetting the Poles.¹⁰⁶

Thanks to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the Central Powers could now call themselves the “liberators” of Ukraine from Russian and Bolshevik tyranny, and Ukrainian separatists could now claim political independence from Petrograd and the support of powerful European friends. The German-Austrian occupation of Ukraine ended the Red Guards' incursions into the country, but forced the UNR into a reluctant military alliance with Vienna and Berlin, whose conservative leadership generally regarded Ukrainian statehood only as a means to their ends and distrusted the Central Rada almost as much as they did the Russian Bolsheviks (whom they had also

German or Austrian officialdom—until peace negotiations with Soviet Russia and the UNR were already well underway. The decision to recognize Ukraine's independence was, at this highest level of command, “merely a hastily contrived improvisation.” Ibid., 50.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 85.

bankrolled). Still, the Germans' decision to help build an independent Ukraine as a bulwark against Russia confirmed Dontsov's convictions that such a state could be born with the help of the Central Powers, and that the recognition of Ukraine's independence by the international community might be secured through the peace process.



Figure 2.2. Ukraine during World War I. Source: Paul Magosci, *Ukraine: A Historical Atlas* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 21.

But Dontsov did not make it to Russian Ukraine until March 1918, after the beginning of the German-Austrian occupation.¹⁰⁷ Thus, he did not participate in the peace talks that led to the recognition of Ukraine's independence by Soviet Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Ottoman Empire. It is not clear why he postponed his return for the negotiations, for

¹⁰⁷ Zetterberg, *Die Liga*, 181-82.

which he had spent the preceding three years preparing. (In any event, his historical arguments for Ukrainian statehood ended up being quite irrelevant to the proceedings.) Dontsov apparently had planned to travel to Kyiv via Stockholm to gather Ukrainian constituents and launch a propaganda campaign for an immediate peace treaty in the spring of 1917.¹⁰⁸ He allegedly had high hopes of heading the new Ukrainian government's press agency.¹⁰⁹ But despite the Austrian authorities' reported willingness to support this venture he remained in Bern, Switzerland, and Austrian-controlled L'viv. Dontsov later claimed to have unsuccessfully sought Archduke Wilhelm's assistance to return to Kyiv sooner,¹¹⁰ but it seems likely that he avoided embroiling himself in Ukrainian politics earlier for reasons other than a lack of means. He had, after all, burned whatever bridges there were between himself and the USDRP and Socialist Revolutionaries in power in the Central Rada. His connection to life in the Ukrainian capital had weakened during his decade abroad, and the situation there had changed dramatically in his absence. Instead of joining the Ukrainian Revolution, Dontsov resumed his publicistic work in L'viv, completing his law degree there in August 1917. His absence during the birth pangs of the UNR prompted accusations of cowardice, betrayal, and irresponsibility from his former USDRP comrade, Volodymyr Vynnychenko (then prime minister of the Central Rada).¹¹¹

Whatever his motives for avoiding the UNR in its troubled infancy, Dontsov revised his ideology to match the swiftly changing times. Following the comparative-historical method—the idea that laws of human development can be discerned and extrapolated from the comparison of

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 200.

¹⁰⁹ Ievhen Bachyns'kyi, "Rik 1917. Pochatok druhoi revoliutsii v Rosii, iak vona vidbulasia sered ukrainsiv u Shvaitsarii (Za tohochasnymy notatkamy)," *Vyzvol'nyi shliakh* 1 (1959), 38.

¹¹⁰ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 137.

¹¹¹ Volodymyr Vynnychenko, *Zapovit bortsiam za vyzvolennia* (Kyiv: Vydavnyche tovarystvo 'Krynytsia' knyoliubiv Ukrainy, 1991), 70.

phenomena in neighboring and otherwise analogous regions (a relic of nineteenth-century positivist thinking that Dontsov nevertheless returned to throughout his career)¹¹²—he developed an increasingly nationalistic set of values and predictions in the course of the First World War. The string of successes enjoyed by national liberation movements in the Balkans and East Central Europe convinced him that Ukraine, too, was destined to have a successful national revolution and gain independence.¹¹³

Reflecting on the emerging European order and the intensifying Ukrainian-Russia conflict, Dontsov proclaimed the dawn of a new “national era” that would supplant the old politics of imperialism, liberalism, and socialism.¹¹⁴ With the exception of Ukraine’s easternmost regions, he argued, the Ukrainian people instinctively opposed Russia, a destroyer of national cultures and a menace to the entire civilized world. Russia was the number-one enemy of the Polish nation as well, and the greater threat beside which the localized Ukrainian-Polish conflict over East Galicia paled. Like Poland, Ukraine would be a better state for Europe to deal with than Russia on key issues, such as the fate of Danzig and the Dardanelles, because it sought international dialog rather than constant wars of expansion. “The disintegration of Russian power, its breakdown into many centers of political thought and will, therefore lies in the most

¹¹² Dmytro Dontsov, *Dvi literaturni nashoi doby* (Lviv: Prosvita, 1991), 171.

¹¹³ Volodymyr Holovchenko, *Vid “Samostiinoi Ukrainy” do Soiuzu Vyzvolennya Ukrainy: narysy z istorii ukrains’koi sotsial-demokratii pochatku XX st.* (Kharkiv: Maidan, 1996), 133. Iryna Shlikhta insists, however, that methodology was not the main thing for Dontsov, citing the memoirs of Nadiia Syrovtsova, a colleague of Dontsov’s in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian State (Hetmanate), who writes that “reading various literature, [Dontsov] took excerpts, and there was a big card file. Then, when it was time to write some work, he simply ‘pulled out’ the appropriate citations from the card file, from here came the brilliant wave of citations in various languages.” Nadiia Surovtsova, *Spohady* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, 1996), 146. On the syncretic haphazardness of Dontsov’s “method” also see Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 67-68.

¹¹⁴ Von einem Ukrainer, “Die separatistische Bewegung der Ukraine,” *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 1467 (August 10, 1917). Republished in Ukrainian as Dmytro Dontsov, “Sparystychnyi rukh na Ukraini,” *Shliakhy*, no. 3-4 (1917) in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 256.

specific interests of the European world.”¹¹⁵ An independent Ukraine would thus ensure the end of the expansionist projects that had bathed Eastern and Central Europe in blood. He used rhetoric of this sort to drum up support for Ukrainian-Teutonic cooperation, first against tsarist and then against revolutionary Petrograd, which he lambasted in a series of articles depicting Miliukov as an impotent liberal anachronism, Alexander Kerensky as the “Don Quixote of the Revolution,” and Lenin as a dangerous “Russian Torquemada” (a reference to the infamous Grand Inquisitor of fifteenth-century Spain).¹¹⁶

Dontsov’s views on what defined the stateless Ukrainian nation and what it might become with (or as) a state differed from the strictly ethnographic and racist ones he later adopted. It was, rather, a territorial, geopolitical conception of Ukraine—a frontier between two mutually hostile civilizations, faced with the choice “either/or”—that guided his thinking at this time. “We must be statesmen more than nationalists,” he wrote in 1918, “remembering that the Jew, the Pole, or the Moskal who stands firmly on the foundation of Ukrainian statehood is a better support for it than Ukrainians who dream about federation.”¹¹⁷ Dontsov derided Russian politics, society, and culture as an aberration from the legal-democratic path of development exhibited by Western countries—the ideal that he expected Ukraine to follow as a matter of course at this time¹¹⁸—but Dontsov’s Russophobia did not disclose the ethnic and racist overtones that it later would. Russianness was a state of mind, a mode of politics, and a negation of the national idea, not a nationality. He professed to favor a democratic form of government

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Dmytro Dontsov, “Kharakterystychni postati rosiis’koi revoliutsii,” *Shliakhy* 3-4 (1917), in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 2, 281-91.

¹¹⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, *Mizhnarodne polozhennia Ukrainy i Rosiia* (Kyiv: Robitnycha knyharnia, 1918), 20.

¹¹⁸ Dontsov, *Kul’tura prymityvizmu*, 12.

that “wants to raise the masses to the ideals [of the individual],” and not the Russian one, which seeks “to lower these ideals to the desires and tastes of the uncivilized masses.”¹¹⁹

The question of whether the state preceded the nation or vice versa remained muddled in Dontsov’s thinking (one could find excerpts that suggest he held both positions between 1914 and 1918) but he praised Ukrainians for the “miracle” of having created the kind of civil society needed to follow the Western path, despite lacking a state, and thereby demonstrating their high level of civic awareness and activeness.¹²⁰ By contrast, the weakness of civil society and the overbearing strength of the state in Russia combined, paradoxically, to generate a tendency toward “anarchism.” Dontsov attributed this to the Russian “psyche,” characterized by a lack of self-discipline, self-respect, and respect for others, as well as the essence of Russian civilization—a barbaric culture that allegedly enslaved all its estates.¹²¹ Dontsov blamed all these ills on Russia’s geography, the inexhaustibility of its human and natural resources, and the merger of the individual with the collective (manifest in the repartitional commune, the Russian Orthodox Church, and other collectivistic institutions).¹²² The centuries-long repression of political dissent bred an obsequious idiocy in the Russian populace, even in their moments of revolt. Russia’s mystical conception of “the people,” its near-perfect obliteration of individualism, its messianic faith in the justness and inevitability of world domination by itself alone (“the Third Rome”); all of it forced Ukrainians to turn west. “We do not have an enemy in the system, in tsarism, in Kadetism, or in Bolshevism [but] only in that from which tsarism,

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 22.

¹²⁰ Dmytro Dontsov, “Ukrains’ke miraculum,” *Shliakhy* 11-12 (1917) in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 1, 292-98.

¹²¹ Dontsov, *Kul’tura prymityvizmu*, 36-38.

¹²² Ibid., 9.

Kadetism, and Bolshevism emanate.”¹²³ After the Bolsheviks had taken power, Dontsov repeated the idea that the problem was the insidious culture of despotism underlying the Russian state, not the form that it happened to take at any given moment.¹²⁴

Dontsov’s understanding of nation and nationalism evolved on the basis of his analysis and comparison of the Russian and Ukrainian cases. In the former, he identified two strains: an “official” “bureaucratic” nationalism, designed to serve the imperial state but largely incapable of inspiring non-Russians to action, and a more dangerous popular or social one, based on an ambivalently ethnic conception of Russianness that claimed, at a minimum, all Orthodox East Slavs.¹²⁵ The greatest peril, he thought, was a synthesis of the two: “Tragedy and comedy at once. The struggle of a caste for its privilege alongside a nation that wants to struggle with all the peoples of Russia *against this caste*, but also *against all foreign peoples with the same caste*.”¹²⁶ Dontsov’s prewar and wartime writings generally linked nationalism with democracy, but he regarded Russian nationalism as an instrument of imperialism and tyranny, irrespective of whatever its proponents called themselves. While a surfeit of statism perverted Russian nationalism, the lack of a state and a political elite prevented Ukrainian nationalism from getting off the ground. In a particularly controversial essay from 1917, “The Bastard Nation” (*Narid-Bastard*), Dontsov formulated a Darwinian yet subjectivist definition of nationhood: “The nation is created not by ethnographic independence, not by ancientness of origin, not forms—only that

¹²³ Ibid., 28.

¹²⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, “Peterburz’kyi perevorot,” *Shliakhy* 3-4 (April 1917), 128.

¹²⁵ This distinction, Shlikhta remarks, anticipated later theories of “official nationalism,” such as Benedict Anderson’s, which also points to imperial (and Soviet) Russia to as a classic instance. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, chap. 6. Shlikhta, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 75-78.

¹²⁶ Dmytro Dontsov, “Voskresinnia mertvykh (pered pohrebinniam despotychnoi Rosii),” *Shliakhy* 1-2 (February 1917).

mystical force (mystical because the reasons for it are not clear), which is called ‘the will to life,’ the will to create a single collective individuality among the races.”¹²⁷ By this definition, Ukraine had not yet become a nation at all—a task that would fall to a new elite of parental figures who could discipline, educate, and organize the orphaned Ukrainian ethnos.¹²⁸

In search of such leaders, Dontsov found the Ukrainian Democratic-Agrarian Party (*Ukrains'ka demokratychno-khliborobs'ka partiia*, or UDKhP), embracing its nationalist, conservative, monarchist, and ostensibly propeasant yet authoritarian statist ideology. The party's ideological leaders were Mykola Mikhnovs'kyi and Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi, both of whom Dontsov had already known and admired for years. As a student he had read Mikhnovs'kyi's famous 1905 pamphlet, *Samostiina Ukraina* (Independent Ukraine), and claimed that it exerted a decisive influence on him.¹²⁹ Still, he retained a certain critical distance from Mikhnovs'kyi's ideas, writing in 1918 that *Samostiina Ukraina* is “an idealistic mistake that rests only upon historical tradition” (namely, the rights promised to the Ukrainian Cossacks in the 1654 Treaty of Pereiaslav yet subsequently violated by the Tsardom of Muscovy).¹³⁰ This was a charge that Dontsov could easily have leveled at himself for having devoted the preceding three years to researching the international agreements and alliances of the early-modern Ukrainian Hetmanate, as if these were pertinent to twentieth-century diplomacy. The more

¹²⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, “Narid-bastard” *Shliakhy* 1-4 (1917) in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 2, 139-49, 143.

¹²⁸ Iuryi Lypa (1900-1944), a young follower-turned-critic of Dontsov's, returned to this concept in the late 1930s, after his break with the ideologue: “In this theory of the ‘bastard people’ the defeatism of the Ukrainian intellectuals already achieved the absolute destruction of the organicity of their own race. This was already not self-effacement, but it was self-destruction, finally the enslavement of the spirit of the race.” Iuryi Lypa, *Pryznachennya Ukrainy* (New York: Hoverlia, 1953), 211.

¹²⁹ Dontsov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 36, 142.

¹³⁰ Dmytro Dontsov, *Ukrains'ka derzhavana dumka i Ievropa* (L'viv: Vydannia “Vsesvitn'oi biblioteky,” 1918), 40. Later, in the 1920s, Dontsov again evaluated Mikhnovs'kyi's contribution to the Ukrainian national movement positively, calling it “a *new worldview*, nationalist and activist to the core, though still not willing to leave the shell of old slogans.” Dmytro Dontsov, *Tvory*, ed. Iaroslav Dashkevych, vol. 1 (L'viv: Kal'variia, 2001), 347.

influential figure, for Dontsov and for the UDKhP, was Lypyns'kyi, who drafted the party's program to solve the land question through the state's purchase of Ukraine's latifundia to be leased to poor peasants and agrarian cooperatives, leaving middle-sized landholdings to remain in private hands.¹³¹ The UDKhP followed Lypyns'kyi in declaring itself an advocate of private property, Ukrainian national sovereignty, and the interests of Ukraine's landowners as well as peasants—positions that put it decidedly at odds with the Ukrainian SRs and SDs. Though not always in synch politically and ideologically, Lypyns'kyi and Dontsov worked closely together in 1918, remaining on good terms until the early 1920s (after which their views, tactics, and circles diverged considerably, bringing their friendship and collaboration to an end). Like Dontsov, Lypyns'kyi entrenched himself in the Germanic world, becoming the Ukrainian state's ambassador to Austria-Hungary in 1918 and living between Vienna and Berlin for the rest of his life.¹³²

During the First World War, Dontsov came to share many of Lypyns'kyi's ideas, including: 1) a cyclical yet nondeterministic conception of history and civilizations; 2) an emphasis on agriculture, territorial patriotism, and the reassimilation of Ukraine's native yet Polonized or Russified aristocracy as the basis for a Ukrainian national rebirth; 3) the desirability of social stratification and nondemocratic or “classocratic” forms of government, based on iron discipline and unity of purpose; 4) the primacy of the will over the intellect, and the political inefficacy of appeals to reason; and 5) the belief that the church should serve as an autonomous

¹³¹ For his classic statement of the “Democratic Agrarian” vision for a Ukrainian monarchist state buttressed by reinvigorated noble and peasant classes, and organized on the principle of the private ownership of land, see Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi, *Lysty do brativ-kliborobiv pro ideiu i orhanizatsiiu ukrains'koho monarkhizmu; pysani 1919-1926* (Vienna: Carl Hermann, 1926).

¹³² Lypyns'kyi served as an officer in the Russian Imperial Army during the war, then worked to Ukrainize its ranks for use in the Ukrainian Revolution after the overthrow of the tsar. Prior to 1914 he had also advocated the Ukrainization of the Polish nobility living in majority Ukrainian areas (such as his own native region, Volhynia).

source of the nation's moral and cultural strength. Dontsov concurred with Lypyns'kyi's critique of the leftwing Ukrainian intelligentsia and the Central Rada in particular, but tended to prefer the populist view that nations precede and invent states, not vice versa.¹³³ Before Ukraine could become a state, Dontsov thought, it must become a nation (that is, Ukrainian people must be made to *desire* that they become a "collective individuality"). Lypyns'kyi took the opposing, "statist" perspective—the Ukrainian nation would have to be built from the top down, starting with the creation of a new ruling class, drawn from the ranks of the country's gentry, and the immediate dismissal of the current Ukrainian government.

By the time Dontsov finally returned to Kyiv in March 1918, he, Lypyns'kyi, the UDKhP, and the German military's occupation regime had reason to be dissatisfied with the Central Rada's performance. The UNR's socialist agrarian reforms, which redistributed land to the peasants (or encouraged them to seize it independently), created disorder, lowered productivity, and interfered with deliveries of grain. Conversely, the military occupation and the requisitions embittered farmers, turning them against the Germans and the Central Rada, and weakening both. Despite assurances that the German intervention would not interfere in Ukraine's internal governance and operations (apart from the railroads)—that they were "friendly guests" who would leave when asked to do so, just as they were invited—Erich Ludendorff and the Supreme Army Command quickly grew impatient with the Central Rada, which they had never trusted. Frequently in conflict with the civil, political, and diplomatic authorities of the Foreign Office and the Imperial Chancellery, yet indisputably in charge on the Eastern Front, Ludendorff appointed Field Marshall Hermann von Eichhorn (1848-1918) chief of German forces in Ukraine, but delegated most decision-making to General Wilhelm Groener (1867-1939), who was dispatched to relieve General Max Hoffman (one of the few high-ranking

¹³³ Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 83-85.

German officers with expertise in Russian and Eastern European matters).¹³⁴ The Foreign Office nevertheless insisted on the appointment of Alfons Mumm von Schwarzenstein (1859-1954) as the Reich's ambassador to Kyiv to act as a moderating influence on Ludendorff and the Supreme Army Command. (Mumm had served as director of the Central Propaganda Agency in Berlin since the outbreak of the war.) Further complicating matters were the conflicts between the Germans and the Austrians, who administered their own occupation zone in Southern Ukraine and had their own candidate for the Ukrainian throne, Archduke Wilhelm von Habsburg (then an officer in the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen [*Sichovi stril'tsi*]¹³⁵ fighting against Bolshevik forces).

The Central Powers' armies and the Central Rada soon began losing control over the countryside. Responding to the mounting anti-German sentiment of the Ukrainian peasantry, Groener censured the Rada and recommended the use of force to carry out grain requisitions. Ludendorff pushed for the restoration of land to the former noble owners, hoping to intensify agricultural production and simplify extraction to the German home front, but the Rada refused to yield. The militarization of the seizure of Ukrainian food began in April 1918, sparking armed resistance against the occupation and the police of the UNR. Retaliation was disproportionate and indiscriminate, with Eichhorn declaring German and Austrian courts martial legitimate in cases relating to "public order." The number of death sentences handed down in such trials rose. Fearing the growth of Ukrainian military power, Mumm and Groener forced the Rada to dissolve the German- and Austrian-sponsored volunteer divisions that had participated in the liberation of the country. With Ukrainian-German relations rapidly deteriorating, Mumm considered replacing

¹³⁴ One of the German great strategists on the Eastern Front, Hoffman made an unsuccessful attempt to build an anti-Soviet coalition in 1922.

¹³⁵ A volunteer legion formed under the auspices of Vienna from ethnically Ukrainian POWs of the Imperial Russian Army.

the Rada but hesitated. Nevertheless, Mumm tentatively distanced himself from both the leftist Rada and the idea of Ukrainian independence. As of mid-April, Eichhorn, Groener, and the Supreme Army Command had embraced the idea of a bloodless coup d'état that would put a more cooperative and efficient dictatorship in charge, and begun the search for native co-conspirators.

Lypyns'kyi's state-building (as opposed to nation-building) prescriptions carried the day on April 29, 1918, when the German occupation regime and the UDKhP conspired to remove the Central Rada from power and declare Pavlo Skoropads'kyi (1873-1945) hetman of Ukraine. Skoropads'kyi was an aristocratic Ukrainian Cossack, aide-de-camp of Tsar Nicholas II, and decorated general in the Imperial Russian Army who had nevertheless been active in the Ukrainian national movement since the February Revolution. He returned to Kyiv at the beginning of the German occupation, later claiming in his memoirs to have organized the putsch himself, presenting the Germans with a "*fait accompli*." Skoropads'kyi exaggerated: although he and the Central Powers did work toward the Rada's ouster independently of one another, the Germans provided the military means of carrying out and sustaining the hetman's rule, and, despite initial pledges of neutrality, heavily interfered in how he governed throughout the alliance, which lasted until the end of the war on the Western Front (November 11, 1918).¹³⁶ The conspirers renamed the Ukrainian People's Republic to the "Ukrainian State," or the Hetmanate.

The UDKhP supported the plot from its inception, jostling to position itself as the political and ideological foundation of the Hetman's dictatorship. These were the first "Hetmanites"—a conservative monarchist strain of Ukrainian nationalism that would survive until Skoropads'kyi's death near the end of the Second World War. Having returned to Kyiv,

¹³⁶ Fedysyn, *Germany's Drive to the East*, 141-42.

Dontsov worked his way into the UDKhP's leadership and embraced its ideology. Vynnychenko alleged that Dontsov personally took part in the anti-Rada conspiracy to put Skoropads'kyi in power, but his actual role in the coup, if any, is unclear.¹³⁷ The Hetmanites' publications after 1921 do not support Vynnychenko's claim.¹³⁸ In any event, Dontsov enthusiastically supported Skoropads'kyi and his government from the outset. He recorded his impressions of the general in his diary, *1918, Kyiv*—a key source for understanding Dontsov's role in the Hetmanate despite the fact that he did not publish it until 1954, with any number of omissions and revisions made to fit the times and shield the author's legacy. Given his opposition to the hetman and his followers after the war, however, we can take Dontsov at his word when he claims to have seen in Skoropads'kyi a politically courageous and ambitious individual amid a morass of “demo-socialist leadership”; a man of war who might have become Ukraine's Napoleon—the creator of a new “ruling caste” capable of bringing both the “Jacobins” and the “Monarchists” into line.¹³⁹

The realities of the Hetmanate, however, quickly disillusioned Ukrainian nationalists such as Dontsov. The Hetmanate's attempts to juggle German, Ukrainian, and Russian interests on the left and the right posed intractable problems. Skoropads'kyi was not only beholden to and dependent upon Berlin, but was also a product of the conservative officer class of the defunct Imperial Russian Army. Unmoored Russian officers—most famously the talented future White Army General Pyotr Wrangel—rallied around the hetman and the Ukrainian State, not out of sympathy for Ukrainian independence or German ambitions in the east, but in hopes of living to defeat the Bolsheviks who had exiled them from Russia's heartland and, ultimately, to

¹³⁷ Vynnychenko, *Vidrodzhennia natsii*, vol. 3, 38, 105.

¹³⁸ Shlikhta, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 53-54.

¹³⁹ Dontsov, *Rik 1918, Kyiv*, 7-9, 36-37.

reconstitute the Russian Empire and the Romanov dynasty.¹⁴⁰ Despite being agents of the Ukrainian State, the hetman's cabinet of ministers and advisors thus had a markedly Russian, Russophile, and Russophone makeup.

One important exception was Dmytro Doroshenko (1882-1951), who served as foreign minister and faced the (ultimately impossible) task of reconciling the regime's contradictory pro-Ukrainian, pro-German, and pro-Russian elements and tendencies.¹⁴¹ Of noble Ukrainian Cossack origins, Doroshenko had been a member of the liberal democratic Ukrainian Party of Socialist Federalists (UPSF), which supported federal ties between Ukraine and the Russian Republic, but resigned from the party to join the hetman's foreign ministry, betraying his comrades in the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the Central Rada. Given Skoropads'kyi's reliance on tsarist, conservative connections from the officer corps, including ultranationalist Black Hundreds, the Ukrainian State also adopted a rightwing orientation that alienated the predominantly socialist, liberal, and democratic political culture of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. The hetman tried and failed to bring representatives of the Ukrainian left (including Socialist Federalists, Socialist Revolutionaries, and Social Democrats) into his government. Patriotic, they naturally resented Skoropads'kyi as a military dictator in thrall to German invaders, but without their help badly needed agrarian reforms and outreach efforts among the discontented Ukrainian peasantry could not get off the ground.

Pressure on the hetman to politically and linguistically "Ukrainize" his government, its largely Russian-speaking bureaucracy, and Ukrainian society at large came from the German

¹⁴⁰ Quixotic Whites in the Hetman's service are the subject of Mikhail Bulgakov's 1925 novel, *The White Guard* (Belaia gvardiia), set in Kyiv during the fall and winter of 1918.

¹⁴¹ Doroshenko went on to become one of the leading emigre Ukrainian historians of the interwar period. A member of the "Statist School," founded by Lypyns'kyi, Doroshenko's participant-observer account of the Ukrainian Revolution is an essential source. Dmytro Doroshenko. *Istoriia Ukrainy 1917-1923 rr.* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2002).

occupation authorities, who wanted their client state to have a broad and firm base of support. In order to overcome barriers to communication that hindered the day-to-day operations of the Hetmanate (especially food deliveries) and damaged its relations with the country's peasant majority and nationally conscious leftwing elite, Ukrainian was to become the national language of the state and education. But most of what remained of the old regime's local government carried on using Russian out of habit or did not know Ukrainian at all, and there was a dearth of Ukrainian speakers qualified for administrative work to replace them.¹⁴² Demands for the Ukrainization of the hetman's regime also came from the Ukrainian National-State Union (UNDS)—an umbrella organization of pro-Ukrainian political actors, many of whom supported the Central Rada—but their vision of nation-building, based on agrarian socialism, was anathema to that of the hetman, his conservative allies, and much of the German military leadership. Hoping to transcend these divisions and win over Ukrainian nationalists, the German Foreign Office organized a visit to Kyiv by Paul Rohrbach and Axel Schmidt, another well-known pro-Ukrainian academic from Berlin. The weeklong affair convinced Rohrbach that the hetman was, “at the bottom of his heart, more Russian than Ukrainian,” having “always looked with an eye to Moscow,” and that the Hetmanate was “of Great Russian orientation and is endeavoring to lead Ukraine back to Moscow. It simply cannot be trusted, since it is composed mainly of Kadets. These people have clearly shown themselves as enemies of Ukraine not only during the Tsarist regime but since the Revolution as well.”¹⁴³ Although Rohrbach accused Mumm of disqualifying ignorance on Ukrainian matters, the latter approved of the agrarian reform and Ukrainian

¹⁴² Borislav Chernev, “Ukrainization and Its Contradictions in the Context of the Brest-Litovsk System,” in Lohr, Tolz, Semyonov, and von Hagen, *The Empire and Nationalism at War*, 163-88.

¹⁴³ Paul Rohrbach, *Um des Teufels Handschrift: Zwei Menschenalter erlebter Weltgeschichte* (Hamburg: Hand Dulk, 1953), 220-21. Quoted in Fedyshyn, *Germany's Drive to the East*, 152-53.

national education system proposed in Rohrbach's report to the Imperial Chancellery. Mumm even stipulated that the hetman's compliance in this nation-building program was a requirement for continued German support. Skoropad'skyi acquiesced.



Figure 2.3. Hetman Skoropads'kyi flanked by Generals Ludendorff (right) and Hindenburg (left), September 9, 1918. *Source:* Geiser Theodore Collection, Imperial War Museum.

Precedents for the targeted, German-sponsored “nationalization” or “indigenization” of nations in wartime Eastern Europe already existed in Ober Ost—the military state overseeing the German-occupied areas of Poland and the Baltic coast. The “*Kultur* program,” which historian Vejas Liulevicius describes as a colonial-utopian “civilizing” mission, sought the creation of subordinate states and peoples that would be “German in content, ethnic in form.”¹⁴⁴ Benighted local cultures would be permitted to flourish outwardly while accepting the imposition of purportedly superior Teutonic management, military discipline, and cultural and technological gifts. The Germans implemented this program (a predecessor to subsequent Soviet indigenization policies) later and more haphazardly in Ukraine and with even more dubious results.

¹⁴⁴ Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, chap. 4.

In the course of the summer and fall of 1918, the hetman and the Germans charged Dontsov with carrying these Ukrainization efforts forward. Although he later decried Soviet Ukrainization as a cynical ploy, Dontsov approved of the idea of synthesizing German *Kultur* with the promotion of Ukrainian national consciousness through schools, newspapers, and government under the Hetmanate. On May 24 he became director of the Ukrainian State's Ukrainian Telegraph Agency (UTA) and press bureau, overseeing the production and dissemination of propaganda and news in support of the Hetmanate and the German-Austrian occupation. He took the position shortly after Doroshenko's dismissal, which followed demands by the UNDS for a pro-Ukrainian change of cadres at the highest level.¹⁴⁵ Skoropads'kyi regularly consulted Dontsov on matters of Ukrainization and Russification, as well as the regime's relations with the Central Powers, Russians, Bolsheviks, and peasants. Hoping to reach the latter, the Hetman ordered Dontsov to develop a publication to rally the peasantry around the Ukrainian State. The result was *Selians'ke slovo* (The Village Word), which broadcasted the prohetman ideology and activities of the UDKhP into the countryside, seeking to build a broad-based party of conservative nationalist peasants, landowners, and intellectuals. To this end Dontsov had the support and counsel of Lypyns'kyi—the hetman's newly appointed ambassador to Vienna—and Mikhnovs'kyi. In his diary, Dontsov recorded his advocacy for state censorship of the (competing) democratic press during meetings around the hetman's table.¹⁴⁶ He argued, moreover, that German outreach to the Ukrainian population should be conducted in Ukrainian, not Russian, and that every effort must be made to defend the Ukrainian State from both the Whites and the Reds. Dontsov's opposition to Ukraine's federation with Russia and insistence

¹⁴⁵ Doroshenko, *Istoriia Ukrainy*, vol. 2, 76.

¹⁴⁶ Dontsov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 13-15. June 3.

upon the use of Ukrainian provoked attacks from Russian-language papers in Kyiv of the right and the left, including *Kievskaia mysl'* (Kievan Thought) and *Rabochaia zhizn'* (Workers' Life).

Dontsov exhibited hostility toward Ukraine's Jews, regarding them as inherently pro-Russian, pro-Bolshevik, and anti-Ukrainian fifth columnists, yet some critics mocked his press bureau as "the all-Jewish congress of the Russian press in Ukraine."¹⁴⁷ The Ukrainian Social Democratic press charged that Dontsov secretly harbored pro-Russian sentiments, pointing to his collaboration with the hetman.¹⁴⁸ But his rapport with influential Germans and Austrians, such as Archduke Wilhelm and Paul Rohrbach, made Dontsov a valuable asset despite the controversy he courted. The hetman even regarded him as a candidate for the position of minister of foreign affairs. Still, the occupation authorities were not always pleased with Dontsov's performance. General Groener complained to Skoropads'kyi that the UTA gave too much attention to disturbances in the provinces (which were embarrassing for the regime), and not enough to drumming up support for the Hetmanate. Dontsov answered that he was between "a hammer and an anvil" at the press bureau—on the one hand was the "Jewish-Russian press," on the other were the Germans, who, he thought, were angry at the shortage of pro-German advertisements broadcasted by the UTA.¹⁴⁹ He nevertheless took great pride in his ability to communicate effectively in German, which he thought distinguished him from "amateurs," such as Doroshenko and Zhuk.¹⁵⁰ With the "Great Ukrainian Jacquerie" raging in the provinces, Dontsov felt alone in his emphasis on the peasantry living outside the capital and the need for a new party

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. June 4.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 17-18. June 8.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 19. June 10.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 21.

to represent and mobilize them, while his collaborators, such as Mikhnovs'kyi, regarded Kyiv as the site of the most important political work to be done.¹⁵¹

Dontsov weighed in on other debates, such as the future of the Crimean peninsula, which the grand strategists of the German Empire coveted and which Russian nationalists considered their sacred patrimony. Much to the annoyance of interested Germans and Russians, Dontsov gave speeches and published articles calling Crimea an “integral part of Ukraine” that, given its enormous strategic importance, should be granted neither autonomy nor democracy.¹⁵² The ideal Ukrainian nation-state would take the form of a strong, centralized, authoritarian government expanding from the Kuban region (north of the Caucasus), to Kholm (Polish: Chełm) and East Galicia. (The former ultimately went to interwar Soviet Russia, while the Second Polish Republic acquired the latter two provinces.) Dontsov was steadfast in his opposition to democratic federalism, which many powerful figures within the Hetmanate continued to advocate, preferring a military dictatorship.

Another pressing and related matter was the need for a large Ukrainian army loyal to the Hetman and ready to halt the threats posed by the Whites, who enjoyed the support of the Entente powers, and the Reds, who were already making gains in the unfolding Russian Civil War. Dontsov may have resented Skoropads'kyi's other advisors, who called for “peaceful negotiations with the Bolsheviks,”¹⁵³ but he participated in the temporarily successful peace talks with the Petrograd Soviet between May 23 and October 7.¹⁵⁴ The German Army's refusal to

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 19-20. June 11.

¹⁵² Ibid., 17. June 7.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 12. May 31.

¹⁵⁴ Dontsov refused to head the commission himself but distrusted Oleksandr Shul'hyn (a leading federalist in the former Central Rada whom the Hetman appointed instead), writing: “You have reason [to think that it is] unpleasant

permit, let alone support, the creation of an independent military for the Ukrainian State forced Dontsov and his allies, above all Colonel Ievhen Konovalets'—leader of the Sich Riflemen disarmed by their erstwhile German and Austrian sponsors for refusing to back the hetman's coup—to plan for the imminent siege of Kyiv in secret.¹⁵⁵ Meanwhile, the domestic and international position of the Hetmanate continued to deteriorate: the Germans were losing on the Western Front, the Entente was not interested in Ukrainian independence, and internal opposition to Skoropads'kyi was gaining steam. The followers of Symon Petliura (who had risen to the rank of Chief Otaman of the UNR's Army and led the defense of Kyiv from the Red Guard only to be jailed under Skoropads'kyi) organized themselves into a variety of regular and irregular armed units to struggle against the hetman, the Germans, and the Bolsheviks, and restore the UNR to power. Further complicating the situation was the anarchist leader Nestor Makhno and his Revolutionary Insurrectionary Army, which fiercely battled the Whites, Reds, Germans, and Ukrainian nationalists alike, and soon carved out the so-called Free Territory, an experiment in stateless libertarian communism, in southeastern Ukraine (Dontsov's home region). Dontsov especially feared the latter movement, *Makhnovshchyna*, regarding the black flag of anarchism as a harbinger of chaos and ruin, and the antithesis of his own worldview.

Trepidations of disorder and collapse were well founded among supporters of the Hetmanate during the summer of 1918. On July 30 the Russian Socialist-Revolutionary Boris Donskoi assassinated Field Marshal Eichhorn, commander of the German occupation of Ukraine. Demands for repression, high-profile arrests, gunfights and explosions in the streets, and general confusion followed. Dontsov watched the bedlam from his balcony in downtown Kyiv, blaming

for me to remain among shady politicians. For this reason I did not accept the position of leader of the 'entire mission' offered to me." Dmytro Dontsov to Mykhailo Tyshkevych, TsDIAL, f. 681, op. 1, spr. 16, ark. 69.

¹⁵⁵ Dontsov, *Rik 1918, Kyiv*, 36. July 12.

the Entente, the Reds, the Whites, and the Poles, working together or independently, for the outburst of sabotage and unrest.¹⁵⁶ Simultaneously, Lypyns'kyi reported that Vienna, despite rumors of backing the young Archduke Wilhelm's ascension to the "throne" in Kyiv, had entirely withdrawn its support for Ukrainian nation-building—especially with regard to Kholm and East Galicia—leaving the Hetmanate with only the German Empire on which to rely.¹⁵⁷ But the position of Ukrainian independence faced new challenges in Berlin too, and from the most embarrassing sources. On August 22, Fedir Lyzohub, prime minister of the Ukrainian State, gave an interview to the liberal newspaper *Berliner Tageblatt* in which he discussed a future Ukrainian-Russian federation as a desirable possibility, invoking the 1654 Treaty of Pereiaslav. The interview outraged Dontsov. Declaring it a "*causus belli*," he demanded Lyzohub's dismissal or a public retraction, to no avail.¹⁵⁸ According to Dontsov, the German military command and the hetman's court adopted an increasingly Russophile, federalist outlook from September, while Ukraine's hedonistic would-be statesmen, seemingly incapable of serious work even in the face of ruin, danced and drank.¹⁵⁹

By early October the defeat of the Central Powers appeared inevitable, as peace negotiations—and preparations for new wars—to determine Eastern Europe's future got underway. The German Reich accepted Wilson's *Fourteen Points* but, hoping to retain its gains on the Eastern Front, promised to withdraw its troops only on the condition that the status quo post-Brest-Litovsk be maintained there. This included preservation of Ukraine's independence from Russia and, problematically, the reign of Skoropads'kyi, who lurched toward the Russian

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 51. August 5.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 53-54. August 13.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 58-59. August 22.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 60-70. August 26, September 4 and 25.

right despite renewed pressure to Ukrainize his cabinet and implement agrarian reforms.¹⁶⁰ As rumors of an impending withdrawal of the demoralized German and Austrian troops stationed in Ukraine spread, the White movement (represented in Kyiv by Pavel Miliukov) grew bolder, organizing large demonstrations in Kyiv, amassing volunteers, and attacking Ukrainian nationalist groups in the provinces. In response, Dontsov claims to have added his voice to German demands for immediate land reforms and a recomposition of the hetman's cabinet. He urged representatives of five Ukrainian newspapers to launch a campaign against the Russian organization of landowners.¹⁶¹ An emergency quorum of the UDKhP's leadership, including Mikhnovs'kyi and Dontsov, resolved to lobby the hetman and the occupation authorities for the deportation of pro-Russian agitators, the dispersal of pro-Russian forces, and the closure of pro-Russian newspapers. Skoropads'kyi was convinced, however, that the Entente desired a "single and indivisible Russia," and hence that he could not appoint Ukrainian conservatives or socialists and retain the good will of the war's imminent victors.¹⁶²

The rifts in Ukrainian politics deepened as nine of the fifteen ministers in the hetman's cabinet declared themselves in favor of union with a "new" anti-Bolshevik Russia on October 19. Fearing a Russian uprising in Kyiv, Dontsov again urged the hetman to raise a pro-Ukrainian army;¹⁶³ wishing to retain their hegemony in Ukraine, the German and Austrian authorities both opposed the creation of such an army until the last possible moment, just days before revolution toppled the Kaiserreich and the Entente claimed victory on November 11. Even then, the Hetmanate lacked the financial and political resources to raise more than an entirely insufficient

¹⁶⁰ Fedysyn, *Germany's Drive to the East*, 233-35.

¹⁶¹ Dontsov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 75-76. October 11-12.

¹⁶² Ibid., 76-79. October 15.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 79-81. October 18-20.

65,000 men.¹⁶⁴ Despite objections by the militantly anti-Bolshevik Ludendorff, German occupation forces began evacuating Ukraine, leaving the Hetmanate to face Petliura, the Whites, and the Reds alone. The Germans left only a small garrison behind in Kyiv, pledging neutrality in the ensuing conflict. Meanwhile, Austria-Hungary's collapse left the fate of East Galicia, Kholm, and Volhynia to be determined by the Ukrainian-Polish War (1918-1919). In a move of desperation, Skoropads'kyi appealed to the Entente powers for assistance, openly pivoting toward "Russophile" positions that he expected to appease them, and on November 14 proclaimed the Hetmanate's federal union with Russia.

The hetman's declaration, an ultimately ill-advised gamble on the future success of the White movement and the Entente's beneficence, outraged Ukrainian nationalists across the political spectrum, and brought an end to Dontsov's collaboration with the hetman. Dontsov resigned from the UTA and, soon thereafter, an order for his arrest appeared, forcing him into hiding as full-scale warfare engulfed the country once again.¹⁶⁵ Simultaneously, the Ukrainian National State Union declared itself in open revolt against the Hetmanate, establishing the Directorate of the UNR under the leadership of Volodymyr Vynnychenko and Symon Petliura, pending new elections. Petliura's forces took control of Left-Bank Ukraine and laid siege to Kyiv in the following weeks. Joining the antihetman putsch, Dontsov published an article in *Nova Rada* (New Council)—the daily newspaper of the pro-UNR Socialist-Federalists—warning that Skoropads'kyi and his followers "will soon raise [Russian] tricolors over Kyiv."¹⁶⁶ (Ukraine's "Russian-Jewish" revolutionaries and reactionaries continued to make a repulsive

¹⁶⁴ Fedyshyn, *Germany's Drive to the East*, 237-39.

¹⁶⁵ Dontsov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 88-89. November 18.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 90. November 25.

impression on him, just as they had over a decade prior during his imprisonment in Lukianivs'ka.)¹⁶⁷ The footnotes to Dontsov's diary cite another regime-critical article ("*Pered katastrofoiu*" [Before the Catastrophe], published in *Nova Rada* on 22 October) as proof that he had begun to oppose the hetman before his fall from power.

The final battle for the city occurred on December 14, at which point Skoropads'kyi resigned and fled the country with the last few remaining German troops.¹⁶⁸ Dontsov recounted observing a firefight between Russians in the buildings along Khreshchatyk and Ukrainians in the streets below. Pro-Ukrainian celebrations followed Petliura's triumphal entry to the capital. Although Dontsov received an order to take back the UTA and await the Directorate's instructions, he loathed the new regime, calling it "Bolshevik." Speaking to the first assembly of Ukrainian parties convened by the Directorate, he warned them: "You began this revolution under the blue-yellow Ukrainian flag, you carry it now under the red flag of socialism. You will end it under the black flag of anarchy."¹⁶⁹ Dontsov's gloomy predictions turned out to have some warrant. The Directorate quickly lost control over the Ukrainian-speaking territories that it claimed to govern. The ensuing three years of warfare between the Reds, Whites, Anarchists, and Polish and Ukrainian nationalists caused more deaths through combat, terror, pogroms, disease, and famine than the preceding four years of the Great War. "It seems the whole world is falling

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 90. December 7. On this point he quotes Bulgakov (no friend to Ukrainian nationalism): "How ungifted and disgusting the Russian Revolution is! No song, no hymn, no memorial, not even a fine joke! Everything is banal, vulgar, stolen." In this context, it is worth comparing to an aphorism in *Götzen-Dämmerung*: "Evil men have no songs." —So why do the Russians have songs?" Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, 158.

¹⁶⁸ Skoropads'kyi settled in Wannsee, Germany, where he lived until his death on April 26, 1945, in an Allied bombing raid in Bavaria. His memoirs, published in 1925, offered an extremely harsh assessment of Dontsov. Pavlo Skoropads'kyi, *Spohady. Kinets' 1917—hruden' 1918*. Kyiv: NAN Ukrainy, 1995, 129. Nevertheless, the former Hetman softened his negative views of previous collaborators, including Dontsov. The two encountered one another in Berlin during the Second World War, and Skoropads'kyi prevented the inclusion of attacks on Dontsov in the Hetmanite press. Dontsov, *Rik 1918, Kyiv*, 140.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 93. December 21.

into the abyss, and us with it,” Dontsov lamented.¹⁷⁰ He advised the Directorate to grant Petliura emergency dictatorial powers and use them for a crackdown on Ukraine’s emboldened Bolsheviks, who soon thereafter seized Kharkiv and began moving west, but the new socialist regime was not inclined to heed the advice of a “Hetmanite,” even if his friendship with Petliura meant that he retained his post at the UTA. News that White Volunteers had put a price on his head and were after him reached Dontsov, who was warned to lay low and encouraged to emigrate.¹⁷¹ In early January he resolved to do just that and, with the assistance of Konovalets’ and Petliura, departed for Paris as part of the UNR’s diplomatic mission to the peace talks at Versailles.

Conclusion: “Good Europeans” and “Great Politics”

“Our age is the age of the twilight of the idols (*prysmerku bozhkiv*) to which the nineteenth century prayed. The catastrophe of 1914 did not fly over our heads in vain: all the ‘unshakeable’ foundations and ‘eternal’ laws of social evolution crumbled into ash, opening up limitless vistas before the human will.”¹⁷² These are the opening sentences and central thesis of Dontsov’s most famous work, *Natsionalizm* (1926), the enchriridion of Ukrainian integral nationalism. In the course of one decade, Dontsov’s thirties, the First World War and its revolutionary shockwaves had transformed Europe, breeding militant rightwing nationalist writer-activists like himself by the hundreds and thousands, as well as large and receptive audiences of resentful, battle-scarred listeners. The war exposed, as he saw it, the impotence and

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 95. December 22.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 96. December 25-28.

¹⁷² Dmytro Dontsov, *Natsionalizm*, 1.

obsolescence of the old values, habits, and convictions of the Ukrainophiles and their “idols”—liberalism, pacifism, internationalism, socialism, and materialism. In their place he offered a doctrine that celebrated war and counseled all members of the nation to emulate the soldier’s unflinching execution of orders in the name of unquestioned ideals. He also reproached the older generation of Ukrainian activists in Kyiv for their ingrained deference to Russian liberals and leftists, and to the imperial Russian language, literature, and political culture in which all late nineteenth-century Eastern Ukrainian intellectuals (including himself) were raised. The fathers’ traditions and model ancestors, from Tolstoy to Drahomanov, were losing their relevance; it was time to smash their icons and find suitable replacements in foreign lands or the more distant past.

Dontsov’s postwar credo aspired to be as German as it was Spartan. Fittingly, the epigraph above the first page of *Natsionalizm* is a quotation, in German, from one of the founders of German nationalism and idealist philosophy, Johann Gottlieb Fichte: “The only thing that can help us is a complete regeneration, the beginning of an entirely new spirit.”¹⁷³ Dontsov took the words from Fichte’s 1808 work, *Addresses to the German Nation*, written on the occasion of Napoleon Bonaparte’s invasion and occupation of Central Europe. In the addresses, Fichte advocates a German nationalist reaction to the French threat that would carry on the betrayed ideals of the 1789 Revolution, delivering them to the world and heralding a new era of history in which humanity’s purpose, universal freedom, is achieved. Dontsov imitated Fichte’s cultural-exclusivist definition of the nation, which called for the denial of German citizenship to Jews; his desire to synthesize cosmopolitan and nationalist strivings, while insisting on the latter’s precedence; his authoritarianism; his penchant for mysticism; and his contempt for decadence, sensuous materialism, and the corrupting belief in determinism. Like Fichte, he

¹⁷³ “Nur eine gänzliche Umschaffung, nur das Beginnen eines ganz neuen Geistes kann uns helfen.” Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2013), 170.

placed Germany at the vanguard of history as a messianic liberator of nations. Ukraine was destined to play the supporting yet essential role of guarding the eastern steppe, Europe's natural and cultural frontier, from the encroachment of Muscovite despotism.

The First World War had proven that German and Ukrainian nationalists were natural allies in the war between *Mitteleuropa* and its eastern enemies—a war that still raged in their hearts, despite the peace treaties that proclaimed it finished and the vaunted establishment of new borders on the principle of national self-determination. But the Ukrainians were to remain the junior partner, whose “new spirit” and “total regeneration” would require the emulation of Teutonic-Prussian traditions of militarism, voluntarism, efficiency, and idealism. The alternative, as Dontsov understood it, was to be conquered by Russian communism, cast into the abyss, cut off from the true fount of human progress. Ukraine faced annihilation at the hands of the nascent Soviet state, but so too did the rest of the continent. A crusade uniting Europe's anti-Bolshevik forces was needed to save the community of free nations. Dontsov began thinking in terms similar to those of another German role model—Imperial Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's “Great Politics”—the grand, realist strategy of rallying the nations of Europe around the purportedly German core of European power and civilization. Joining a cause and a tradition such as this, Ukrainians might finally (or once again) become “good Europeans,” to borrow a concept from another one of Dontsov's German heroes from the same era—Friedrich Nietzsche.¹⁷⁴ As “good Europeans,” Ukrainians would be fervent patriots of their own homeland, to be sure, but outward-looking ones with a sense of their still-greater responsibility and birthright to imbibe and defend the ancient culture of Europe from the timeless barbarism of

¹⁷⁴ On the connections between Bismarck's late-nineteenth-century continental (i.e. anti-British and anti-Russian) vision for Germany's foreign policy on the one hand and Nietzsche's political philosophy on the other—both of which greatly influenced Dontsov—see Hugo Drochon, *Nietzsche's Great Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

Muscovy; in a word, cosmopolitan ultranationalists. Dontsov claimed to loathe cosmopolitanism, but for political exiles like himself a cosmopolitan outlook was necessary in order to take advantage of the opportunities for rejuvenation and reinvention that the war had presented.

One way of thinking about Dontsov's wartime search for German exemplars and examples of German-Ukrainian cooperation in the historical record is "retrospective ancestral constitution," which historian Hayden White describes as a potentially revolutionary process driven by a rebellious generation against the sociocultural system into which they were born.¹⁷⁵ White gives the example of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, whose chosen (ideal) ancestors were Marx and the European socialists rather than the Russian forebears whom their fathers expected them to honor. Similarly, Fichte, Bismarck, and Nietzsche were not Dontsov's *real* ancestors but they were his *ideal* ancestors, and he chose them in the hope of giving the Ukrainian national movement an entirely new lineage and a revolutionary path forward—out of the Russian Empire, Bolshevik or Romanov, and back into Europe. Dontsov's quest for worthy Ukrainian forebears led him to Hetman Ivan Mazepa, who was acceptable for this purpose because of his distance in time and his status as the traitor *par excellence* in the imperial Russian narrative. But the rest of Ukraine's more recent inheritance was tainted with "saccharine Little Russian sentiment." If he could convince a critical mass of Ukrainians to embrace this alternative ancestry of German geniuses and Zaporizhian warriors, then he would have effected a national revolution.

Pushing the ideologue along a geographically and intellectually circuitous (some would say opportunistic) route, World War I inspired central components of Dontsov's doctrine of Ukrainian integral nationalism, shaping a generation of veterans, activists, and students inclined to embrace his militaristic ideology in the tens of thousands. The war confirmed Dontsov's

¹⁷⁵ Hayden White, *The Fiction of Narrative: Essays on History, Literature, and Theory, 1957-2007* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2010), 133.

prewar skepticism about the morality and efficacy of international law, and the concept of a “right to national self-determination,” but not before driving him to place his highest hopes for Ukrainian independence, not in the force of arms, but in the force of arguments and peace treaties buttressed by well documented historical precedents and Wilsonian rhetoric. It convinced him that nations are doomed to battle one another in a zero-sum struggle for survival, but also that alliances were crucial to any future Ukrainian state- and nation-building. The Great War strengthened Dontsov’s affinity and admiration for the German world, but undermined his previous conviction that it would (or could) become the guardian of an independent Ukraine. Dontsov entered the 1920s with an all-consuming hatred for the Muscovites, but he could not conceal his awe and esteem for the Bolsheviks’ meteoric rise to power, their resolve, ferocity, discipline, and organization, which allegedly assured their victory over the squabbling, bumbling, out-of-touch aesthetes and leftists of the Ukrainophile camp. The maturing ideologue also honed his skills as a journalist and propagandist during the war, ultimately arriving at his signature style of emotive demagoguery—and the corollary belief that single-minded zealotry and passion drive human action and history more than facts and reason—but only after years of taking a much more subtle and academic approach to winning over an international readership to the Ukrainian cause. It would thus be simplistic to interpret Dontsov’s postwar integral nationalist worldview as a direct and inevitable result of the world conflict. His opinions, methods, and loyalties were open to revision throughout 1914-1918, and remained malleable thereafter, but the Great War and the failed Ukrainian Revolution to which it gave rise became Dontsov’s touchstone experience.

CHAPTER 3: “TO THE OLD GODS!” REACTIONARY MODERNISM AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF UKRAINIAN INTEGRAL NATIONALISM, 1919-1925

In the years following the Versailles settlement, Russian (Soviet) and European politics, culture, and mentalities retained the imprint of total war and the passions that drove it. This was especially the case in Eastern Europe, where the Great War’s denouement brought neither an end to the hostilities, nor the resolution of disputed borders, nor the triumph of Wilsonian national self-determination and liberalism, but a calamitous “continuum of crisis” lasting well into the 1920s, and arguably until World War II.¹ The “Russian Civil War”—more accurately thought of as a multitude of distinct conflicts among many nationalities—saw the continuation of the methods, havoc, and enmities of World War I, condensed onto the territory of the former Russian Empire at an even greater immediate and long-term cost to the people who lived there. Reds, Whites, Blacks (Anarchists), Allied expeditionary forces, Ukrainians, Poles, and other non-Russian nationalities fought against and alongside one another in a bewildering array of combinations. Although fighting continued, particularly in Central Asia, until at least 1926,² the conventional narrative marks the end of the Russian Civil War at the Treaty of Riga (March 18, 1921), which established the border between the nascent Soviet Union and the Second Polish

¹ Numerous recent works have stressed the continuities between World War I and the events and trends of the years that followed it, including the Russian Civil War, the rise of Fascism and Stalinism, breakneck modernization projects, and heady modernism in philosophy, literature, and the arts. See, for example, Modris Eksteins, *The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2012); Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia’s Continuum of Crisis, 1914-1921* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); and Jonathan D. Smele, *The “Russian” Civil Wars, 1916-1926* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

² Smele, *“Russian” Civil Wars*, chap. 6.

Republic, dividing the Ukrainian lands into a Soviet east and a Warsaw-dominated west (East Galicia and Volhynia)—a state of affairs that lasted until the summer of 1939, when, as the “winners” of the Russian Civil War, the Poles and the Bolsheviks gained states of their own and turned to the task of consolidating their rule over the “losers,” especially the Ukrainians, who failed to maintain their grip on statehood and either reconciled themselves to working with the new order or chose the path of struggle, vengeance, and revision. Confronted with the failure of their national revolution, Ukrainian nationalists who chose the latter course faced the “accursed questions”—who is to blame and what is to be done?

Dontsov’s answers to these questions proved as influential as anyone’s in interwar Ukrainian politics and culture. He pinned the blame for defeat on the Ukrainophile socialists and the Hetmanite conservatives, who were out of synch with the times and the imperatives of a Ukrainian national politics. Both had failed to learn the lessons of World War I, which swept away old values and ideas. Only those who accepted this radical break with the past and boldly pressed forward, heedless of the weak and outmoded, would inherit power and shape the future. Yet, in order to be reborn, Ukrainians would need to invoke the strength and traditions of their ancient “gods” and ancestors. Dontsov admired the Bolsheviks, despite loathing them, and the Italian Fascists, holding them up as examples to be emulated by a new breed of ruthless, iconoclastic, fanatical, and authoritarian Ukrainian nationalism. He advocated an anti-Bolshevik alliance with Poland, which was a “European” nation unlike [Soviet] Russia, but participated in the formation of a militarized Ukrainian nationalist underground, which initiated a violent struggle against Warsaw’s rule in East Galicia and Volhynia. The recruits for the Ukrainian underground were drawn from the veterans of the wars and revolutions whose outcome—the reversal of Ukrainian independence—they refused to accept. Dontsov spearheaded the creation of a press and a community of writers to represent this underground, setting an avant-garde

aesthetic agenda, inspired by expressionism and futurism. His central goal was to produce the palingenetic national mythology he thought would be needed to transform Ukrainian politics and culture into a force to be reckoned with in the brave new world of interwar Europe.

The tension between tradition and innovation in Dontsov's thought placed him in the same camp as a new breed of leaders, artists, and ideologues appearing throughout interwar Europe who combined a modernist ("progressive") aesthetics with a palingenetic and particularistic ("reactionary") politics. Effacing the traditional distinctions between right and left, progress and reaction,³ they embodied what historian Jeffrey Herf has dubbed "reactionary modernism"—the paradoxical combination of a mystical fetishization of high technology, formal experimentation in the arts, and cutting-edge philosophy with radically backward-looking politics and the repudiation of modernity as decadence.⁴ Rejecting the concept of a universal, teleological model of modernity, Herf argues: "There is no such thing as modernity in general. There are only national societies, each of which becomes modern in its own fashion."⁵ The subjects of his study, the artists, ideologues, and engineers of the Right in Weimar and Nazi Germany, were products of their nation's *Sonderweg*, which is to say its "paradoxical and truncated" incorporation of the Enlightenment. Thus, Herf challenges the Frankfurt School's analysis of Nazism and the Holocaust as a consummation, rather than a negation, of the Enlightenment, with its "means-ends rationality of bureaucratic terror," the nexus of myth,

³ See Zeev Sternhell, *Neither Right nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France*, trans. David Maisei (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁴ Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 1.

⁵ There is a paradox here, in that Herf discards the teleological concept of modernity, yet keeps it by using the word "modern." But if one follows Andrew Hewitt in reinterpreting Herf's assertion to mean that a nation's discovery of "its own fashion" and "becoming modern" are one and the same process, then it becomes a "question of identity being constructed in the process of modernization as something originary." Andrew Hewitt, *Fascist Modernism: Aesthetics, Politics and the Avant-Garde* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 44.

reason, and domination over nature that it implies, and, consequently, its enormous potential for destruction through war and genocide.⁶ Rather than blaming fascism on a surfeit of inhumane rationalism, Herf concurs with the Marxist philosopher György Lukács, who pinned the blame on the irrationalist, subjectivist rebellion of art and literature *against* the Enlightenment, from Romanticism to Symbolism: “If the mendacious and demagogic slogans of fascism about ‘blood and soil’ were able to find so rapid a reception among the petty bourgeoisie, then the philosophy and literature of the decadent period, which awakened these instincts in its readers . . . is in large measure responsible, for it helped in fact to cultivate those feelings.”⁷ Relatedly, German Expressionism, despite the predominantly left-wing politics of its founders, produced some prominent converts to Nazism, such as the Hanns Johst (1890-1978) (poet laureate of the Third Reich and an SS officer during World War II) and Gottfried Benn (1886-1956), who hoped that Hitler’s regime would bring an end to the degeneracy of the Weimar Republic and exalt their aesthetics into the official art form of a rejuvenated Germany.⁸ Lukács attributed Benn’s and Johst’s scandalous enthusiasm for Nazism to the Expressionists’ Nietzschean, irrationalist, and vitalist declaration of independence from the tyranny of social and economic forces. Imagining themselves as autonomous subjects liberated from historical necessity, they favored a romantic

⁶ Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 168-208.

⁷ György Lukács, “Marx and the Problem of Ideological Decay” (1938), *The Destruction of Reason* (London: Merlin, 1980), 131. In Symbolism, the height of decadence, “the experience of fragmentation spills over into an epiphanic, but nevertheless ideological, assertion of the unity of the subject,” while “the social connection between over-refinement of vacuous individuality and this unleashed bestiality might strike readers as paradoxical, caught as they are in the prejudices of our time. But they can be readily shown in the whole intellectual and literary production of the decadent period.”

⁸ This enthusiasm for Nazism was short-lived in Benn’s case, however. He turned against the regime after the Night of the Long Knives (1934) but joined the Wehrmacht in 1935 (his way of protesting through the “aristocratic form of exile”). The Nazi press began denouncing Benn’s experimental poetry as “degenerate,” “homosexual,” “Jewish,” and so on.

(hence ineffectual) anticapitalism instead of classical Marxism.⁹ The Expressionists' petit-bourgeois refusal to accept the primacy of economic, social, or biological determinants (the whole edifice of nineteenth-century positivism) led to a mystification of the real source of their cultural despair—capitalism—which, Lukács maintained, could be overcome only through communism, not via some heroic “transvaluation of values” at the level of individual subjectivity. This basic error allegedly directed the Expressionists down the path to the specious salvation of culture offered by fascism, a “utopian barbarism.” We will recall that Dontsov spent some of his formative years in the decadent Symbolist milieu of fin-de-siècle St. Petersburg (the Silver Age of Russian Poetry), imbibing the scene's “irrationalist” and antimodern yet subversively experimental literature and existentialist religious philosophies, bound up into a vision of apocalyptic redemption at the end of history.¹⁰

But I would like to get beyond the (hyper)rationality/irrationality, pro-/anti-Enlightenment debate. Both qualities are discernible in figures such as Dontsov, who counseled brutal irrationalism in the defense of “European” reason (Latin *ratio* as opposed to Russian *logos*), while offering rational arguments for the primacy of the irrational (will, instinct, and intuition) and warning of the dangers of reason for human vitality and creativity. As French philosopher Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe suggests, “it would be better to learn to stop considering fascism a ‘pathological’ phenomenon (from what extra-social position, asks Freud, might one make such a diagnosis?) and recognize in it not only (at least) one of the age's political forms—and one no more aberrant or inadequate than any other—but the political form that is perhaps

⁹ György Lukács, “Expressionism: Its Significance and Decline,” *Essays on Religion* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1980). Originally published in *Internationale Literatur* 1 (1934): 157-73.

¹⁰ Consider, for example, Dmitrii Merezhkovskii's “Third Testament,” an obscure twelfth-century doctrine that he reimagined as a modern Church of the Holy Ghost (transcending the Father and the Son), replete with sex rituals that scandalized St. Petersburg society.

best able to bring us enlightenment regarding the essence of modern politics.”¹¹ Myth and representation—the purview of art—are at the heart of this “essence.”

Thus, instead of treating Dontsov’s cultural and political doctrine as yet another symptom of a hidden malady of modernity, let us analyze it with the tools of a different paradigm: aestheticization. According to Walter Benjamin’s seminal formulation, “fascism is the introduction of aesthetics into politics.” Through fascism, the avant-garde aestheticist principle of “art for art’s sake” (*l’art pour l’art*) became the principle of “war for war’s sake.” Fascists reimagined war, along with all experiential acts of violence and destruction, as something profoundly “creative” and “beautiful.”¹² To illustrate this point, Benjamin cites the poet Filippo Tommasi Marinetti (1876-1944), one of the founders of Italian Futurism to enthusiastically embrace Fascism.¹³ Fascism offers the materially discontent working masses of modern society a “chance to express themselves” (in the forms of a unifying, mobilizing spectacle of mass rallies, propaganda films, monumental architecture, and the state- or party-sanctioned words and acts of violence directed at enemy others), instead of the more just arrangement of property relations toward which they strive. The accumulated energy and rage of the masses, along with the technological might of industrial production alienated from them, seeks a constructive outlet in

¹¹ Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art, and Politics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 107. Quoted in Hewitt, *Fascist Modernism*, 191.

¹² Walter Benjamin, “Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 241-42.

¹³ “For twenty seven years we Futurists have rebelled against the branding of war as antiaesthetic. . . . Accordingly we state: . . . War is beautiful because it establishes man’s dominion over the subjugated machinery by means of gas masks, terrifying megaphones, flame throwers, and small tanks. . . . War is beautiful because it combines the gunfire, the cannonades, the cease-fire, the scents, and the stench of putrefaction into a symphony. War is beautiful because it creates new architecture, like that of the big tanks, the geometrical formation flights, the smoke spirals from burning villages, and many others. . . . Poets and artists of Futurism! . . . Remember these principles of the aesthetics of war so that your struggle for a new literature and a new graphic art . . . may be illumined by them!” Quoted in Benjamin, “Art in the Age,” 241-42. Analogous observations on the relation between avant-garde poetry and fascist ideas can be the case of the German Expressionist Hanns Johst: “I shoot with live ammunition! When I hear the word culture . . . I release the safety on my Browning!” Hanns Johst, *Hanns Johst’s Nazi Drama Schlageter*, trans. Ford B. Parkes-Perret (Stuttgart: Akademischer Verlag Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1984), Act 1, Scene 1.

vain and must be redirected (away from the necessary, genuinely socialist revolution) into “imperialistic war,” which Benjamin pithily defines as a “slave revolt of technology.”¹⁴ “All efforts to render politics aesthetic culminate in one thing: war. War and war only can set a goal for mass movements on the largest scale while respecting the traditional property system.”¹⁵

Dontsov’s metaphysics of war as a vital and sacred expression of the nation—a force of nature as beautiful as any other instance of life on earth and an imperative of modern political organization—reflected this tendency. So too did his socioeconomic views, which projected the establishment of the petite bourgeoisie as the hegemonic class, despite its material impoverishment and decline under modern conditions. He dismissed the grievances of the “Russian-Jewish” proletariat in Ukraine’s cities and condemned its desire to rule the whole country as an “alien minority.” As of the early 1920s, Dontsov advocated the preservation or restoration of property of the country’s peasant and petit-bourgeois majority as the basis for a new order, established through myth-motorized willpower, which would nullify the false “laws of social development.” Given the fact that Ukraine’s anachronistic peasants, artisans, and aristocrats faced the real prospect (unlike their counterparts in Western Europe) of being “eliminated as a class” by the Soviet state, the theoretical problems of economic determinism and historical materialism took on a greater urgency and concreteness for anti-Bolshevik Ukrainian nationalists. Dontsov’s antieconomism—a rejection of Marxist and liberal theories explaining history, society, ethics, and culture in terms of economic forces and interests—which he shared in common with most fascists, can be analyzed despite itself in socioeconomic terms

¹⁴ “Without approaching the surface of the significance of the economic causes of war, one may say that the harshest, most disastrous aspects of imperialist war are in part the result of the gaping discrepancy between the gigantic power of technology and the minuscule moral illumination it affords.” Walter Benjamin, “Theories of German Fascism: On the Collection of Essays *War and Warrior*, edited by Ernst Jünger,” *New German Critique* 17 (Spring, 1979): 120-28.

¹⁵ Benjamin, “Art in the Age,” 241.

as a product of his own class *ressentiment* as a *déclassé* petit bourgeois.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the hegemony that this class managed to achieve through fascism, despite its economic enfeeblement, constituted an objective refutation of the sociohistorical laws that had created it, a denial of the existence of class *tout court*, and thus a watershed in the nature of modern politics and society. This was not simply a “flight from reality” that elided sociopolitical strife through a false reconciliation in the realm of “representation.”¹⁷ Rather, it was a “flight of reality itself” through which the “real” became ideological.¹⁸ Or so Dontsov hoped vis-à-vis his ideology and Ukrainian reality. (As it turned out, Western Ukraine later endured revolutions “from above” that instead came from abroad, taking the forms of Stalinism and Nazism, which denied Ukrainian integral nationalists a chance to see their own ideology reified and hegemonic.)¹⁹

In addition to Italian Fascism and Bolshevism, Dontsov drew inspiration from one of the prime examples of reactionary modernism, to which writers have compared his ideology and literary circle:²⁰ the Conservative Revolutionary movement. Emerging in the Weimar Republic

¹⁶ Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, trans. Victory R. Carfagno (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970), 44.

¹⁷ “The fascist public sphere should be understood as a ‘beautiful illusion,’ which is, however, different from the ‘beautiful illusion’ of art which served as a means for private psychic flight from reality. The fascist illusion is the factual result of a flight from reality by the petty bourgeois masses, who are socioeconomically and siocio-psychologically most disposed to such flight. German fascism can therefore be understood as a false, perverted, merely formal fulfillment of the ideals and intentions of classical aesthetics for which bourgeois society had no use, i.e. as a pseudo-socialist changeling.” Rainer Stollmann, “Fascist Politics as a Total Work of Art: Tendencies of the Aestheticization of Political Life in National Socialism,” trans. Ronald L. Smith, *New German Critique* 14 (Spring 1978): 41-60, 59.

¹⁸ Hewitt, *Fascist Modernism*, 172. Perhaps the most famous statement of this idea is Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (London: Rebel Press, 2000).

¹⁹ See Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland’s Western Ukraine and Belorussia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), chaps. 3-4; and Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), chap. 5.

²⁰ Ihor Zahrebel’nyi, *Natsionalizm versus modern: zhyttia i tvorchist’ Dmytra Dontsova v optytsi konservatyvnoi revoliutsii* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo Serhii Pantiuka, 2004). Zahrebel’nyi’s study of Dontsov’s life and works is not strictly academic, but also prescriptive with regard to present-day Ukrainian nationalists. Also see, Mykhailo Chuhuienko, “Idei konservatyvnoi revoliutsii v ukrains’kii suspil’no-politychnii dumtsi: D. Dontsov i M. Khvyi’ovyi,” in *Dopovidi ta povidomlennia 3-ho mizhnar. Konhresu ukrainsiv “Politolohiia, etnolohiia,*

shortly after World War I, its leading representatives, including Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (1876-1925), Ernst Jünger (1895-1998), Oswald Spengler (1880-1936), and Carl Schmitt (1888-1985), combined militarism, nationalism, voluntarism, irrationalism, and a “third-way” rejection of both capitalism and Communism, with an unrestrained enthusiasm for technology, even (or especially) in its most terrifying, inhumane aspects, as well as avant-garde modes of literary expression and philosophical inquiry.²¹ The Conservative Revolutionaries inspired central elements of Martin Heidegger’s philosophy, and arguably laid the intellectual foundations for the subsequent rise of Nazism. Diagnosing Germany’s humiliating defeat in the First World War and the revolutionary crises it engendered as symptoms of an excessively rational civilization, unmoored and in decline, these writers turned to a vision of national renewal that sprang directly from their reportedly transcendental experiences of modern warfare, yet took their models for the future from a romantic mythology of the nation’s imagined racial, historical, and cultic origins. They latched on to a mystical apotheosis of war for its own sake, holy and eternal, abstract and metaphysical, purifying and ennobling—the deepest, most primeval expression of the nation’s essence and (hence) of nature itself. Nevertheless, as Peter Osborne clarifies, Conservative Revolution was unmistakably “modernist” in the sense that it was geared, above all, toward a total break with the past and an altogether unprecedented *future*.²² “In this respect, it is the term ‘conservative’ which is the misnomer, rather than ‘revolution.’ Conservative revolution was a

sotsiologii,” (Kharkiv: Oho, 1996), 305-10. Chuhuienko rejects Sosnovs’kyi’s methodology, which sees too many commonalities between Dontsov and fascism (an attempt, he argues, that reflected the OUN’s move to distance itself from Dontsov’s “totalitarian” heritage in the 1970s). Chuhuienko challenges the idea that “active nationalism” was “totalitarian” at all, instead treating Dontsov as the leader of a Ukrainian variant of “Conservative Revolution.” Dontsov synthesized conservative and revolutionary ideas into an antidemocratic, yet antitotalitarian worldview that upheld traditionalism, clerical autonomy, rigid social hierarchies, territorial patriotism, and private property.

²¹ On the Conservative Revolutionary movement, see George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology; Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964); Herf, *Reactionary Modernism*, chap. 2.

²² Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and Avant-Garde* (New York: Verso, 1995), 164.

form of revolutionary *reaction*. It understands that what it would ‘conserve’ is already lost (if indeed it ever existed, which is doubtful), and hence must be created anew.”²³ Whether they affirmed or bemoaned technology in the narrow sense of the word, reactionary modernist projects of this sort were actually quite novel, made possible only by the paradoxical conditions of modernity. “What Herf calls reactionary modernism is not a hybrid form (modernism + reaction),” Osborne continues. “Rather, it draws our attention to the modernistic temporality of reaction *per se*, once the destruction of traditional forms of social authority has gone beyond a certain point.”²⁴ Russia and Europe passed this threshold around the First World War, opening the floodgates for revolutionary ideologies across the spectrum.²⁵

Dontsov’s nationalism at this stage was the mirror image of yet another group of reactionary modernists: Russian Eurasianism, a school of thought founded by White émigrés under the same circumstances of defeat and exile from the former Russian Empire between 1917 and the early 1920s.²⁶ The two doctrines, Eurasianism and Ukrainian integral nationalism, agreed that Asiatic Russia and Occidental Europe formed an oppositional dyad with fundamentally

²³ Ibid. Also see Roger Griffin’s work on fascism as a form of political modernism, which, even in its reactionary aspect, had “a mission to change society, to inaugurate a new epoch, to start time anew.” Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism: The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 2.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ “Both politically and aesthetically, ‘progress’ and ‘reaction’ can no longer be fully disengaged historical concepts. The stage is set for Fascist Modernism.” Hewitt, *Fascist Modernism*, 47. Artistic and literary movements combining modernist forms with reactionary agendas also appeared in France (around Georges Sorel and the Proudhon Cercle), the UK, and the US. See Mark Antliff, *Avant-Garde Fascism: The Mobilization of Myth, Art, and Culture, 1909-1939* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); and Charles Ferrall, *Modernist Writing and Reactionary Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

²⁶ The founding figures of Eurasianism were the renowned linguist Prince Nikolai Trubetskoi (1890-1938), the publisher Petr Suvchinskii (1892-1985), Petr Savitskii (1895-1968) (a young protege of Petr Struve), historians and theologian of the Russian Orthodox Church Georgii Florovskii (1893-1979), and the poet-turned-priest Prince Andrei Lieven (1872-1937). Savchinskii and Suvchinskii, it is worth noting, identified as “Little Russian” and cherished what we would today call Ukrainian culture but embraced a Russian imperialist politics. Mark Bassin, Sergey Glebov, and Marlene Laruelle, “Introduction: What Was Eurasianism and who Made it?” in Mark Bassin, Sergey Glebov, and Marlene Laruelle, eds., *Between Europe and Asia: The Origins, Theories, and Legacies of Russian Eurasianism* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015), 3.

different spiritual values and geopolitical interests, but they took antithetical views concerning which civilization was superior and thus entitled to a sphere of influence in Ukraine (“Little Russia,” to the Eurasianists). They also shared a deeply pessimistic, Spenglerian view of (Western) modernity as a manifestation of decadence and bourgeois philistinism, favoring some vision of antidemocratic “conservative revolution,” and seeking to revive equally archaic yet generally opposing traditions in order to bring about a spiritual rebirth. While Eurasianism could imagine a messianic transfiguration of the Soviet Union that would herald the liberation of the colonial world and even the rejuvenation of Europe, Dontsov and his followers saw only a “Mongolic” monstrosity, as imperialistic and brutal as its predecessors, that needed to be slain for the sake of all nations and individuals. Like the Eurasianists, Dontsov turned to Christianity (first Catholicism then Orthodoxy), as one of the moral, institutional, and cultural pillars of a new order in the country that he had abandoned to the Bolsheviks. In doing so, both drew from the antimodern religious and political philosophies of the fin-de-siècle Russian writers Nikolai Berdiaev (1874-1948), Sergei Bulgakov (1871-1944), and Petr Struve (1870-1944)—whom the Eurasianists nevertheless blamed for ignoring the Russian folk in much the same way that Dontsov blamed the Ukrainophiles for failing to inspire the Ukrainian peasantry. Dontsov read these authors “against the grain” as symptomatic of Russia’s primitivism and innate hostility toward the West, but their core ideas—anti-Enlightenment, authoritarian, elitist yet fascinated by the untapped elemental power of the masses, mystical and traditionalist—were nearly identical. The Eurasianists proudly regarded the vast empire of Chingis Khan and his lineage, not Kyivan-Rus’, as the true antecedent of imperial Russia; Dontsov happily agreed, claiming Kyivan-Rus’ for Ukraine (and Europe), yet represented Russia’s Mongol kernel as the source of a great plague loosed upon the world. Finally, both called upon their audiences to reorient themselves in two ways: one spatial—of Eurasia away from Europe and of Ukraine away from Eurasia,

respectively—and one temporal—against the notion of universal, deterministic, mechanistic “progress” and for a freely willed traditionalism/alternative modernity.²⁷

The same processes of antimodern modernization unfolded in the (Western) Ukrainian (or southeastern Polish) context through the efforts of Dontsov and his coterie as in the Italian, French, German, Polish, and Russian émigré contexts, but this was not a case of west-to-east diffusion. The appearance of Ukrainian integral nationalism in the early 1920s coincided with that of Italian Fascism, Eurasianism, and Conservative Revolution, and drew inspiration from them, but it followed (or, more accurately, discovered) “its own fashion.” Responding to the same experiences of total war and socialist revolution, Dontsov sought to aestheticize Ukrainian politics with a reactionary modernism designed according to his own tastes.

The Versailles Settlement and the Realignment of Ukrainian Nationalism

Between 1919 and 1921, Dontsov returned to a life of exile and international diplomacy, but achieved little. The representatives of the Entente proved to be far less interested in the Ukrainian question than the Central Powers had been. Britain, France, and the US favored the territorial claims of Poland and the White movement under General Anton Denikin, leaving no space for a Ukrainian nation-state between them. Dontsov placed little faith in Wilson’s rhetoric about national self-determination, calling the US president’s *Fourteen Points* a “wordy pronouncement with no content.”²⁸ Officially, Dontsov served in the Ukrainians’ quixotic delegation to Paris for just ten days (January 18-28, 1919), before being cut to meet the maximal number of members.²⁹ Instead, he spent mid-January to mid-February in Vienna, where he met

²⁷ Ibid., chaps. 3-5.

²⁸ Dontsov, “Peterburs’kyi perevorot,” 535.

²⁹ It is not clear why he was cut or how he reacted. Dontsov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 132.

with Lypyns'kyi and an officer of the Sich Riflemen, Colonel Ievhen Konovalts' (1891-1938)—a leading Ukrainian nationalist and close collaborator of Dontsov's during the 1920s—to draw up an anti-Bolshevik military and political strategy. They dreamed of remobilizing the thousands of Ukrainian POWs who had been deployed to Italy in the Austro-Hungarian Army for a two-pronged assault from Galicia and Odesa to drive out Ukraine's socialists, Bolshevik or otherwise, and install a military dictatorship.³⁰ The never realized such ambitions, of course, but the war-tempered mentality that inspired them endured.

Dontsov and Lypyns'kyi also worked to coordinate their propaganda efforts from the latter's base in the Ukrainian Bureau in Vienna, but increasingly disagreed on the best path forward ideologically and geopolitically. In November 1919, Lypyns'kyi tried to bring Dontsov on board with the reorganization of Ukrainian conservative monarchist forces around his new Ukrainian Union of Agrarian-Statists (USKhD), the successor to the Ukrainian Democratic Agrarian Party, which sought to consolidate émigré Hetmanite elements in a new group.³¹ Dontsov, however, kept his distance from the new formation, citing what he considered to be its pro-Russian tendencies. Lypyns'kyi struggled unsuccessfully to convince Dontsov that dialogue with Russian and Russophile elements was a necessity, however unpleasant. "Our state can be built only by state-building elements, but these elements have for so long been connected with Russia that to overthrow their political thought all at once is impossible," Lypyns'kyi reasoned: "Thus, our relations with Russia must be arranged such that our statesmen, yesterday's Russophiles, will themselves evolve in accordance with Ukrainian statehood."³² Denying rumors

³⁰ Ibid., 99-105. January 22-23.

³¹ As of its founding in Vienna in February 1920, the USKhD's membership included the deposed Hetman Pavlo Skoropads'kyi, Dmytro Doroshenko, Osyp Nazaruk (1883-1940), and Serhii Shemet (1875-1957).

³² V. Lypyns'kyi to D. Dontsov, November 12, 1919. Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi, *Lystuvannia*, vol. 1, 572-74.

that he had converted to East Slavic federalism, Lypyns'kyi promised to explain his strategy to Dontsov in an “open letter addressed to political friends and the like-minded—thus, above all to you, Pan Doctor! . . . What would you think about the *revitalization of the organization* of our party or, better put, tendency—at any rate here in the emigration abroad? To me it seems *that our time has already arrived* and we must be ready for this moment, but we are wasting it just like the Hetmanate wasted it.”



Figure 3.1: Interwar Ukraine. *Source:* Paul Robert Magocsi, *Ukraine: An Historical Atlas* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1986), map 22.

Dontsov was unswayed. For Lypyns'kyi, the greatest enemy of Ukraine was a resurgent Poland, which was certain to pursue the Polonization of any ethnic Ukrainians subject to its rule. Dontsov, by contrast, regarded Russia as Ukraine's only mortal foe and Poland as a natural partner in the resistance to Russian or Bolshevik expansion. Thus, although Lypyns'kyi

continued to think of Dontsov as an ally, the two ideologues had already begun to grow apart. Dontsov insisted on ending Ukrainian negotiations with White or Red Russia in favor of an implacable struggle for survival against both, alongside the anti-Bolshevik powers of the West, in the spirit of Ukraine's glorious past, but for the sake of a culturally dynamic future—a modernist appeal for a living European “tradition” against deadening oriental “stagnation.”

We must find this spirit of occidental civilization in ourselves, we must baptize ourselves anew with the forgotten traditions of our ancient culture, if we do not want to dissolve in the Muscovite pseudoculture, which is above all a *culture of stagnation*. *This is the task we must absolutely fulfill*. . . . Culture cannot be separated from politics. Because only a national organism powerfully infused with Western civilization has the strength to resist any political experiments from Russia. But if the organism of the nation is poisoned with a culture of the east foreign to it, then no political separation will help us in the least.³³

Lypyns'kyi responded skeptically to Dontsov's starkly anti-Russian thinking, as well as his elitist persona and politics, underscoring what he saw as the latter's self-defeating rejection of the rational, civic values that allegedly made Europe different from Russia:

In my naiveté (which you accuse me of as a ‘nonbeliever’) I think with sorrow that the matter stands poorly with our Europeanness when it can be propagated among us only by Asiatic methods. If your task is to create a sect of Russia-fighters, then perhaps you will succeed in this. But if you wanted to Europeanize even a part of our society, disseminating within it the European spirit of civic organicity and collective sense (and not with the romanticism to search for a collective paradise in life), then I think that your book [*Pidstavy nashoi polityky* —T.E.] does not offer the desired conclusions.³⁴

Lypyns'kyi's letter cautioned Dontsov against aggrandizing himself as a sage among fools in need of an authoritarian leader and a simplistic black-and-white worldview to follow blindly. “Europeanizing” Ukrainians would entail, to the contrary, giving them the knowledge, poise, strength, and will to organize and defend themselves no matter the direction, east or west, from which a threat might originate.

³³ Dmytro Dontsov, *Kultura primitivizmu*. This publication is from Dontsov's speech to the Ukrainian Club in Kyiv on June 19, 1918.

³⁴ V. Lypyns'kyi to D. Dontsov, [undated] 1921. Lypyns'kyi, *Lystuvannia*, Vol. 1, 574-78.

The question remained whether any European power would take an interest in Ukraine's plight. As it turned out, the Versailles settlement included no provisions for the recognition of Ukrainian independence. Their former sponsors, the Central Powers, were defeated and in crises of their own, but émigré Ukrainian nationalists still regarded Germany, despite its failings, as the only major European power to which they could turn in their ongoing liberation struggle. A "strictly confidential" May 1919 memorandum addressing "Germany's task in the coming era," probably written by Dontsov given its style, charged Germany with having made the mistake of abandoning its Ukrainian "agents" "in their hour of need," whereupon they "sheepishly fell at the feet of the Entente."³⁵ The end result was a diplomatic "fiasco." Those who received money from Germany (the memo singles out Mykola Zalizniak of the SVU, but says nothing about Dontsov's own activities and the League of Russia's Foreign Peoples) did so only to enrich themselves. These opportunists had failed to appreciate the "historical necessity" of the "German-Ukrainian orientation." Moving forward, Ukrainians must rely on Germany, "but ensure that it is not mixed up in either our political or economic internal conditions," "grow[ing] strong with its help and liv[ing] in friendship with it," while preserving autonomy from Berlin. To do this they should seek longterm German investment, but the development of an effective propaganda apparatus was the more important and pressing task, and one which Dontsov was uniquely well positioned and qualified to execute.

Still, even Central Europe was losing its luster for Dontsov, who grew more pessimistic and cynical day by day, losing whatever faith he had had in peaceful diplomacy, international law, and the steady march of human progress. An ideological reorientation seemed to him as necessary as a geopolitical one. The bittersweet experience of returning to Vienna after the war

³⁵ Quoted by Golczewski, who agrees that Dontsov composed the memo. Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 374.

convinced him that European civilization, too, was undergoing a potentially irreversible decline. The Austrian capital retained the charm and beauty of “an ancient and glorious dynasty” and “the brilliant traditions of a great state,” but merely on its facade. World War I may have been the direct cause for the death of these traditions, Dontsov opined, but “nihilism,” “demoralization,” and “anemia”—all manifest in the prewar Dual Monarchy’s art, literature, and music, which lacked “bright colors, great problems, the pulse of hot blood”—had begun decades earlier.³⁶ On this score he echoed the Italian Futurists, early enthusiasts for Mussolini’s Fascism, and their call for a culture of speed, violence, machismo, and machines; “humanity” be damned. “My misanthropy grows with each day,” he confided to his diary on February 2, 1919, yearning for the appearance of a new man, tough and ruthless enough to revive and defend Europe’s once-great nations in an era of total wars and totalitarianism.³⁷ Two days later, Kyiv fell to the Red Army, pushing him deeper into grief and despair at the dawn of a new era of “rule by plebeians” and the proliferation of “charlatans” without the class, sophistication, or will to achieve great things.³⁸ Dontsov was convinced that Bolshevism would bring physical ruin to Ukraine, but the problem, as he saw it, was global and existential, and as much internal as external. The nineteenth century’s cherished moral, political, and aesthetic ideals—optimistic, universal, materialist doctrines, such as liberalism, Marxism, and positivism—had brought the continent to the brink of annihilation. Modernity per se meant decadence. The cure that Dontsov and other interwar rightists offered was a “revolutionary,” paradoxical blend of nationalism, authoritarianism, militarism, modernism, and traditionalism. This entailed a continent-wide effort because the disease of modernity compromised the ability of the West as a whole to defend

³⁶ He singles out the “musical demagoguery” of Wagner and Strauss for reproach. Dontov, *Rik 1918*, Kyiv, 128-29. Dated January 20.

³⁷ Ibid., 106.

³⁸ Ibid., 107-8. February 7.

itself and emboldened its mortal enemies (Russians and Communists). Ukrainians could not fulfill such a daunting task alone, but to whom could they turn if the Entente favored “Russia” and the defeated Central Powers no longer counted (at least for the time being)?

The Ukrainian-Polish-Soviet War and the Treaty of Riga

Despite a year of bloody conflict between the Western Ukrainian People’s Republic (ZUNR) and the Second Polish Republic over possession of L’viv/Lwów and East Galicia, which the Western Ukrainians lost, the idea of a Polish-led bloc of reconstructed independent Eastern European nation-states bridging the Black and Baltic Seas struck many Ukrainian nationalists as the last remaining hope for their cause in 1919. As Dontsov had counseled for years, they proved willing to make painful concessions if it meant a chance to prevent the return of Russian imperialism, under any guise, to Ukraine. Acting in this pragmatic spirit, Petliura forged a last-ditch alliance with Piłsudski, the Treaty of Warsaw, on April 21, 1920, renouncing Ukrainian claims to Galicia and Volhynia in exchange for Polish military support in the Directorate’s bid to drive out the Bolsheviks and reclaim power. The Polish-Ukrainian force launched the Kyiv Offensive, briefly controlling the Ukrainian capital before a successful Soviet counterattack from June to August pushed Piłsudski’s army back to Warsaw. Polish fighters delivered a crushing defeat to the Bolsheviks in the Battle of Warsaw (August 12-15), and, through a series of follow-up victories, moved the frontline and eventual border between Poland and the Soviet state as far east as Minsk to the north and Kamianets’-Podil’skyi to the south. With nothing of the UNR left to defend, Petliura and his closest supporters fled to Western Europe, leaving embittered Ukrainian nationalist veterans of the conflict to debate whether he had been a fool or a traitor for placing his trust in Piłsudski and the Poles, who entered separate

peace talks (expressly forbidden in the terms of the Warsaw Treaty) with representatives of Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine.



Figures 3.2-4: Józef Piłsudski, Symon Petliura, and Colonel Ievhen Konovalts'. *Source:* Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine and www.wikipedia.org

The inclusion of non-Communist Ukrainians in the negotiations that culminated in the March 1921 Treaty of Riga, hosted by the Latvian government in its capital, remained an open question. The Soviet republics resolutely opposed the admission of Petliura's people to the talks, but the hope remained that the Entente and the new states of Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, and Latvia might be persuaded to rebuke the demand. The UNR's ambassadors throughout Europe shifted their lobbying efforts toward achieving this goal. Among them was Dontsov, who departed Vienna for Bern to once again head the Ukrainian press bureau from 1919 to 1920 on behalf of Petliura's beleaguered government-in-exile. The state of the Ukrainian diplomatic mission in Switzerland, half of whom had allegedly been replaced by obscure "Jews and Russians," appalled Dontsov,³⁹ but he remained more committed to the idea of Ukrainian independence than ever, despite the grim situation back home.

³⁹ Ibid. February 8.

His wife, Mariia Bachnys'ka-Dontsova, whose mastery of German and tireless administrative support had made Dontsov's activities in Central Europe possible during the First World War, also represented the UNR at this time, but as an ambassador to Denmark in Copenhagen.⁴⁰ Dontsova was highly active in Ukrainian civic and political life in the 1920s, taking leadership roles in the education society *Prosvita* (Enlightenment), the sporting organization *Sokil* (Falcon), the youth scouting group *Plast*, and the women's patriotic charity and teaching society *Ukrains'ka Zakhoronka* (Ukrainian Shelter).⁴¹ She published numerous articles on politics, art, the women's movement, and philanthropy in the women's press.⁴² As we will see in chapter 5, Dontsova espoused views on humanity diametrically opposed to those of her husband, serving as the leader of the feminist group *Soiuz Ukrainok* (Union of Ukrainian Women), which rejected Dontsov's nationalism, from 1926 to 1927.

The couple shared hopes that the Ukrainian peasantry, which resented Soviet power, War Communism, and the associated return of coercive food requisitions, intensified to famine-causing levels in order to supply the Red Army and Bolshevik-dominated urban centers, would subvert Muscovite domination themselves. On January 10, 1920, Dontsov expressed to Dontsova that "the situation in Ukraine seems better since the insurrections against the Moskals are burning with a new force and the chances of the Vynnychenkos, Hrushevs'kyis, and other idiots

⁴⁰ TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 9, ark. 9.

⁴¹ Iryna Shlikhta, "Shtyrykhy do portreta Marii Dontsovoi" in *Ukrains'kyi arkhеohrafichnyi shchorichnyk*, vol. 11/12 (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo M.P. Kots', 2004), 683.

⁴² See, for example, Mariia Dontsova, "Zhinka i mystetstvo," *Zhinochyi vistnyk*, no. 8 (1922); "Vybery i zhotstvo," *Zhinocha dolia*, no. 16 (1927); "Rozvytok nashykh zhinochykh tovarystv," *Iliustrovanyi kalendar-al'manakh "Zhinochoi doli" na zvychainyi rik 1927: Na novuyi shliakh* (Kolomiya, 1926); "Zhinochyi rukh: zhinka na Radians'kii Ukraini," *Zhinocha dolia*, no. 3 (1926); and "Ukrains'ka zhinka v Radians'komu Soiuzi," *Nova khata*, no. 6 (1928).

are falling.”⁴³ (Hrushevs’kyi had emigrated to Vienna, and Vynnychenko resigned from the Directorate on January 30, 1919, leaving it entirely in Petliura’s hands.)⁴⁴ The “Moskals,” however, were there to stay: although the White Army (under the leadership first of Denikin and Wrangel) found itself cornered in Crimea by March 1920, the Red Army supplanted it as the dominant force in Ukraine east of Volhynia. Unsurprisingly, Soviet possession of Kyiv (unlike Minsk) was nonnegotiable at the international congress in Riga.

In search of reliable partners other than his wife to somehow turn the tide in favor of Ukrainian independence via diplomacy, Dontsov found only the pro-Petliura geographer and member of the Directorate Oleksandr Lahutenko (1885-1959),⁴⁵ then serving as secretary of the diplomatic mission of the UNR to Riga. Lahutenko wrote to Mariia about his respect for her husband’s “crystal clear honor” and became a follower and collaborator of the Dontsov’s throughout the interwar period.⁴⁶ He reported to Dontsov on the difficulties encountered in his attempts to secure an invitation for the UNR to join the peace talks from the ministries and officials of the Baltic States. The government of Lithuania, in particular, had allegedly fallen under Soviet Russian influence. Regarding Petliura as an ally of its enemy, Poland, with which it was then in conflict over the fate of Vilnius, the Lithuanian state refused to recognize the UNR

⁴³ D. Dontsov to M. Dontsova. TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 17, ark. 196.

⁴⁴ As an émigré in Vienna, Vynnychenko converted to the “Sovietophile” position, founding the Foreign Group of the Ukrainian Communist Party, which mostly consisted of former USDRP members. He traveled to Moscow during the summer of 1920 where he made an unsuccessful attempt to reach an agreement with the Soviet leadership ensuring Ukraine’s independence. Disillusioned with the Bolsheviks, whom he accused of Great Russian chauvinism and disingenuous socialism, he spent the rest of his life as a writer in Germany and France. Similarly, Hrushevs’kyi continued his political and historical work as an émigré in Central Europe at this time, reconciling himself to Communist rule in Ukraine after the implementation of NEP and the Ukrainization program, then returning to Kyiv in 1924 as a full member of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, only to be arrested in 1931 and dogged by the authorities until his death in 1934.

⁴⁵ Lahutenko continued to work with Dontsov throughout the interwar period, contributing ideologically charged art criticism to *Vistnyk*.

⁴⁶ Oleksandr Lahutenko to Mariia Dontsova, February 20, 1920. TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 19, ark. 64

as a legitimate representative of “the entire Ukrainian people,” blocking its participation in the congress.⁴⁷ In August 1920, Dontsov reported on the situation to the UNR’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrii Nikovs’kyi (1885-1942). Despite Lahutenko’s efforts, which Dontsov highly praised, the Latvian, Polish, and Lithuanian delegations refused to allow the UNR’s participation (only the Estonians and the Finns responded favorably to their entreaties).

As usual, Dontsov pinned the blame for the failure on his fellow Ukrainians, whether socialist or conservative: “One cannot but notice that our ‘patriots,’ in particular Mr. Vynnychenko, hinder us the most. Generally under his influence, the Lithuanian Government responds to us insultingly and easily yields to the requirement of the Bolsheviks concerning the non-entry of Ukraine to the conference.”⁴⁸ Lahutenko and Dontsov also expressed concerns about the damage done to the UNR’s reputation by the activities and publications of the Hetmanites around Europe. Dontsov’s former collaborator in the LFR and editor of *L’Ukraine* in Geneva, Volodymyr Stepankivs’kyi, publicly disavowed the UNR, deliberately undermining Petliura in the Swiss press and using his ties to Berlin and London to plot a joint invasion of Ukraine by Hetman Skoropads’kyi and General Wrangel, backed by British capital. Sounding the alarm about these and other imagined Hetmanite conspiracies, Dontsov continued to distance himself from Skoropads’kyi’s circle.

This included Lypyns’kyi, who invited Dontsov to join his reorganized Hetmanite party, the Ukrainian Union of Agrarian-Democrats (USKhD), to no avail throughout 1920. Dontsov was apparently unconvinced that Lypyns’kyi and his party actually favored Ukrainian independence. Such doubts bemused Lypyns’kyi: “I remember myself in 1908, when we met

⁴⁷ TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 3-6.

⁴⁸ TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 7.

with you in Zakopane, you called the idea of state independence, which I presented before you then, very naive. Today I am glad that you accuse me of ‘vacillation’ with regard to independence.”⁴⁹ His patience wearing thin, Lypyns’kyi offered to publish Dontsov’s work in the USKhD’s journal, *Khliborobs’ka Ukraina* (Agrarian Ukraine), emphasizing their relative ideological affinity: “I think that the differences in our views are not so great that they could not find a place within the framework of one publication.”⁵⁰ Saddened by Dontsov’s rejection of his project to reorganize Ukrainian conservatives, Lypyns’kyi made a final attempt to convince him that “it is not hatred for Russia but the construction of our own Ukrainian monarchy that will save us from Muscovite bondage. Without this, all current ‘independentists’ will be forced to accept some kind go autonomy.” Petliura was especially to blame for the internal (hence external) “ruination” of Ukrainian politics, argued Lypyns’kyi, whereas Skoropads’kyi deserved a second chance at governing at the helm of a revived aristocracy. Unpersuaded, Dontsov instead sought new doctrines, preferably of his own creation, and new leaders to represent them. The following year Lypyns’kyi began taking shots at the “republican” “democratic” ideology of Dontsov, “for whom we [Hetmanites] are only the authors of naive books” with “incomprehensible political manners.”⁵¹ These partisan squabbles, as both sides were painfully aware, did nothing to help a situation that demanded unity in the face of overwhelming odds: neither Petliura nor Skoropads’kyi had a shot at regaining power under the circumstances.

The Riga peace talks formally concluded on March 18, 1921, nullifying the Warsaw Treaty and dividing the Ukrainian lands between the Soviet and Polish, as well as Czech, Hungarian, and Romanian governments—a state of affairs that lasted until the summer of 1939.

⁴⁹ V. Lypyns’kyi to D. Dontsov, June 25, 1920. Lypyns’kyi, *Lystuvannia*, vol. 1, 575.

⁵⁰ V. Lypyns’kyi to D. Dontsov, September 9, 1920. Ibid., 576.

⁵¹ Ibid.

The UNR's consequent death meant the closing of its embassies in Bern and Copenhagen, which Mariia and Dmytro departed for L'viv/Lwów. Count Mykhailo Tyshkevych (1857-1930)—a Ukrainian diplomat and publicist in Lausanne during World War I, and the UNR's ambassador to the Paris peace talks and the Holy See—supported their applications for Polish visas to resettle in Galicia. Piłsudski personally approved their permanent return to the region (now called Little East Poland), remarking “the Ukrainian writer D. Dontsov was already our political colleague (*combattant politique*) before the world war.”⁵² There is no evidence the two were personally acquainted, but Sosnovs'kyi indicates that Piłsudski intervened on behalf of Mariia's wealthy and well-connected family—the Bachyns'kyis.⁵³

Unlike many other Ukrainian nationalists, who considered Piłsudski's deal with the Soviets a betrayal and took an understandably dim view of Warsaw's intentions with regard to the sizable Ukrainian minority it thereby inherited, Dontsov continued to espouse pro-Polish views. The “Intermarium”—Piłsudski's vision of an anti-Bolshevik, anti-Russian imperialist alliance of Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Romania, and the other young nation-states between the Black and Baltic Seas—struck Dontsov as infinitely preferable to Ukraine's absorption into a Soviet pseudo-federation. A *cordon sanitaire* such as this might prevent future Russian incursions into Europe, Dontsov reasoned, but only if Poland regained a sense of messianism toward Eastern Europe, rekindling its traditional antipathy toward Russia.⁵⁴ Since the eve of the First World War, Dontsov had considered the Poles a natural ally to Ukraine despite their “atavistic” tendency to regard the borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as the

⁵² Cited in Mykhailo Chuhuienko, *Formuvannia ta rozvytok ideolohii Dmytra Dontsova* (Kandidat nauk, National University of Kharkiv, 1999), 204.

⁵³ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 153.

⁵⁴ Stryjek, *Ukraińska idea*, 129 and 148.

rightful boundaries of a twentieth-century Polish nation-state. In 1917 he urged Ukrainians to put the conflict over Galicia and Volhynia into a wider perspective, for “only then will we not be led astray by political loudmouths and super-patriots who do not see the forest for the trees.”⁵⁵

During the 1920s and early 1930s, Dontsov reached a *modus vivendi* with the Polish Interior Ministry, which permitted him to work in L’viv and Warsaw in peace, provided that he publish nothing overtly critical of Poland’s treatment of minorities. The police moved to deport Dontsov as a danger to civil society in 1924 following an investigation into his ties to the Ukrainian nationalist underground, but dropped it at Dontsov’s request—an indication that circles in the Polish government considered him useful as a fierce critic of Moscow and a proponent of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation. Despite his ties to nationalist organizations and individuals that were militantly anti-Polish and illegal, he studiously avoided doing or publishing anything that might raise suspicion,⁵⁶ instead working to channel Ukrainians’ resentment in defeat eastward and leftward, away from the Polish republic and its conservative supporters.

The Foundations of Ukrainian Integral Nationalism

Dontsov changed allegiance numerous times over the course of the First World War and the Ukrainian Revolution, striving to retain his ideological purity within the confines of a political philosophy that he himself was still in the process of cobbling together from disparate sources, but by the early 1920s he had found his way to an original and independent position, which he dubbed “active nationalism” (*chynnyi natsionalizm*). He presented it in *Pidstavy nashoi polityky* (The Foundations of Our Politics), the first book to propound a comprehensive

⁵⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, “Pol’ska Kryza,” *Shliakhy* 5 (1917), 543.

⁵⁶ Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi integral’nyi natsionalizm*, 165.

Ukrainian integral nationalist program, and one of the most important in his oeuvre.⁵⁷ Stressing continuity, as was his lifelong wont (despite the ruptures of which his biographers are well aware), the preface to the first edition claimed that its author had been espousing the same ideas since before the war, as far back as 1907, and had hurried the volume into publication because the “byways of provincialism, Moscophilia, and cosmopolitanism” continued to mislead and debase Ukrainian political thought. Still, the book exudes the bitterness of a disillusioned apostate, not only from the community of Ukrainian socialists, but also from Lypyns’kyi’s conservative monarchism, and above all from the Russian world of his youth. The central thesis of the work—that Russia and Europe are two antithetical civilizations—was nothing new for Dontsov as of 1921, but he presented it in much starker and broader terms in *Pidstavy*, offering up hatred of Muscovy and the imperatives of struggle against it as a basis for the politics, literature, and spirituality, not just of Ukraine, but of the entire Western world.

Characteristically, Dontsov’s starting point is World War I, which reminded all European nations that traditions matter and that all conflicts are ultimately settled with “blood and iron.” But such revelations eluded Ukraine, where the “outbreak of war found our political thought at an impasse.”⁵⁸ Lulled into a slumber by their faith in the inevitable evolution of humanity, the peaceful resolution of all conflicts, and “international brotherhood,” Ukrainians took their prophets from other nations. He rejects the “vulgar idea” that the war was caused by the “secret diplomacy” of the imperialist powers, that only a worldwide social revolution will prevent such conflicts from happening again. The true essence of World War I was a clash of two civilizations, Muscovy and the West, just as Friedrich Engels, Konstantin Leontiev, Mikhail

⁵⁷ Dontsov, *Pidstavy nashoi polityky* (1921). Republished in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 5, 17-144.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

Bakunin, Maxim Gorky (1868-1936), and others had allegedly predicted. Everything in Dontsov's thought was structured around this oppositional dyad hereafter.

Bolshevism is simply the latest manifestation of the Asiatic threat. Dontsov dismisses the "ignorant" people who say that Bolshevism is an international movement to overthrow the "gods of the bourgeois pantheon" (capitalism, imperialism, nationalism), and the anti-Semites who suppose that it is a Jewish conspiracy to weaken Christianity. Rather, Bolshevism is first and foremost a "Russian phenomenon."⁵⁹ Dontsov cites Dostoevsky, Bakunin, Lenin, and the archconservative Konstantin Pobedonostsev (1827-1907) to the same effect: they all sought to destroy European democracy as "the great lie of our era." Tsarism and Bolshevism share the same essence: "Russian messianism." This argument is almost identical to the one found in the essays of the Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdiaev as roughly the same time.⁶⁰ According to Dontsov, a mystical belief in Russia's destiny to displace the declining West and thereby bring about humanity's salvation, informs the purportedly anti-Western convictions of figures as diverse as Alexander Pushkin (1799-1832), Alexander Herzen (1812-1870), and Vasilii Rozanov (1856-1919). Thus, Bolshevism is concerned not with fomenting a revolution of the international proletariat, but only with undermining Western states and societies. Hence Leninism's condemnation of the colonial practices of Britain, France, and America, but not those of Russia. Nikolai Bukharin directs his wrath, not against traitors of the working class, but against "German, Austrian, French, and English Mensheviks." Like the pan-Slavists, the Bolsheviks

⁵⁹ As we shall see, this is in marked contrast to his increasingly anti-Semitic attitudes in subsequent years.

⁶⁰ "The messianic idea of the Russian people assumed either the apocalyptic or a revolutionary form; and then an amazing event in the destiny of the Russian people occurred. Instead of the Third Rome in Russia the Third International was achieved, and many of the features of the Third Rome passed over to the Third International. The Third International is also a Holy Empire, and it is founded on an Orthodox faith. The Third International is not an international, but a Russian national idea." Nikolai Berdiaev, *Istoki i smysl russkogo kommunizma* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1955), 118. Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 192.

incite the revolutionary proletariat to the “destruction of ‘rotten’ European democracy,” to the greater glory of Russia.⁶¹ Imperial Russia’s expansion into Europe was the sole cause of World War I. Following in its footsteps, the Soviet state opposes Europe per se, leftists and rightists alike, freely deploying the methods of tsarism (unlike European socialists, who adhere to the principles of liberalism). Russia has always behaved this way, recognizing (correctly) that every advance of Europe is a threat to its fundamental nature. This, Dontsov avers, is the key to setting Ukraine’s politics on firmer foundations.⁶²

Pidstavy’s second chapter, “Muscovite Barbarism,” contrasts the features of Europe (to which the non-Russian Slavic nations belong) with those of Russia. In Europe there is pluralism and drama, the dynamic interplay of forces, states and societies, classes, great historical figures, powerful religions and churches. In Russia there is only bleak homogeneity and oppression, a state that dominates a passive, faceless mass, a history of slavery, drudgery, and inertia. Russian “primitivism,” Dontsov argues, does not distinguish the “I” from “we.” “Thus, in the West there is, in the widest sense, *self-government* [Dontsov uses the English term —T.E.]; in Russia there is chaos or absolutism.”⁶³ The Russian peasantry’s repartitional commune or *obshchina* epitomizes this immobilizing collectivism, which breeds slavishness and irresponsibility. The Russian serf—whether under tsar or commissar—is an empty vessel to be filled with whatever wickedness and idiocy one pleases.⁶⁴ The other Russian estates, the clergy and the gentry, are no better. Their rights were merely “granted from the mountain”—they never fought for them like

⁶¹ Ibid., 3-14

⁶² Ibid., 17-18.

⁶³ Ibid., 23.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 24-25. Dontsov’s main source on the Russian peasantry was the Russian Populist Gleb Uspensky (1843-1902).

their counterparts in the West. Dontsov claims that, thanks to this overbearing statism, honor and human dignity, even as concepts, are totally lacking in Russia.

To the progressive rationalism and autonomy of the Catholic Church in Europe, Dontsov contrasts the Russian Orthodox Church's dogmatism, authoritarianism, dependence on the state, and incapability of reform.⁶⁵ Orthodoxy is passive; Catholicism is active. The former does not require the active participation of its congregates in the cult, only their passive submission; the latter addresses itself directly to the individual's conscience and demands his or her active participation.⁶⁶ The consequent moral weakness of individual Russians and their governmental, familial, and church structures accounts for the "shameful collapse" of their ruling class before Bolshevism and the submissiveness of the peasantry. Stark theological differences between the Catholic West and Orthodox Russia affected the intellectual histories and mentalities of the two civilizations: "the foundation of European philosophy is *reason* [*ratio*], the foundation of Russian thought is *logos* [the word]. Reason is a human attribute; logos, by contrast, is something metaphysical and godly, . . . the hidden force that lives in every thing, and which does not recognize logic, only 'internal intuition.'" A mystical obsession with "oneness" and the "totality" leads to the Russian preoccupation with the collective subconsciousness—the unknown god. This "cult of the masses," which Dontsov compares this "somnambulistic" mindset to Buddhism, predominates in Russian literature, particularly Lev Tolstoy, who connected "two epochs of Russian history: tsarism—when the masses carried out the intelligentsia's pogroms at the instigation of the gendarmes—and Bolshevism, when these same masses carried out the same intelligentsia's pogroms [but this time] at the instigation of the people's commissars." Of

⁶⁵ This line of argumentation echoed the positions taken by Russian philosopher Petr Chaadaev (1794-1856) in his famous *Philosophical Letters* (published in French in 1826-1831).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 44.

Tolstoy's allegedly anti-intellectual, altruistic, and collectivist ethics, as presented in *War and Peace*, Dontsov asks: "Is this not the philosophy of Bolshevism?" European-style heroes, which have their own ideas and act on the basis of their own reason cannot appear in the literature of Russia, where such men are regarded as "the Devil in disguise." Russian heroes, by contrast, are mere conduits through which the colorless, stupefied masses, which "do not know whether to 'Beat the Jews' or say 'Long Live the Revolution,'" and impersonal historical forces act. Like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky propounded the "apotheosis of the masses" as a "higher truth, to which the nameless individual must be subordinated." Better "serfdom" than a freedom that permits the existence of "kulaks."⁶⁷

Dontsov discerns only continuities between Russia's prerevolutionary theological and philosophical traditions and the attitudes of the Soviet state: "The new socialist ideologies of Russian society have come bearing the vestiges of yore. And this is not surprising! Because the whole science of Marxism captivated Russians not through its socialism, [but] only through its materialist fatalism and, as is clear to the Moskal's intellect, the negation of the role of individuality in history."⁶⁸ The most reactionary Slavophiles also hated the West for its individualism. Leontiev condemned its "human rights," "democratic revolutions," and "respect for women." Orest Miller (1833-1889) opposed the European "cult of human individuality" and "chivalry with its cult of personal honor." Muscovy, a "nation of slaves" whether rightists or leftists rule it, constitutes an existential threat to the Occident, which it wishes to overrun through sheer force of numbers and plunge into chaos. Russian conceptions of freedom and democracy

⁶⁷ Ibid., 48-51. Taken from the Russian word for "fist" (a symbol of greed), the Bolsheviks wielded this epithet against wealthy peasants accused of exploiting poorer peasants, targeting them for "liquidation as a class" during the collectivization of agriculture in the late 1920s and early 1930s. However, any perceived enemy of the Soviet regime in the countryside, no matter their economic status, was liable to be labeled a kulak.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

are incompatible with those found in Europe and America. The Russian scientist and ideologue of pan-Slavism Nikolai Danilevsky (1822-1885) observed that “Russians know democracy but not in the sense of government by the people, but in the sense of equality, or better said, egalitarianism,” which Dontsov calls a “superlatively vulgar ideal,” foreign to Europe and tantamount to “political slavery,” mirrored in economic life as a preoccupation with “distribution and leveling, not the interests of production and trade.” In the absence of personal initiative there is only abject submission to authorities. For Russians, “wealth is an object of hatred [and] poverty is an object of adoration.” The result is an impoverished, stagnant, and inept society and economy. Russians push egalitarianism to disastrous extremes: a fear and loathing of “talent and genius,” “science and art,” “the elegance and beauty of women,” and of all who might raise themselves above the crowd and lead it (masters, manufacturers, engineers, singers, the heads of workers’ syndicates). The Russian contempt for work and material prosperity as things beneath their lofty spirituality breeds “laziness” and “negative parasitism among nations.” To show this Dontsov quotes Dostoevsky: “By God, I do not want these virtues. Everything to work, like the free, and everything to hoard money, like the Kikes (*zhidy*). I’d much rather plow a row, like a Russian”; “Russians should be exterminated for the good of humanity, as a harmful parasite!”⁶⁹ A Russian hates the European bourgeoisie and the Jew, not because of some socialistic, altruistic, or ascetic principle, but because he is too listless and undignified to become anything like them.

Driven by what Nietzsche called *ressentiment*, Russians are slaves and slave moralists bent on taking revenge against their natural superiors. Their goal is “the apotheosis of deformity [*kalitstvo*], physical and moral,” which takes the form of a revolution that will make rulers of

⁶⁹ Ibid., 59. These quotations come from Dostoevsky’s *Diary of a Writer*.

humanity out of “cripples” and “failures” like themselves. Herd-like, Russian society requires despotism to hold it together. A lack of internal discipline necessitates external discipline. Even after the “Great Revolution,” the fatalistic, dissolute, and uncomprehending Russian folk need a tsar. Dontsov concludes that Russia *must* struggle against Europe because:

The amorphous Russian masses can be led only through absolutism; the self-active European society, only through self-action. For this Russia must, on the one hand, defend itself against the European principle and not allow European bacilli into it, because if they were inoculated into Russia they could lead only to the debauch and collapse of the state mechanism. On the other hand, they must strive to destroy this Europe, to destroy its ideas, everywhere they exert their influence, because these ideas are the sole protection against everything, and this includes Muscovite absolutism, that strives toward domination over the continent. To destroy this spiritual compound that unites individuals into groups, states, classes, and unions, and to make of them an amorphous mass, incapable of any resistance.⁷⁰

The crisis engendered by the Russian-European clash, and the role that Ukraine was to play in it, are the central concerns of the new “foundations” that Dontsov claims to provide for “our national politics and the essence of our collective ideal.”⁷¹ The latter is not, he clarifies, something “metaphysical,” but the concrete tasks that nations and classes must complete—in the service of humanity (*liuds’kist’*)—so as not to be condemned to death by history. Holding every modern imperialism but Russia’s to have had a positive impact on the world, Dontsov invokes the Monroe Doctrine, which “concentrates everything into the racial-geographic interests of the nation,” as an exemplary “national idea.” Ukraine, too, needs a national mission of global significance in order to survive.

What should the Ukrainian collective ideal be? Dontsov begins his answer by placing Ukraine within Central Europe, geographically and culturally, as the easternmost outpost of Western civilization (along with Poland and the Baltic countries). The absence of the

⁷⁰ Ibid., 67.

⁷¹ Ibid., 69.

repartitional commune among the Ukrainian peasantry, the presence of constitutional and liberal thought in Ukrainian political traditions, and a “legal psychology” distinguish the country and its people from Russia, binding them to Europe. Thanks to its position, Ukraine is the kingmaker in Eastern Europe: if it sides with Russia, then the Poles, Czechs, and other Slavic nations will crumble before the Muscovite horde, critically endangering Western civilization in the process, but if it sides with Europe (emphatically including Poland), then the Slavic world will be won for the West, empowering European civilization. The keys to mastery over the Slavic peoples are L’viv and Constantinople, which must not be allowed to fall into Russian hands. Ukraine’s separation from Russia is the only way to prevent this. The West must offer cultural and material support to Ukraine in order to ward off the “Muscovite plague.” Ukraine will fulfill its collective ideal, return to Europe, and join the chorus of self-conscious, sovereign nations only by embracing “national egoism.” “The will to become a political nation must become the highest law,” marshaling all the nation’s resources and abilities.⁷²

Paradoxically, in order to earn its rightful and heroic role in the universal progress of humanity, Ukrainians must renounce the ideas and slogans of universal human progress, above all “federalism, pacifism, and international socialism,” as foggy-headed romanticism and cosmopolitanism. Federalism (between rather than within nations) is, for Dontsov, an incoherent, wishy-washy term, devoid of content, but it is dangerous for Ukraine (and Europe) because it entails the acceptance of fatally corruptive Russian elements into the national organism. Dontsov dismisses “absurd” talk of a purely economic federation or trade union between Ukraine and Russia, warning that is the first step to political union. Disunion and strife propels human advancement. Whereas pacifism is utopian and naive, war is the natural, inevitable, and desirable

⁷² Ibid., 77.

result of conflict among peoples (not conspiratorial elites). International laws and parliaments are as powerless to stop them as earthquakes. Moreover, pacifism is “reactionary” (in a vaguely Marxist sense of the term) because it preserves every status quo, including “political monsters like Turkey or states like Mexico, which have not the slightest understanding of the idea of progress and civilization.”⁷³ Dontsov attacks the League of Nations, the idea of international government, and Wilson’s *Fourteen Points*, attributing them to an “illness of the president.” Citing John Maynard Keynes’s *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Dontsov calls the Versailles Treaty a “fiasco” doomed to failure. As for international socialism, it lost the revolutionary prerogative it had during the era of Marx, Engels, and Lasalle, when it advocated for the oppressed nations. Since the Russian Revolution, international socialism has taken its orders from the “poisonous-imperialist spirit of the Kremlin’s cellars.” Still, Dontsov praises the callous principle of “scientific socialism” that “divides nations into those whose liberation lies in the interest of human progress (not the ‘liberation of the proletariat!’), and those whose disappearance will benefit human civilization.”⁷⁴ It is for this reason that Marx would have supported Russia enemies in 1914, just as he did in his own time. The Second International’s national nihilism was a betrayal of the master, who recognized the importance of struggles that took an outwardly national rather than class form. The Third International, emanating from Bolshevik Moscow, has replaced the “corpse” of the second and resumed the First International’s interventionism in conflicts between nations, but it has done so to support nations that oppose world democracy and to attack those fighting for it (such as Poland and Ukraine). “Both [the

⁷³ Ibid. 81.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 83.

Second and the Third Internationals] placed the interests of a vanishing bunch of the urban proletariat over the needs of the great masses [and] of peasant democracy.”⁷⁵

Contra the Third International, founded in 1919 by the Communist parties of Europe under Bolshevik leadership, Dontsov considered European imperialism a necessary component of Ukraine’s liberation, but gave up on the idea of Germany freeing Ukraine from the Muscovite yoke and feared the prospect of a Russian-German union. He argues, in hindsight, that the German “invasion of Ukraine was an apparition, which served only as proof to the Moskal’ that the entire ‘Ukrainian intrigue’ bore the stamp *Made in Germany*.” In actuality, Dontsov adds, contravening his erstwhile Germanophilia, the Central Powers’ motivation for supporting the UNR and the Hetmanate was their need for bread and peace on the Eastern Front, not a desire to dismember Russia. In the war’s aftermath, German and Russian interests are more aligned than ever, necessitating a Ukrainian reliance on the “imperialism” of “those states in the Entente that will fall into antagonism toward Russia with a change of the political map of Europe,” especially Great Britain:

For this, the construction of a bloc of states from the Baltic to the Black sea would lie in our interests. For this, a strong Rumania, Hungary, and Poland would lie in our interests. For this, it would be good if the Union Jack flew triumphantly above the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. This would mean that the bridge between Europe and Asia, as Karl Marx called Constantinople, would become the *tête de pont* of Europe on its path to the East, and not of Russia in its expansion to the West.⁷⁶

Turning his attention away from England, Dontsov advocates a rapprochement with Poland.

“The feelings that inspired our grandfathers against Poland” are not the basis for a collective ideal, which is founded upon love for one’s own country, not hatred for another’s. The anti-Polish politics of Galician Ukrainians is “nothing other than a political atavism, though it may

⁷⁵ Ibid., 87.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 95.

also proceed from great love for the native country.” “The conception of that great and old conflict between Europe and Russia forces us, whether we like it or not, together with Poland on this side of the democratic line, on this side of the barricade.” Dontsov presents the threat of Russification as much greater than that of Polonization for the Ukrainian people. Alongside the Austrians and Prussians, the Poles have at least transmitted the spirit of civic duty, military discipline, and other “European values” to Ukrainians. Russian domination means the destruction of Warsaw and Kyiv as alternate bases of power; Western hegemony means the opposite. Thus, “unity with Europe, under all circumstances, at any price, is the categorical imperative of our external politics.”⁷⁷

Similarly, internal politics must be geared toward the discovery and realization of Ukraine’s national ideal, and, ipso facto, its independence, in accordance with the West’s norms, values, and “racial” qualities. Invoking Nietzsche’s concept of the “will to power” and Merezhkovsky’s “will to the fatherland” [*voliu k otechestvu*], Dontsov argues that “the categorical imperative of [our] internal politics should be to instill in all the composite parts of the nation a ‘*Wille zur Nation*’ [will to the nation].” The foundation for this higher sense of unity and purpose is early modern Ukraine’s historical traditions, from the Constitution of Orlyk to the Battle of Poltava. The “German-Latin culture” has given Ukraine its “individualistic psychology, its activeness, which, acting upon individuals as well as groups, empowered [it] to stand against Russian influences.” Such occidental traditions are as significant as any in Europe and should be cultivated and celebrated. But since political independence is the basis of literature (according to Fichte), stateless Ukraine remains a “cripple among nations.” The greatest danger: Ukraine ceases “to be a complete organism, [and] makes itself a sect, like the Jews or the ‘Old

⁷⁷ Ibid., 96-101.

Believers.” The individual members of such a nation suffer from schizophrenia, delusions, and insanity. Thus, the “territorial unity” of the nation must be maintained above all else. Sacrificing this for the sake of social justice will bring disaster because “the dominating factor in international life is not social struggle, but racial struggle.” Internal politics (including all questions of constitutional rights and equality) must be subordinated to external politics and the biological survival of the nation in the international arena.⁷⁸

Dontsov’s vision of the form that this state would take is a rather confusing blend of libertarian individualism and authoritarian collectivism, democracy and elitism, capitalism and socialism. “For the lack of a better term,” Dontsov champions “democracy” in the specific sense that it is allegedly understood in the West—i.e. “political and economic self-action,” and the “freedom of the individual.” He derides the idea that the revolution in Ukraine should have been socialist because the majority of the population simply did not have a socialist mentality. Rather, the revolution should have had a peasant and petit-bourgeois character in order to reflect the emerging dominant classes of the town and country—a development that he interprets as “revolutionary” in its own right, given Ukraine’s stage of modernization (primitive capitalism). The petite bourgeoisie and peasantry, whether they are poor or wealthy, have interests opposite to the proletariat because they desire the expansion, not the liquidation, of private property and the free market (regulated in accordance with the “national will”). Unfettered capital, however, confronts them as an alien force: capitalist modernization impoverishes and displaces them as antiquated classes—an aporia that leads to searches, like Dontsov’s, for a “third way” between capitalism and socialism. The “reactionary” system that was put into place by the Soviet constitution is no more representative than the one that existed under Stolypin.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 102-08.

According to Dontsov, the “dictatorship of the proletariat” is an absurd, antidemocratic idea that spells ruin for the vast majority of Ukraine’s population. The Bolsheviks pursue an antipeasant, antibourgeois policy in defense of the unchanged principle of Muscovite bureaucracy. “For Ukrainians, as a peasant nation, no kind of compromise with this ideology is possible.” Dontsov’s ideal, then, is a democratic “peasant, petit-bourgeois republic,” which may choose to embrace the traditions of European socialism, but never Bolshevism’s dictatorial, centralizing rule by the minority, which attacks electoral rights, the free press, individual rights, trade unions, and rival parties. “The principles [of self-government, the rule of law, and self-action —T.E.] that lie at the base of European socialism, abstracting from it the requirements and possibilities of socialism in general, are the general principles of the dynamic of European social life, and as such must be recognized by us. In politics: parliamentarianism, not soviets. In industry: national consensus, not chaos and the dictatorship of a minority.”⁷⁹ Under the influence of Fascism and Nazism, Dontsov abandoned even this qualified approval of socialism and democratic institutions in the years leading up to World War II, but as of the early 1920s he remained open to almost any politico-economic doctrine, from laissez-faire capitalism, to anarcho-syndicalism, to parliamentary socialism, provided only that it originated in the West and therefore pointed a way forward.

What, then, was wrong with Ukrainian socialism and democracy? To answer this question, Dontsov returns to his critique of Drahomanov and the Ukrainophiles, laying the blame for the failure of the Ukrainian Revolution at their feet. Cowardly, impractical dilettantes, the Ukrainian intelligentsia’s seizure of state power in 1917 quickly devolved into a tragicomedy because they failed to appreciate that the essence of the Russian-Ukrainian war was a “conflict of

⁷⁹ Dontsov, *Pidstavy*, in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 5, 87–90.

two nations, two races,” not an internal class struggle. To speak of such national conflict as a real feature of history, they thought, was to fall into the trap of the “satanic game of the ‘exploiters.’” Following Drahomanov, they saw all of Ukraine’s foreign policy interests as aligning with Russia’s. They were willing to struggle with the “errors of Bolshevik centralism” and the Black Hundreds, but never with Russia as such. This lack of an independent political ideal and naive faith in the compatibility of the Ukrainian and Russian national projects led to the zigzagging, confusion, and inevitable downfall of the nascent Ukrainian state. Dontsov cites Vynnychenko’s three-volume participant’s account of the revolution, *Vidrodzhennia natsii* (Rebirth of the Nation), as proof of the Ukrainophiles’ rejection of separatism before and during World War I. The Central Rada sought compromise with the Provisional Government instead of revolution, socialism instead of nationalism. It refused to raise a national army until it was far too late. They feared putting words into action—illegal, violent, terroristic action, if need be—even as the Ukrainian people demanded it and began acting independently. The Fourth Universal, which finally declared the UNR’s independence from Soviet Petrograd, and the invitation of the German occupation were similarly forced upon the Rada, which lost all legitimacy in the eyes of Ukrainians. The Hetmanate started out promising enough, reinvigorating the peasantry and granting the revolution a “national character,” but soon made the same mistake of giving power back to the “ideologues.” When Skoropads’kyi declared a “criminal” federation with the supporters of the tsarist old regime, he lost the respect of his supporters at once and forever. They followed him into exile, hoping against all experience that they would eventually be able to restore him. The Directory seized power in Kyiv, but it too failed to understand and utilize the peasantry’s open struggle against the Bolsheviks. Petliura foolishly hoped to work with the capitalist Entente and the socialist Soviets simultaneously. He was too soft and noble to match

the chaotic energy that Bolshevik Russia had unleashed upon the world with something of equal force and ruthlessness. What Ukraine really needed was “chauvinism.”⁸⁰

Dontsov recounts the abysmal performance of the UNR’s diplomatic missions to Europe, but omits himself from the story despite his prominent role in it. These ambassadors, he claims, labored under illusions about their own importance as diplomats, posing as doctors and professors of all sorts to gain the respect of their European audiences, while petty jealousies and quarrels arose among them. There were scandals in the foreign press, a lack of unity, and inordinate focus on nonnational politics (i.e. socialism). The multitude of factions operating abroad (federalist, Hetmanite, pro-Bolshevik, and so on) hopelessly confused Ukrainian politics for European audiences. Meanwhile, the soldiers of the UNR were left hanging in the lurch, starved for cash, supplies, and weapons. Dontsov condemns the “paid foreign agents of the Union of the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU)”⁸¹ and the other Ukrainian socialist émigré groups for their indecisiveness, lack of national and personal dignity, inexperience, and sycophantic flip-flopping between the Third International and the League of Nations. He attacks the Ukrainian Communists and Socialist Revolutionaries among these ambassadors as Russophile traitors to the national idea who regarded the Soviet despoliation of the peasantry and the loss of Ukraine’s cultural-linguistic identity as acceptable sacrifices for the sake of progress arm-in-arm with Moscow. Hypocritical or selectively amnesic, Dontsov avoids acknowledgement, let alone justification and differentiation, of his own part in this diplomatic fiasco.⁸²

This disingenuous outsider’s perspective allows Dontsov to condemn the Ukrainian intelligentsia without personal embarrassment, unfairly rebuking them for having failed to adopt

⁸⁰ Ibid., 108-21.

⁸¹ Ibid., 137.

⁸² As we shall see, his later critics called him out on this. Ibid., 124-30.

a Ukrainian integral nationalist worldview before such a thing existed (he himself articulated it for the first time in *Pidstavy*, well after the fact). He rues their moral bankruptcy and political impotence in the face of the Bolsheviks' "racial, national struggle" to enslave the Ukrainian peasantry in the name of the Russian-Jewish proletarian minority. Here Dontsov conflates the Jewish working-class in Ukraine with the Russian Communists bent on conquering it, arguing that the former sided with the latter thanks to their racial psychology and class interests, and blaming their behavior as a resentful and recalcitrant alien minority in various host nations for the rise of anti-Semitism across Europe. Despite the activism and heroism of the Ukrainian people at large, the intelligentsia failed to give their elemental "will to the power" ideational content, direction, and form.⁸³

Dontsov maintains that Ukrainians needed a simple formula of uncompromising national struggle against Russia and a new type of leader to follow. This entailed resisting the modern decline of the West as a whole: "Ukraine together with the whole European-American world will pass this crisis, which will not end with the downfall of Bolshevism because it did not begin with it."⁸⁴ The rise of "European nihilism" that Nietzsche predicted in *The Will to Power* takes the form of Bolshevism, heralded by Russia and its agents, and threatens the existence of the nation as such. Only the peasantry and an ideology geared toward its interests and habits of thought can resist this grave danger in Ukraine. The urban proletarian minority, with its narrowly materialistic "stomach interests," has nothing to offer. The haute bourgeoisie, too, is weak and unreliable. Dontsov points to the declining aristocracy as a potential source of leadership because they allegedly retain elements of "discipline, authority and the spirit of antimaterialism," but

⁸³ Ibid., 131.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 136.

while he does not reject monarchy in principle, he doubts it could work in Ukrainian conditions, jabbing at the Hetmanites as faux monarchists.⁸⁵ The basis for any nation-state-building in Ukraine, he insists, must be the wholesome, uncorrupted peasantry, the country's absolute majority and rightful ruler.⁸⁶

As late as 1921, Dontsov still spoke favorably of “democracy,” but what sort? Still reluctant to take the plunge into antidemocratic palingenesis, he skeptically referred to the “political spiritists, who want to charm the peril of nihilism with the shadows of the distant past, [and] do not believe in the possibility of regulating democracy, calling this task a squaring of the circle.” The desired democracy, he clarified, is not the plebeian nihilistic democracy of Rousseau and the Russians, of “pacifism, egalitarianism, antimilitarism, ochlocracy, stomach socialism and class struggle,” of “general leveling” and “sentimental-anemic people's justice.” Rather, Dontsov envisioned a Ukrainian democracy modeled on the Canadian farmer and the French peasant: a rule by the people founded upon “work, hierarchy, social solidarity, duty, and the strong fist.” The equality propounded here is not the sort that drags the strong down to the level of the weak, making slaves of all, but a Social Darwinian “equality with regard to the point where the race begins and not where it ends,” that “recognizes the primacy of freedom” and “the competitive struggle for life.” Dontsov described an authoritarian agrarian democracy grounded in self-discipline and self-action. He hailed the USA as the most perfect realization of this sociopolitical system and claims that the peasants of Ukraine are strongly inclined toward it.⁸⁷

Still, the Ukrainian peasantry remained a class without a philosopher to guide and represent them—a role that Dontsov imagined himself fulfilling—and it needed a philosophy to match its

⁸⁵ Their slogan, he quips, should be “*Le roi est mort, vive le mort!*”

⁸⁶ Ibid., 138-39.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 140-42.

temperament and traditions. As the Scottish journalist Donald MacKenzie Wallace (1841-1919) observed in his travels in the Russian Empire, the Ukrainian peasant is a deep individualist like his English or American counterpart. He respects the family, private property, the state's authority, the church, and other institutions that provide "social discipline." Bolshevism and its chaos-inducing social engineering schemes are incompatible with the very existence of the Ukrainian peasantry. Noble and patriotic, imbued with a "healthy xenophobia," the peasants may not understand "isms" but they are quite capable of building a society strong enough to save Europe from Muscovite barbarism. They share a common psychology with the West, the vestiges of medieval chivalry, enshrined in the concepts of individual freedom and personal responsibility. A politics built upon the bedrock of an independent peasantry and a corresponding ideology of rugged individualism could unify all the classes and nationalities of Ukraine, including the descendants of ethnically Russian or Polish colonists (Ukraine's "Ulster"), with a collective ideal, common historical traditions, and devotion to their native land. As antianarchism (anti-*makhnovshchyna*), antitsarism, and anti-Bolshevism (anti-Russian messianism), this ideal is the nation living in accordance with the "perennial laws of racial struggle," not class struggle and the "international solidarity of the proletariat." The problems encountered in the pursuit of Ukrainian statehood (not autonomy) under a "blue-yellow flag" must be addressed within the "framework of great world-historical conceptions," with reverence for the West (foremost peoples of the species) and scorn for Soviet Russia and its deceitful vulgarization of Marxism.⁸⁸

Dontsov's closing remarks in *Pidstavy* concern the poetry of national revolution, and evidence his desire to "turn Marx on his head," to invert the relation between superstructure and

⁸⁸ Ibid., 142-43.

base, to make consciousness prior to matter, to assert the reality of the text rather than the textuality of the real, to reconcile life and art, and to bring about a sociopolitical revolution in Ukraine through a spiritual-aesthetic revolution in its literature and mentality, smashing received idols yet drawing freely and anachronistically on exemplars from bygone eras:

The poetry of this struggle may seem bizarre, . . . but even hyper-cultured Europe will soon find in this struggle the profound [and] original rhythm by which it too gyrates. To decipher this rhythm of movement, its sense—such is the task of our generation, which must finally understand that our national ideal can be realized only in uncompromising struggle with Russia. The movement of the peasantry also allows us to mend the caesura in the thread of our tradition, which is not the tradition of the [Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius], of Drahomanov, and of international-Moscophile socialism, not the tradition of the times of the nation's decline, only the tradition of enlightenment from the West, the tradition of 1709 [the Battle of Poltava —T.E.], taken up in our times by all who want to realize it with weapons in hand.⁸⁹

Such is the hybrid tradition that will allow modern Ukrainians to return to the golden age of their nation: Cossack swashbuckling plus Western idealism, eulogized by a new generation of writers working in a time-honored “European” idiom.

The Formation of Ukrainian Nationalist Groups in Postwar East Central Europe

Dontsov struggled to balance the pro-Polish and pro-Entente image that he projected in *Pidstavy* with his reputation as a revolutionary and a purist among radicalized interwar Ukrainian nationalists. Although the Polish authorities tolerated him, he was closely connected to the largest and deadliest underground Ukrainian nationalist group of the time—the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO), founded by former Sich Riflemen. “We have not been defeated!” Colonel Ievhen Konovalets’, leader of the UVO, thundered at its founding congress in Prague in August 1920. “The war is not over! We, the Ukrainian Military Organization, are continuing it. .

⁸⁹ Ibid., 144.

.. Victory lies before us!”⁹⁰ The main parent organization of the OUN (founded in 1929), the UVO drew its ranks from the veterans of World War I, the Ukrainian-Polish War (1918-1919), and the Ukrainian-Soviet War (1917-1921), which caused a westward exodus of tens of thousands of pro-independence soldiers and civilians seeking refuge from Bolshevik rule in Eastern Ukraine.⁹¹ Those allowed into Poland were barred from settling in Eastern Galicia, moving instead into concentration camps to live in conditions widely condemned as appalling; the rest relocated to countries farther west, especially Czechoslovakia, setting up new hubs of Ukrainian émigré life in Prague and Poděbrady.⁹² There were roughly 100,000 Ukrainian émigrés in Central and Western Europe at this time.⁹³

Declaring its intent to liberate Ukraine from both Polish and Soviet domination by any means necessary, the UVO infamously carried out political assassinations, acts of sabotage, high-stakes heists, and terrorist attacks against the Polish state and its Ukrainian “collaborators.” Warsaw responded with mass arrests, escalating repressions of Poland’s Ukrainian minority, and the intensified colonization and forced Polonization of the *kresy* (interwar Poland’s Ukrainian-populated southeastern borderlands), further hastening the radicalization of Western Ukrainian society. This vicious cycle strengthened support for Roman Dmowski’s integral nationalist party, the Endecja, which rejected Chief of State Piłsudski’s more tolerant federalist ideals, advocating the coercive ethnic assimilation of non-Polish Slavs and the exclusion of Jews from the “national organism.” The climate of violence and hostility benefited the most radical Ukrainian

⁹⁰ M.P., “Polkovnyk Ievhen Konovalets’,” *Viina i tekhnika: Voienno-naukovy zbirnyk* (Paris: n.p., 1938), 5.

⁹¹ Andrii Portnov, *Nauka u vyhnanni: Naukova i osvitnia diialnist’ ukrains’koi emihratsii v mizhvoiennii Polshchi (1919-1939)* (Kharkiv: KhIFT, 2008), 62, 86.

⁹² Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 17-19.

⁹³ Mariia Mandryk, *Ukrains’kyi natsionalizm: Stanovlennia u mizhvoiennu dobu* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, 2006), 91.

nationalists too. Still, Dontsov avoided Polonophobic rhetoric. Even the UVO membership's considerable anti-Polish animus did not prevent him from advocating a military alliance with Poland against Soviet Russia at its founding congress. Konovalets' and former president of the ZUNR Ievhen Petrushevych (1863-1940) blocked this motion.⁹⁴ Like most Western Ukrainian nationalists, they regarded Poland as an inveterate enemy on par with Muscovy. Many underground activists, thousands of whom potentially faced arrest, torture, and execution for their activism,⁹⁵ came to resent Dontsov's coziness with the Polish regime, but the clean persona and record enabled him to create front organizations and publications intended to complement the illegal ones associated with the UVO.

The most important of Dontsov's surreptitiously subversive nationalist periodicals was *Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk* (Literary-Scientific Herald, or *LNV*, 1922-1932). Previously the foremost Ukrainian literary and scientific journal, *LNV* was founded in L'viv in 1898. Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi and Ivan Franko edited it as the official organ of the Shevchenko Scientific Society in a spirit of nonpartisanship, intellectual rigor, and artistic freedom. *LNV* moved to Kyiv in 1906 after the expanded rights of expression gained in the Revolution of 1905 had made it possible do so, but the tsarist regime soon banned it, like all Ukrainian publications, in 1914. Revived after the end of the autocracy in 1917, the Soviet authorities banned it once more in 1920. Funds provided by the UVO made the revival of the journal in L'viv possible in 1922. At the insistence

⁹⁴ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 433.

⁹⁵ The most notorious case of such treatment was that of Ol'ha Basarab (Levyts'ka), a UVO member and former ambassador of the UNR to Finland and Austria, who died in police custody on February 9, 1924. Her autopsy indicated that she had been severely beaten and murdered, contravening the official story of suicide by hanging in her cell. The outrage caused by the incident sparked large-scale protests, led by the Union of Ukrainian Women (Soiuz Ukrainok) and turned her into a martyr of the Ukrainian nationalist underground. On Basarab and the Ukrainian women's movement see, Myroslava Diadiuk, *Ukrains'kyi zhinochyi rukh u mizhvoienii Halychyni: Mizh hendernoiui identychnistiu ta natsional'noiui zaanhazovanistiu* (L'viv: Astrolabiia, 2011). On the 20,000 other arrests of active UVO members and other suspected Ukrainians, see V.I. Smolii, ed., *Politychnyi teror i teroryzm v Ukraine XIX-XX st. Istorychni narysy* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2002).

of Konovalets', Dontsov became *LVN*'s chief editor, giving the publication a decidedly nationalist agenda despite assurances that it would remain a neutral, nonpartisan forum, open to writers of all ideological persuasions. This was Konovalets's attempt to win Dontsov over to the UVO's cause before it was too late: "If you do not take Dontsov for what he is," he once remarked, "then rest assured that he will become a fanatic opponent at once."⁹⁶ Hrushevs'kyi and the members of the directory of the Ukrainian Publishers' Union, which also financed the publication, opposed Dontsov's appointment, fearing that it might ruin the paper's democratic traditions. Indeed, Dontsov quickly adopted an authoritarian and tendentious approach to managing the publication, causing one of the other original members of the editorial board, Volodymyr Doroshenko (1879-1963), to complain that he "led the journal according to his own will and taste, drawing some [likeminded people] into collaboration and rejecting others" and "had an abrasive, apodictic, tenacious character."⁹⁷ Unwilling to tolerate dissenting voices, Dontsov soon had Doroshenko and Volodymyr Hnatiuk (1871-1926) purged, assuming total control over *LVN*, retaining his independence from the UVO (and later the OUN), and using the journal as a platform for the promotion of his own ideas and goals.⁹⁸

Dontsov outlined his agenda for *LVN* in the first issue of the revived paper, published May 1922, in a manifesto, "Our goals" (*Nashi tsili*). He sought "to tear our national idea from the chaos in which it threatens to perish, to cleanse it of rubbish and mud, to give it bright, expressive content, to make of it a banner around which the entire nation might gather."⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Iuryi Boiko, ed., *Ievhen Konovalets' ta ioho doba* (Munich: Cicero, 1974), 348.

⁹⁷ Volodymyr Doroshenko, "Literaturno-Naukovyi Vistnyk," *LVN* 1 (Regensburg, 1948): 53-54. This appeared in the fourth and final revival of *LVN* (1948-9).

⁹⁸ Petro Mirchuk, *Narys istorii Orhanizatsii Ukrain's'kykh Natsionalistiv* (Munich: Ukrain's'ke, 1968), 48-50.

⁹⁹ [Dmytro Dontsov], "Nashi tsili" *LVN* 1 (1922): 1-5.

Dontsov hoped to create a new “worldview” and credo, expressed in simple, ecstatic slogans by supremely self-assured sloganeers, capable of mobilizing the masses. Dontsov derided Ukrainian literature for its quietism, fogginess, ineptitude, unhealthy faith in abstract historical determinisms, and drab, overworked realism, which will never inspire the people to action. Instead, he advocated a new romanticism of the peasantry, which has proven its willingness to fight and die for its and the nation’s interests. This new ideology “knows no iron laws of social and economic development. . . . We know, on the contrary, that many an unexpected renaissance has come about as a consequence of war inevitably leading, in many countries, to domination of the peasantry and in no way to democracy.” Nevertheless, there is a tendency toward a disintegration and decentralization of European powers, the fallout of 1914, which Dontsov considered favorable to the movement for Ukrainian independence. The peasants, he thought, “possess the virtues necessary to prosecute Ukraine’s national struggle,” above all personal initiative; they require only inculcation with a militaristic worldview, such as all Western European nations allegedly have. “We want to be not an object, but a subject of history,” Dontsov writes, insisting that the most essential thing for achieving such recognition is a purified, heroic, action- and future-oriented ideology of force, invoking George Sorel’s reflections on the power of myths to foment sociopolitical change, irrespective of their objective truth or realness.¹⁰⁰

LNV, its new chief promised, would serve as the main vehicle for a Ukrainian nationalist cultural renaissance, and the revolutionary war and liberation to which he hoped it would give

¹⁰⁰ Sorel’s concept of myth, not unlike Dontsov’s, draws on Henri Bergson’s “vitalist” concepts of intuition and “integral experience,” condemns intellectualism and the “bloodthirsty” illusion of progress, and celebrates a cult of “creative” violence and, aestheticized (“beautiful”) acts of self-sacrifice and destruction. Myths are “expressions of a will to act,” through which we understand “the activity, the sentiments and the ideas of the masses as they prepare themselves to enter a decisive struggle.” A myth’s “truth” derives from its efficacy in effecting revolutionary change and galvanizing movements. George Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 28, chap. 4.

rise. On its pages, Dontsov began developing a nationalist mythology, which Zaitsev parses into the following¹⁰¹: 1) the myth of an apocalyptic “final battle” in Ukraine’s struggle for freedom (analogous to Sorel’s “social myth” of the “general strike” and its galvanizing role the workers’ movement); 2) the palingenetic myth of national rebirth and the triumphal return of Ukraine’s golden age¹⁰²; 3) the myth of Ukraine’s ancient and modern role on the frontline of the civilizing (i.e. Europeanizing) mission against Russia and Asia as a whole¹⁰³; and 4) the elitist myth of “knights and plebeians”—a binary opposition of lower and higher castes or “spiritual” human types derived from a vulgarization of Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra* (replete with Dontsov’s reimagining of Taras Shevchenko as an *Übermensch* [*nadliudyna*])—a creator of new values who takes action heedless of moralities and celebrates heroic deeds).¹⁰⁴ Although Dontsov was steeped in the material secularism and anti-Christian currents of his era, he wanted to charge his nationalist worldview with a sense of the sacred and the sublime, hallowed in ecstatic paeans and capable of inspiring fanatical devotion. But the “death of God” and the “twilight of the gods” proclaimed by Nietzsche’s “untimely” prophet (*Zarathustra*), did not prevent Dontsov from using theological metaphors. Armed with modernist techniques and ideas, he produced (or at least set the agenda for) a Ukrainian nationalist “mythopoeia.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 213-22.

¹⁰² Ibid., 206-7; Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, chap. 6. On the palingenetic myth and fascism, see Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 32-40.

¹⁰³ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 207-10.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 210-13. On the competing interpretations of Shevchenko—national prophet or revolutionary democrat?—see George G. Grabowicz, *The Poet as Mythmaker: A Study of Symbolic Meaning in Taras Ševčenko* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

¹⁰⁵ An experimental form of myth making in modernist literature, Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and J.R.R. Tolkien’s Middle Earth are classic examples of mythopoeia. D.H. Lawrence, T.S. Eliot, Franz Kafka, and Wallace Stevens also experimented with this postsecular form of myth making. In the cases of Nietzsche, Eliot, and Lawrence, mythopoeia interacted with “reactionary,” antimodern politics. See Scott Freer, *Modernist Mythopoeia: The Twilight of the Gods* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palsgrave Macmillan, 2015).

As we shall see, Dontsov called, rather cynically, for the mobilization of the church and the Christian convictions of the people for the purposes of warlike national egoism and the apotheosis of the nation, but he had no use, at this point, for the doctrines and stories of the Bible, preferring the Roman Empire's transformation of early Christianity (a slave morality) into a religion of worldly power and glory (Catholicism). He thus viewed the Greek-Catholics or Uniates favorably in the early 1920s, though he took anticlerical, anti-Catholic positions in the 1930s, after Greek-Catholic leaders came out in opposition to his ideology and its realization in the practices of the OUN. Dontsov was hostile toward Orthodoxy, the faith of his own upbringing and that of the majority of Ukrainians, but he later joined the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and became outwardly devout as he aged. The ideologue was as inconsistent about his theological as his political worldview, but there is no evidence that he had moved beyond the atheism of his youth with regard to his personal faith at this point, even if he now considered religiosity and religious institutions critical to the health of national states, societies, and cultures. He populated his 1920s writings with many "gods," but the apparently sincere monotheism of his later years is missing. Dontsov sought the salvation of Ukrainian politics and culture in and through an aesthetically edifying, spiritually fortifying mythopoeia of the nation—not through God, Christ, or the morality of the Old and New Testaments.

Despite the radical traditionalism at the heart of his mythopoeia, Dontsov favored the use of the iconoclastic, transgressive, and experimental methods of futurism and expressionism to achieve it. In this regard, he followed the trend throughout the Ukrainian world, especially in newly Soviet Kyiv.¹⁰⁶ Dontsov presented his ideal modernist aesthetics in a study of one of his

¹⁰⁶ On the Ukrainian avant-garde movements of this period see Makaryk and Tkacz, *Modernism in Kiev*, and Oleh S. Ilnytskyj, *Ukrainian Futurism, 1914-1930: A Historical and Critical Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

few Ukrainian literary heroes, the renowned author Lesia Ukrainka (1871-1913). In “Poetka ukrains’koho risordzhimenta: Lesia Ukrainka” (Poetess of the Ukrainian Risorgimento), which appeared in *LNV*’s first two issues, Dontsov extols the power of Ukrainka’s poetry to possess readers, its energy and dynamism, militancy and burning faith, self-sufficiency, and refusal to compromise.¹⁰⁷ He admired her storytelling for its recognition of the interdependence of good and evil, and for the “logic of dreams” that animates her plots. Dontsov later wrote that she rejected the “genial human morality of peace and love for one’s neighbor” as the “religion of slaves.”¹⁰⁸ Ukrainka’s final poems, such as *Boiarynia* (The Boyar Woman, 1910) and *Orhiia* (The Orgy, 1912-13), depict armed struggle in the name of lofty ideals as Ukrainians’ only path to liberation from the “prison” of Russian imperialism.¹⁰⁹

Of all the Ukrainian intellectuals of her generation, Ukrainka alone rejected the “complacent provincialism,” “pornography,” and “peasant ethnography” that degraded the Ukrainian language into an argot, or a caricature based on the speech of the most oppressed social caste (the peasantry), something Dontsov accused Ukrainka’s uncle, Mykhailo Drahomanov, and Volodymyr Vynnychenko of doing.¹¹⁰ She was uniquely worthy of her predecessor, Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine’s greatest national poet, because she refused to collapse the Ukrainian nation into its peasant class, and counseled a voluntarist nationalism that was as

¹⁰⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, “Poetka ukrains’koho risordzhimenta (Lesia Ukrainka),” *LNV* 1 (1922): 28-44, and *LNV* 2 (1922): 135-50. Published separately as *Poetka ukrains’koho risordzhymenta (Lesia Ukrainka)*, (L’viv: Vydavnytstvy Dontsovykh, 1922).

¹⁰⁸ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 92. Dmytro Dontsov, “Pamiati velykoi buntarky (Lesia Ukrainka),” *Vistnyk* 2 (1938): 92-99.

¹⁰⁹ The Nietzschean critique of morality and fascination with the irrational and the mystical in human nature that Dontsov detected in Ukrainka’s work can also be found in the feminist, symbolist poetry of Ol’ha Kobylians’ka (1863-1942), a close friend of hers.

¹¹⁰ Dontsov, *Pidstavy*, in Dontsov, *Vybrani Tvory*, vol. 5, 144.

capable of hatred and action as of love and contemplation.¹¹¹ Dontsov also admired Ukrainka for her ideals of personal sacrifice, arguing that martyrs must be conscious of and steadfast in their martyrdom, fanatically dedicated to the nation, and unafraid to spill the blood without which no idea can be sanctified—an ideal that his young followers enthusiastically embraced in the coming years.¹¹² Such an approach to literature was precisely what was needed, Dontsov believed, for the creation of mass-mobilizing myths, which was his central goal as an editor, publicist, and critic from the early 1920s.¹¹³

An editor unashamed to fill the pages of *LN* with his own articles, Dontsov was successful in turning the journal into the beacon for a new formation of nationalist authors and subscribers drawn from the young Ukrainians of East Galicia, the native-born as well as emigres from the former Russian Empire. These were children of the Great War who refused to accept its outcome, and Dontsov's ideology of force and willpower resonated with them.¹¹⁴ Not without a tinge of jealousy, Konovalets' called Dontsov the "spiritual dictator of Galician youth."¹¹⁵ In the early 1920s, they organized themselves into myriad formations: the Group of Ukrainian Nationalist Youth (HUNM)¹¹⁶ and the League of Ukrainian Nationalists (LUN), which combined into the Union of Organizations of Ukrainian Nationalists (SOUN); the Organization of the Higher Classes of Ukrainian Gymnasium Youth (OVKUH); and the Union of Ukrainian

¹¹¹ Dontsov, *Pidstavy nashoi polityky*, 96-97.

¹¹² Dontsov, *Poetka ukrains'koho risordzhimenta*, 154.

¹¹³ Olesia Omelchuk, *Literaturni idealy ukrains'koho vistnykivstva (1922-1939). Monohrafiia*. (Kyiv: Smoloskyp, 2001), 24-25.

¹¹⁴ Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 84-85.

¹¹⁵ Boiko, *Konovalets'*, 347.

¹¹⁶ The HUNM was known as the Group of Ukrainian *Statist* Youth prior to their rejection of Lypyns'kyi and the Hetmanites in favor of Dontsov and the nationalists.

Nationalist Youth (SUNM). These groups combined with the UVO to create the OUN in 1929, and like the UVO they held Dontsov in high esteem. OVKUH members, including future OUN leader Stepan Bandera (1909-1959) and future UPA commander Roman Shukhevych (1907-1950), today the two most celebrated and condemned heroes in the history of Ukrainian nationalism, organized public readings of *LNV* in L'viv.¹¹⁷

Another OVKUH member and future OUN(B) ideologue, Stepan Lenkavs'kyi (1904-1977), claimed to have drawn all his political knowledge as of the early 1920s from Dontsov's articles in *LNV*, "the leading organ of nationalist creativity."¹¹⁸ He recalled that the SUNM, which offered financial support to Dontsov and boasted members published in *LNV*, deferred to him before all others on the most pressing political and moral questions.¹¹⁹ Many of the ideologue's young followers even came to regard him as the prophet and founder of a new religion. As the author of the OUN(B)'s "Ten Commandments of the Ukrainian Nationalist," Lenkavs'kyi appreciated the religious quality of Dontsov's credo, writing approvingly in 1928 that it exhibits "important distinctive marks of religion: strong emotional coloring, fanatical belief in the truth and inviolability of its dogmas, reckless intolerance to and negation of everything that does not agree with it."¹²⁰

Dontsov was forthright about his aim to sacralize the politics and literature of Ukrainian nationalism, to turn it into an "ersatz religion" with himself as head priest and a pyramidal

¹¹⁷ Mirchuk, *Narys istorii*, 56.

¹¹⁸ Stepan Lenkavs'kyi, *Ukrains'kyi natsionalizm: Tvory*, vol. 1 (Ivano-Frankivs'k: Lileia-NV, 2002), 176.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 201. Stepan Lenkavs'kyi, "Filosofichni pidtsavy 'Natsionalizmu' Dontsova," *Rozbudova natsii* 7/8 (1928): 272-76.

¹²⁰ Quoted in Oleksandr Zaitsev, "Ukrainian Integral Nationalism and the Greek-Catholic Church in the 1920s-1930s," in Jan Nelis, Ann Morelli, and Danny Praet, eds., *Catholicism and Fascism in Europe, 1918-1945* (Hildesheim: George Olms, 2015): 289-403, 395.

hierarchy of acolytes and foot soldiers beneath him.¹²¹ “Modern” nationalism, he thought, was destined not to replace, but to modify and redirect the traditional sources of religious fulfillment in Ukrainian folklife, rendering God and nation, church and state, evermore synonymous. Dontsov’s attitude toward Christianity and its institutions in Ukraine continued to evolve away from atheism; the church and modern Ukrainian nationalism must, of necessity, draw near to one another and fight toward the same end—“the transformation of a scattered tribe into a conscious nation.”¹²² Whatever theological and political differences may have separated the two forces previously, Ukrainian nationalism and the church were drawn together by opposition to a common enemy: Russian Communism. In *Pidstavy* Dontsov called for a reformation of the Ukrainian church to cast off the chains of Muscovite Orthodoxy in the name of Westernization, to returning to its preschismatic roots and reuniting with the allegedly more empowering theologies and institutions of the West. “The organism of this monster [Russia] is mortally wounded in its three main foundations: autocracy, nationality, and orthodoxy. Our collective ideal places, instead of the first, the principle of self-action; instead of the second, self-determination of the nation; instead of the third, an independent Church, faithful to its ancient ties with the Occident.”¹²³ Accordingly, in 1921, Dontsov favored the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, which was strongest in East Galicia and loyal to Rome, but by 1924 had switched to Ukrainian Orthodoxy—a conversion that held for the rest of his days, as his religiosity grew more vehement and apocalyptic with age.

But Dontsov’s version of Christianity, as Zaitsev argues, was not that of the Jews’ “passive worldview,” which he followed Nietzsche in calling a “religion of submission” and

¹²¹ Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi integral’nyi natsionalizm*, 222.

¹²² Dmytro Dontsov, “Tserkva i natsionalizm,” *LNV* 2 (1924), 81.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 92.

“slave morality,” but that of the allegedly more worldly, ennobling, and activist faith of the Roman church.¹²⁴ “The idea that dying Rome [gave] to Christianity: the idea of *virtus*, the highly developed feeling of personal dignity and right, the cult of force and courage.”¹²⁵ He learned from the French integral nationalist Charles Maurras that Christianity’s true essence was not the “Jewish letter” (the Bible) but its “Roman clarification.”¹²⁶ Most valuable was its doctrine of holding faith above question and reason, conducive to an authoritarianism buttressed by supernatural forces and revelations, hieratic hierarchies, and the secrets of initiation. Nationalism moves inexorably toward the “theological worldview of the church,” sharing its antipathy for materialism and socialism.¹²⁷ In place of rationalism they both offer a “dogmatism” that Dontsov casts in a positive, life-affirming light. “According to perhaps its greatest apostle, M[aurice] Barrès, modern nationalism dethroned *l’intelligence*, and in its place put passion [*afekt*] as the greatest explosive force in the history of humanity. Modern nationalism has begun to search for its God not in the combined reason of the ideal, but only in its own desire, its own faith.”¹²⁸ Forged in the crucible of World War I, the modern nationalist, “like a medieval *fidei defensor*, paid no mind to the number of existences that were sacrificed for the triumph of his idea . . . just as he paid no mind to it in 1914.” Dontsov went so far as to pronounce war the essence of both nationalism *and* Christianity, wedding “redemptive violence” on modern battlefields to a

¹²⁴ Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi integral’nyi natsionalizm*, 215.

¹²⁵ Dontsov, *Poetka ukrains’koho rysordzhymenta*, 34-35.

¹²⁶ Dontsov, “Tserkva i natsionalizm,” 82.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 76-77.

traditionalist cult of ancestors.¹²⁹ The church exists solely to serve the nation, doing God's will by supporting Christendom's nationalists.

Certain circles of young Ukrainian writers responded with enthusiasm to Dontsov's project—the production of a new nationalist religion and the spiritual revolution in ethics, politics, and aesthetics that this entailed. As poets, essayists, novelists, literary critics, and scholars of Ukrainian history, linguistics, mythology, and folklore, they sought to generate the texts that would reify this creed and win converts to it, inspiring fervent devotion and great deeds in the process. Dontsov's *LVN* served as the beacon around which this cadre of aspiring myth-makers rallied. Broadly speaking, the group included Ievhen Malaniuk (1897-1968), Iuryi Lypa (1900-1944), Leonid Mosendz (1897-1948), Oleh Ol'zhych (1907-1944), Iuryi Klen (1891-1947), Olena Teliha (1906-1942), Mykhailo Mukhin (1894-1974), Andryi Kryzhanivskyi (Sviatoslav Dolengo) (1907-1950), and Ulas Samchuk (1905-1987), among others.¹³⁰ Some scholars group these writers together as the “Prague School,” after the city where they gathered as émigrés in the early 1920s, or as the “Warsaw School,” after the city to which some of them relocated shortly thereafter, while others insist that these were two stylistically and programmatically distinct groups. I use the name “*Vistnykivtsi*,” which is derived from the journals in which they all published at one point or another (*LVN* and its revival under the Dontsov's sole discretion, *Vistnyk* [1933-1939]), to denote a broader conception of Ukrainian émigré nationalist literature in the interwar period than the geographically confined Prague and Warsaw Schools allow.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 77-79. Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 216-17.

¹³⁰ Myroslav Shkandrij's *Ukrainian Nationalism* is the best (and only) monographic introduction to the group and its historical contexts in English. Teliha did not join the circle until the early 1930s.



Figures 3.5-7: Ievhen Malaniuk, Iuryi Lypa, and Oleh Ol'zhych. *Source:* Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine.

The unity of the *Vistnykivsti* was manifest in their ideology, personal connections, venues of publication, and the stylistics and themes of their writing. With the exception of Malaniuk, all became involved with the OUN, espousing a variety of radical nationalist ideas. Contributing to Dontsov's periodicals and belonging to his club, the self-declared cultural elite of the interwar Ukrainian emigration, was more important than mere location. One of the implications of this category, which has made some Ukrainian literary critics uncomfortable, is that Dontsov, as the editor of *LVN* and *Vistnyk*, was also the founder and ideologue of the school—a controversial association that could taint or diminish the artistic accomplishments of individual *Vistnykivsti*. Many of the latter eventually outgrew Dontsov and turned against him, starting journals of their own and renouncing his influence—a select few remained loyal to the end—but all publicly and privately acknowledged his centrality to the Ukrainian nationalist literary milieu that took shape after World War I. Lypa found his “fine, audacious articles” and their “implacable militancy” strongly appealing.¹³¹ Malaniuk hailed him as “a phenomenon,” later heaping praise on *Pidstavy*

¹³¹ TsDAVO, f. 4465, op. 1, spr. 577, ark. 6.

on the occasion of its author's seventy-fifth birthday.¹³² Ol'zhych wrote the editor about the transformation he had effected in all of them: "We feel in ourselves, and this is original, the birth of such a force (you call this an awakening of the Western elements of the national psyche) that it is not surprising that pride goes to the head. Do not take this for evil—this is only faith in oneself, certainty of one's strength and a sense of one's calling."¹³³ Like the UVO, the origins of this generation's nationalist poetry can be traced to the POW and refugee camps for the veterans of UNR's army and other exiles from Soviet Ukraine, especially at Kalisz and Shchepiorno in central Poland, where Ol'zhych, Lypa, Malaniuk, Mosendz, Iuryi Darahan (1894-1926), and others met, began their careers as poets, and created their own journal, *Veselka* (Rainbow). Schools and theaters operated in the camps, serving teachers, students, farmers, soldiers, officers, and artisans. According to Ol'zhych, the emotions of the exile experience and the hardships of camp life shaped these budding poets' expressive artistic individualities, deepening their appreciation for Ukrainian reality and widening their perspective on the national movement and its possibilities.¹³⁴ They eagerly consumed Dontsov's writings, which circulated in the camps, urging inmates down the path to nationalist radicalization.¹³⁵

According to the prominent Ukrainian cultural critic Iuryi (Sherekh) Shevel'ov (1908-2002)—one of the most trenchant detractors of Dontsov and his influence on Ukrainian literature (despite admitting to a fascination with his ideas during World War II)—it was a worldview, not a particular style, that united the Vistnykivsti: a conviction that Ukraine possessed a unique

¹³² Anatolii Kentii, *Zbroinyi chyn ukrains'kykh natsionalistiv, 1920-1956: Istoryko-arkhivni narysy*, vol. 1 (Kyiv: Derzhavnyi komitet arkhiviv Ukrainy, 2005), 64; Ievhen Malaniuk, "Dmytro Dontsov (Do 75-littia)," in Ievhen Malaniuk, *Knyha sposterezhen'. Proza*, vol. 2 (Toronto: Homin Ukrainy, 1966), 376.

¹³³ Oleh Ol'zhych to D. Dontsov. May 3, 1934. Quoted in Svarnyk, "Chy isnuvala," 91.

¹³⁴ Oleh Ol'zhych, *Neznanomu voiakovi: zapovidane zhyvym*, ed. Leonid Cherevatenko (Kyiv: Fundatsiia imeni O. Ol'zhycha, 1994), 180-81.

¹³⁵ Mykhailo Hikavyi to D. Dontsov, March 26, 1924. DD BN, mf. 87263.

spirituality (*dukhovnist'*), theretofore repressed, and that their task was to realize it in the form of an independent nation-state.¹³⁶ They sought this spirituality in Ukraine's bygone eras and folklore—what Shevel'ov calls a “Herderian-romantic and in part also Hegelian cultural-literary ideology” of “the strong man, the aristocrat, the statesman, the warrior, and the knight,” which was “typical of interwar Europe.”¹³⁷ Shevel'ov attributes the group's voluntarism to Dontsov's (pernicious) influence, dismissing their patriotism for its “delusion [and] artificiality” born of their estrangement from the fatherland.¹³⁸ Under Dontsov's “hypnotic” spell, the school, an autistic aberration, turned inward, spoke only to themselves, and succumbed to “internal exhaustion” by the late 1930s.¹³⁹ Other commentators (Halyna Svarnyk, Ivan Fizer, and Volodymyr Derzhavyn) evaluate the school less harshly, focusing on its “tragic optimism,” “Ukrainian messianism,” and “Promethean worldview,” its creative achievements and continuity with eras of Ukrainian literature before and after, and the real self-sacrifices made by several *Vistnykivtsi* as OUN members during World War II, whose acts of martyrdom demonstrate the authenticity of their poetry and the sincerity of their beliefs.¹⁴⁰

With regard to style, the *Vistnykivsti*'s heavy use of irregular rhymes and accumulation of neologisms, rare words, and archaisms anticipated the work of the Soviet Ukrainian dissident poets of the 1960s (the *Shestydesiatnyky*). The *Vistnykivtsi* carried on traditions of form and

¹³⁶ Iuryi Shevel'ov, *Ia—Mene—Meni (i dovruhy): Spohady*, vol. 2 (Kharkiv: Berezhil, 2001), 107.

¹³⁷ Iurii Sherekh, *Tretia storozha: literatura, mystetstvo, ideolohii* (Baltimore: Smoloskyp, 1991), 447.

¹³⁸ Iuryi Sherekh, “Skarby, iakymy volodiemo,” *Suchanist'* no. 6 (1993), 162.

¹³⁹ Shevelov, *Ia*, vol. 2, 107-08.

¹⁴⁰ Nazi executioners shot Teliha, alongside her husband, at Babyn Iar, the Gestapo arrested and executed Ol'zhych, and the NKVD apprehended and killed Lypa, dumping his badly tortured body near Shutova village; all were targeted for their activities in the OUN(B) or OUN(M). Halyna Svarnyk, “Chy isnulvala praz'ka shkola ukrains'koi literatury?” *Ukrains'ki problemy* 2 (Kyiv, 1995): 87-97; Volodymyr Derzhavyn. “O. Ol'zhych—portret natsional'noho heroizmu,” *Ukrains'ke slovo* 2 (Kyiv, 1994), 537.

content stretching back to the Ukrainian Baroque and the Cossack period, but also pursued the aesthetic agendas inaugurated by modernist movements, such as symbolism and neoclassicism, transitioning from “art for art’s sake” to a radical commitment to political ideologies and the reconciliation of text and life after World War I (a typical progression for contemporaneous avant-gardistes throughout Europe).¹⁴¹ Pleased with his own impact, Dontsov described the aesthetic and ideological orientation of the generation under his influence in his 1923 essay, “Pro ‘Molodykh’” (On “the Youth”):

The revolution that has dethroned the saints of positivism has replaced them with intuitivism in philosophy (Bergson) and expressionism in art and literature (in poetry it was first called ‘symbolism’). The new worldview has broken irrevocably with everything old. This was a revolt in the name of everything elemental, subconscious in the human soul. Feeling took the place of reason, the personal ‘I want’ took the place of laws, mysticism took the place of phenomena. At the source of everything there appeared a will that knew no compromises, or more correctly its protoform—an obscure drive. Once more the world appeared as the play of turbulent, blindly raging forces, as a chaos in which nothing is but everything is just becoming. The individual ‘Ego,’ its autonomous creativity, and its untiring activism became values in themselves, independent of aims and content. Ethical pathos and ‘amorality,’ *fas* and *nefas*, the delight of the creator and the malice of the destroyer all became mixed up in the cult of the naked force and power that hates everything sickly or condemned to die, and that is the sole guarantor of victory in our epoch of lost illusions, unparalleled boredom, and war of all against all.¹⁴²

In addition to *LNV*, Dontsov disseminated these ideas more directly, with fewer pretensions to neutrality, through the journal *Zahrava* (Crimson Sky), which he edited in the years 1923-24, again with the support of Konovalets’ and the UVO. Highly regarded among

¹⁴¹ The Ukrainian Neoclassicists (the core members were Mykola Zerov, Maksym Ryls’kyi, Iuryi Klen, Pavlo Fylypovych, and Mykhailo Drai-Khmara) self-consciously sought to create high art for its own sake, disdaining the utilitarian, didactic, and ideological approaches favored by the Communist Party. Like Dontsov, they regarded Ukrainian culture as an organic part of the West, and strove to produce balanced, logical, masterfully crafted works that spoke to “universal” themes, often drawn from antiquity. Ukrainian Symbolists, under the influence of both French and Russian poets, also started out as aestheticists, insisting on their perfect autonomy from politics and other “real-world” concerns. Rejecting naturalism and realism in favor of mystical explorations of the evocative, magical powers of words and metaphors in themselves. Representatives of both trends shifted away from aestheticism toward ideological commitment and political engagement with “the real” during the tumultuous 1920s and 1930s.

¹⁴² Dmytro Dontsov, “Pro ‘Molodykh’,” *LNV* 4 (1923): 267-80, 268. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 85-86.

interwar Ukrainian integral nationalists, *Zahrava* was the official publication of the Ukrainian Party of National Work (UPNR, known internally as the “Ukrainian Party of National Revolution”). Founded April 24, 1924, the UPNR was the short-lived legal front organization of the UVO.¹⁴³ The party’s rightwing program called for a “Ukraine for Ukrainians” purged of the foreigners who had deformed the country into a rural dependency. It recognized the importance of the peasantry in the life of the nation, called for reeducation of the youth in the values of discipline and self-reliance, and opposed cosmopolitan and internationalist ideas. According to Motyl, this was the first programmatic statement of the desires of Ukrainian nationalists, and it clearly bears Dontsov’s mark.¹⁴⁴ The UPNR’s pursuit of a united front of Ukrainian forces led to its dissolution on July 11, 1925, when most of its members abandoned it to join the newly formed centrist Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UNDO), the largest legal Ukrainian political party in interwar Poland. Some attribute the party’s failure to Dontsov’s conflicts with Konovalets’, whom he accused of doing too little to support it.¹⁴⁵ The outcome of the venture permanently damaged relations between the two. Others blame Dontsov’s disagreements with Paliiv (coeditor of *Zahrava*), who, unlike Dontsov, opposed the emulation of Western ideas and models.¹⁴⁶ Whatever the case, order eluded him during his tenure at the helm of the UPNR and *Zahrava*; practical politics appeared not to be his strong suit and he never returned to them.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Its other leaders were Dmytro Levyts’kyi (1877-1942), Dmytro Paliiv (1896-1944), Ivan Kedryn (1896-1995), and his sister Milena Rudnyts’ka (1892-1976)—a prominent leader in the Western Ukrainian women’s movement.

¹⁴⁴ Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 114-16.

¹⁴⁵ A.V. Kentii, *Ukrains’ka Viis’kova Orhanizatsiia (UVO v 1920-1928 rokakh. Korotkyi narys* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 1998), 60. Volodymyr Martynets’, *Ukrains’ke pidpillia vid U.V.O do O.U.N. Spohady i materialy do peredistorii ta istorii ukrains’koho orhanizovanoho natsionalizmu* (Winnipeg: Ukrainian National Federation, 1949), 229.

¹⁴⁶ Shlikhta, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 61.

¹⁴⁷ One of Dontsov’s future rivals in the nationalist camp, Volodymyr Martynets’, described his error in a letter: “If you, Doctor, had at the time paid more attention to order in the political party around *Zahrava* and purged it of

Embarrassed by the affair, Dontsov later denied ever being a part of the UPNR's leadership, though most researchers who have addressed the matter disagree.¹⁴⁸ Nevertheless, *Zahrava*'s two-year run represented a milestone in the radicalizing development of Ukrainian nationalism. The success of *Zahrava*, *LNV*, and *Pidstavy* ensured Dontsov's popularity, which only grew in the years that followed, propelling him to celebrity status in the Ukrainian émigré community in Central Europe.

While all the nationalist youth groups acknowledged Dontsov's intellectual authority, they had their own ideologues, some of whom eventually rejected aspects of his thought and positioned themselves as his competitors. By the mid 1920s a split had already begun to emerge between Dontsov's "active nationalism" and the "organized nationalism" of the future OUN. Volodymyr Martynets' (1899-1960), the chief ideologue of the SUNM at this time, complained of the "unnatural existence of two 'nationalisms'—'Dontsovist' and organized," writing that "if someone wanted to call Dontsov the 'father of Ukrainian nationalism,' and us his children, then he would be a father who did not recognize his children and we would be children who already stood on our own legs on the day of [our] birth."¹⁴⁹ Martynets's somewhat self-serving assessment underestimates Dontsov's impact, eliding his sincere though unsuccessful attempts to spearhead the organization of Ukrainian nationalists through *Zahrava* and the UPNR. After

undesirable elements, then we would not have witnessed these undesirable elements outgrowing you, demolishing the party, and leaving you completely alone." Martynets' to Dontsov, July 18, 1930. TsDAHO, f. 269, Dokumenty provodu OUN. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 284.

¹⁴⁸ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 194. Petro Mirchuk, *Narys istorii*, vol. 1, 51; Zynovii Knysh, *Stanovlennia OUN* (Kyiv: Vydavystvo imeni Oleny Telihi, 1994), 21-26; Kentii, *Ukrains'ka viiskova orhanizatsiia*, 55-59.

¹⁴⁹ Martynets', *Ukrains'ke pidpillia*, 157, 228; Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 214. As we will see, Martynets' later sought to undermine Dontsov's reputation by harping on his pro-Polish orientation and contempt for the masses which they both wished to lead. Other future OUN theorists, including Mykola Stsibors'kyi (1897-1941), Ievhen Onats'kyi (1894-1979), Iuliian Vassyian (1894-1953), and Dmytro Andriievs'kyi (1892-1976), once avid students of Dontsov's thought, failed to persuade him to participate in the creation of an all-inclusive Ukrainian nationalist organization during the late 1920s, came to resent his aloofness, and became critics of his ideas.

1925, it is true, Dontsov kept a safe distance between himself and the nationalist underground, but he did not abandon all of his followers, and the ones he supported played an active role in the OUN.

Dontsov and Dontsova never had biological children, but instead devoted themselves to the cause of Ukraine's liberation, becoming spiritual guardians to the young *Vistnykivtsi*, nurturing their authorial abilities, and offering them a platform through which to express and amplify themselves. Their protégés—Lypa, Teliha, Mosendz, Malaniuk, Ol'zhych, Klen, and Samchuk—published in the Dontsovs' journals, gathered at their home in L'viv, joined them for dinner parties in Warsaw and Prague, accompanied them on vacations to the Carpathians and Western Europe, and even became romantically involved with them.¹⁵⁰ Dontsov failed to build a parliamentary party on the basis of his ideas, but he played an essential role in Ukrainian nationalist politics from its inception, aestheticizing and sacralizing it, quite self-consciously, with a new poetics and an epic, palingenetic mythos.

Dontsov, Fascism, and the Avant-Garde

After Benito Mussolini's rise to power in 1922, Dontsov's ideas and the organizations permeated by them elicited negative comparisons to Italian Fascism by critics. His predilection for authoritarian statism had already been called out in a review of *Pidstavy* by the Ukrainian Social Democrat Isaak Mazepa (1884-1959), who accused him of betraying the authentic traditions of the Cossacks, which were rebellious and anarchic. "If in contemporary conditions one could create a state based on Dontsov's ideas," Mazepa writes, "it could only be a police state in which the popular masses serve mutely as material for the experiments of various

¹⁵⁰ I discuss the personal relationships between Dontsov, Dontsova, and the *Vistnykivtsi* in chapter 5.

‘brilliant cynics.’”¹⁵¹ But Dontsov insisted that the heavy-handed centralization of power promoted in his writing was only a transitional measure, necessary in the time of great stress and upheaval that stateless revolutionary Ukraine will face on its path to his ideal government and society: American-style democracy. “No one is so naive as to consider dictatorship a permanent form of government; this is a temporary phenomenon. . . . When I speak about a state system on the American model—I am speaking about the more or less stable form of an already constituted state.”¹⁵² Nevertheless, accusations of fascism did not offend Dontsov, who considered what Mussolini and his Blackshirts had achieved in Italy to be highly instructive for Ukrainian nationalists. His first published use of the term occurs in his 1922 work on Lesia Ukrainka, in which he writes that “the whole of her creative work is one frenzied cry to that *bella vendetta*, which, in its most recent form of ‘fascism,’ favored orgies in Italy, but [took] the form of uprisings in her native country.”¹⁵³ The ascendant Italian ideology represented the aggressive, uncompromising values and monumental, overpowering aesthetic that he sought to inject into Ukrainian politics and literature.

His 1923 article, “Bellua sine capite” (The Beast without a Head), written on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the UNR’s declaration of Ukrainian independence, compares Fascism to Bolshevism to uncover the secrets behind their success. Both, he argues, were “above all antidemocratic movements,” which were nevertheless “popular” and “revolutionary.” Exhibiting “uncompromisingness and irreconcilability,” Fascism and Bolshevism were both “movements of

¹⁵¹ Isaak Mazepa, *Bol'shevyzm i okupatsiia Ukrainy: sotsialno-politychni prychyny nedozrilosty syl ukrains'koi revoliutsii* (L'viv: Dilo, 1922), 60. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 88.

¹⁵² Dmytro Dontsov, “Targovitsa chy Poltava?” *LNv*, no. 10 (1925), 173.

¹⁵³ Dontsov, *Poetka ukrains'koho risordzhimenta*, 34.

an initiative minority, which imposed its will on compatriots.”¹⁵⁴ So long as Ukrainian nationalist movements lacked these elitist, authoritarian features and the corresponding ability to inspire fanatical commitment to an idea, they would continue to fail. However, Dontsov hedged such endorsements: “I am not making an advertisement here for either Fascism or Bolshevism: with what the first will end—I do not know; that the second will end in total bankruptcy—is obvious. But I am not concerned here with their internal politics, but only with the methods of seizing and consolidating the state apparatus . . . , and in this regard both Fascism and Bolshevism are still classic examples of how this is done.”¹⁵⁵ Dontsov elaborated on the need for “creative violence” and “initiative minorities” elsewhere in the early 1920s, holding forth the possibility of a new elite emerging meritocratically in the crucible of revolution (a position that the Hetmanites rejected completely).¹⁵⁶ In an anonymous 1923 article in *Zahrava*, “Chy my fashysty?” (Are We Fascists?), Dontsov addressed the Ukrainian left’s accusations directly: “We do not regard fascism as something evil. On the contrary!”¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, he expressed skepticism about the term’s meaningfulness outside the Italian context and specifically in Ukraine, quoting an unnamed “leader of Italian Fascism”: “‘Fascism is an essentially Italian matter. Because of this, any replication in a foreign country is impossible and would only be aping (*malpovannia*). A fascist world union is nonsense.’ We wholly subscribe to this declaration. And thus it is appropriate that we stand, like fascism, not on an international but on a

¹⁵⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, “Bellua sine capite (Z nahody piatylitnykh rokovyn proholoshennia nezalezhnomy Ukrainy),” *LNV* 1 (1922): 59-60.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Dmytro Dontsov, “Agoniia odnoi doktryny (Pid novyi rik),” *LNV* 1 (1924): 56-67.

¹⁵⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, “Chy my fashysty?” *Zahrava* 7 (1923): 97-102.

national platform, — we cannot be fascists.”¹⁵⁸ Then again, as Zaitsev notes, Italian Fascism’s prioritization of national over social liberation, hostility toward internationalism, and conception of nationalism as a way of life prompted Dontsov to declare that “if this is the program of fascism, then have it your way — we are fascists!”¹⁵⁹

The following year he again identified his ideology as a form of fascism, albeit in quotation marks, in part because it opposed both communism and liberalism, following a third way between or beyond them, in part because a more precise term was lacking.¹⁶⁰ Interestingly, he acknowledged the possibility of Ukrainian Communism combining with Ukrainian “fascism,” provided that it become “national” (i.e. purge itself of Russian messianism and instead pursue independence), because it had the right “antiliberal temperament” to prosecute a violent revolution.¹⁶¹ (In the meantime, of course, only a struggle to the death was possible between the two doctrines’ adherents.) Thus, at this point, despite his admiration for the modern states and societies of the West, above all the US, Dontsov’s antiliberalism was almost as uncompromising as his anti-Communism. Communists were at least capable of putting up a fight and exercising authority; the same could not be said of meek liberals. “If I had to characterize the doctrine of liberalism in one word,” he writes, “I would call it the *atrophy of the instinct of domination*, the weakening of the thirst for power. But the consequence of this is a negative relation to all attributes of power, to violence.” Liberalism’s principled rejection of violence directed at the

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. Quoted in Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 225. Picking up on this pronouncement, the Polish police identified *Zahrava* and the UPNR as a “party of Ukrainian fascists,” calling for their “decisive liquidation” in the summer of 1923, but the organizations had disbanded before a crackdown was executed.

¹⁶⁰ Dontsov, “Agoniia,” 67.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

people, at rival parties, and at foreign nations rendered it impotent and anachronistic in the postwar present:

In the first case it chooses, instead of dictatorship—consultation . . . instead of civil war—elections . . . instead of aggressive nationalism—‘national onanism,’ to use Mussolini’s name for such internationalism without reciprocation. At this time, in aggressive nationalism (fascism) as well as in aggressive socialism (communism), the element of domination [and] violence sets the tone in relation to the masses, to ‘parties,’ and to other nations, it is a goal and a method—[but] the method of liberalism is understanding, [and] its aim is an apolitical ‘happiness of all.’¹⁶²

The liberal conception of power and sovereignty as something that derives from the people as whole struck Dontsov as patently false. It was clear to him that only a small minority of any given population is actually capable of ruling—the rest are simply too stupid or uninformed for politics, no matter how many millions they comprise.¹⁶³ (Adolf Hitler was making similar arguments against democracy at roughly the same time in his dictation of *Mein Kampf*.)¹⁶⁴ World War I, thought Dontsov, heralded the “agony of liberalism” and its irrelevance as anything more than a moderating opposition to excessive dictatorships for the foreseeable future.¹⁶⁵ Above all, he blamed liberalism and its abhorrence of “creative violence” for the failure of the Ukrainian Revolution and the disastrous triumph of Russian communism, concluding that “the only thing that could pick us back up from this downfall is a full rejection of the liberal-democratic doctrine.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Ibid., 64.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 60.

¹⁶⁴ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 200.

¹⁶⁵ Dontsov, “Agoniia,” 63. Zaitsev argues that this indicated Dontsov’s rejection of totalitarianism in favor of a checked authoritarianism as of 1923. By the early 1930s, however, he had advanced to fully totalitarian ideas that did not envision toleration for oppositional groups and political pluralism. Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 200.

¹⁶⁶ Dontsov, “Agoniia,” 66.

Historian Stanley G. Payne's typology lists "anticonservatism," alongside antiliberalism and anticommunism, as one of the basic features of fascism¹⁶⁷; can it be ascribed to Dontsov as of the mid 1920s? Increasingly future-oriented and iconoclastic (with the exception of the half-dead Cossack traditions that he reimagined to match his ideology), Dontsov's opinion of the leading forms of contemporaneous Ukrainian conservatism—Lypyns'kyi's agrarian-statism and Hetmanite monarchism—lowered in the course of the decade. He summed up his critiques of it in a 1925 article, "Pans'ko-muzhyts'kyi tsentavr i neomonarkhizm" (The Lordly-Peasant Centaur and Neomonarchism), in which he dismisses Lypyns'kyi's doctrine as fantastical, utopian, and out-of-step with the times. It overestimated the Ukrainian nobility, to the meager extent that such a caste had survived, and its conception of the peasantry as a single class comprising all the country's farmers, both wealthy and impoverished, was unrealistic. The neomonarchists and the would-be gentry of Ukraine demonstrated their unreliability when they backed Skoropads'kyi's decision to side with the Russian Whites. Representatives of a "nonliving idea" and incapable of innovation, "these people lack that *creative* element that builds states and organizes still unorganized nations."¹⁶⁸ The Hetmanites put the narrow class interests of the Ukrainian pseudogentry before the goal of independence. While acknowledging the need for a personification of power and the strivings of the nation in the form of a charismatic leader whose word is synonymous with the law (the *Führerprinzip*), Dontsov believed that, for an independent Ukraine, such a man could not be a "legal monarch" because no such monarch existed. The Romanov dynasty had a stronger claim to rule in Ukraine, according to the same principle of legitimacy through unbroken hereditary succession, than an upstart like "Hetman"

¹⁶⁷ Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism: Comparison and Definition* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980), 7.

¹⁶⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, "Pans'ko-muzhyts'kyi tsentavr i neomonarkhizm" *LVN* 4 (1925), 359.

Skoropads'kyi. Rather, such as Mussolini, the new leader of Ukraine would have to be ushered into power through the opposite principle of revolution.¹⁶⁹

What, then, should we call Dontsov's ideology at this point? It bears, at minimum, a "family resemblance"¹⁷⁰ to Italian Fascism, sharing features commonly included in academic definitions of generic fascism: radical nationalism; exaltation of youth and war, order, discipline, and hierarchy; ideas of the initiative minority, of redemptive violence and creative destruction, of the new man, and of mythic palingenesis; willingness to accept the dictatorship of an absolute leader in order to hasten modernization and destroy internal or external enemies (especially communists); contempt for parliaments, egalitarianism, and weakness; association with paramilitary groups (the UVO); appeals to and strength of support among the middling "losers" of capitalist or socialist industrialization (the petite bourgeoisie and the independent peasantry); and alliances with conservative organizations such as the church, despite a post-Nietzschean dismay for modern Christianity and bourgeois moralism (not to mention an undercurrent of fascination with native polytheistic and pagan beliefs). Although interwar Ukrainian nationalism was, unlike Italian Fascism, stateless, and thus geared toward the attainment of a state rather than the transfiguration of an existing one, it drew upon overlapping sources of inspiration (Mazzini, Sorel, Bergson, Nietzsche), developed undeniably related worldviews and practices, and was born in the same crisis following World War I and the Russian Revolution.

Dontsov appreciated that he was living through the dawn of what Eric Hobsbawm has called the "age of extremes" and which the French philosopher and historian Élie Halévy

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 363.

¹⁷⁰ Following Ludwig Wittgenstein, we can define "fascism," not by a single thread or essence common to all putative instances thereof, but as "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and crisscrossing." See his *Philosophical Investigations* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), §66-68.

lamented as an “era of tyrannies.”¹⁷¹ The fortunes of liberalism were declining, while those of authoritarian socialism and integral nationalism, latent in modern warfare, rose. As a creature of the Great War, the Soviet experiment was the original model of this boldly futurist and hard-edged vision of politics, inspiring its “progressive” friends and “reactionary” foes alike. Its “postwar socialism”—which Halévy broadly defined as “state control of production, exchange, and distribution” plus “state control of thought” via censorship and the “organization of enthusiasm” via mass agitation and propaganda—“derives much more from this wartime organization than from Marxist doctrine.”¹⁷² Still, the war radicalized ideas, which, as we saw in chapter 1, were already present in the heterodox, nationalized Marxism of Dontsov and many of his contemporaries. Reeling from the shock of the Russian Revolution and (in many cases) the humiliation of defeat, the fascists and integral nationalists of Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe imitated Bolshevik techniques, but did so in opposition to Soviet power and the Marxist credo, with the aim of promoting or reviving “traditional” values, hierarchies, and property relations rather than abolishing them.¹⁷³ The Bolsheviks had seemingly proven that one could start with ideology (the superstructure, culture, philosophy, etc.), then, using state violence and propaganda, force social and economic “reality” to conform to it—an ironic contravention of the

¹⁷¹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994).

¹⁷² Élie Halévy, *The Era of Tyrannies: Essays on Socialism and War* (New York: New York University Press, 1966), 266. Halévy, a specialist in nineteenth-century British history, first presented his theses about World War I and its complicated, sometimes paradoxical intersections with revolution, socialism, and nationalism in a 1929 Rhodes Memorial Lecture at Oxford University, “The World Crisis of 1914-1918: An Interpretation.” *Ibid.*, 209-47. “The paradox of postwar socialism,” he added, “is that its recruits often come to it out of hatred and disgust of war, while it offers them a program consisting in the prolongation of the wartime regime in time of peace.” Halévy invokes Russian Bolshevism, which arose “out of a revolt against the war,” and its practice of “War Communism” during the subsequent Russian Civil War, as a case in point.

¹⁷³ As governmental systems—single-party dictatorships created by armed groups during periods of crisis and anarchy—Bolshevism and Fascism were identical, according to Halévy, who referred to both as unique forms of generic “fascism” (using a definition of the term that most modern scholars, apart from A.J. Gregor, would reject).

same materialist conception of history that had inspired them in the first place. For Dontsov, there was no law binding humanity to a particular course of development; any ideology can become a reality, provided only that its adherents are victorious in war. Ideals and moralities, gods, myths, and heroes, castes, institutions, and titles; the modern ideologue and his people were free to take and combine whatever elements they liked from any era and any culture real or imagined, and reify them in the present through sheer will, commitment, and violence.

Dontsov's fascist style of political theorizing and cultural critique was not just modernist, but avant-garde. The historical avant-garde (1909-39) was a product of a crisis in the self-consciousness of modernity that roughly coincided with the interwar period and the rise and fall of fascism. According to Peter Bürger: "Through the avant-garde movements, the historical succession of techniques and styles has been transformed into a simultaneity of the radically disparate."¹⁷⁴ A rupture within modernism, contemporaneous with and homologous to fascism (in politics), the avant-garde abolished historical diachrony and sequentiality in the arts; the Classical, the Gothic, the Romantic, etc., ceased to be distinct periods and styles, and instead became aesthetic possibilities at the disposal of the present in whatever combination the artist liked. In a way analogous to the avant-garde, fascism, according to Ernst Bloch, is characterized by "objective nonsynchronicities" and "the nonsimultaneity of the simultaneous"—concepts which he expounded in 1932 to explain the rise of Nazism.¹⁷⁵ The underlying argument was that the various classes of (German) society had modernized at different rates and times, and thus inhabited different temporalities (a different "Now"), existing at "lower" or "earlier" levels of

¹⁷⁴ Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 63.

¹⁷⁵ Ernst Bloch, "Non-Synchronism and the Obligation to Its Dialectics," trans. Mark Ritter, *New German Critique* 11 (Spring, 1977): 22-38.

socioeconomic development. Declining classes (to wit, the peasantry and the petite bourgeoisie) retained “anachronistic” worldviews because they were still involved in precapitalist modes of production. Modernity confronted them as a menace to their entire way of life, so they retreated into an idyllic past and embrace political ideologies that promise to revive “the ghost of history.” In situations where the unevenness of development is particularly acute, these nonsynchronicities can give rise to a conservative revolution (fascism) spearheaded by the antimodern (because *premodern*) classes. Bloch wrote in and about interwar Germany, but his thesis could be applied to Ukraine during the same period, which was also experiencing the displacements associated with industrialization, globalization, democratization, etc., and contained a vast peasantry and a smaller petite bourgeoisie, both threatened with annihilation and driven to desperation by the double bind of capitalism and Bolshevism. Political thinkers who addressed themselves to their plight, such as Dontsov, hailed traditions derived from whatever historical epochs happened to suit the moment—ancient, medieval, modern, prehistoric, and futural—all at once, in their bid to transcend an intolerable present.

Conclusion: New Traditions

The American philosopher Marshall Berman argued that early twentieth-century European intellectuals, in coming to terms with the illusion-shattering maelstrom of mechanized death and forgetting that had befallen them, resorted to “rigid polarities and flat totalizations” and “either embraced [modernity] with a blind and uncritical enthusiasm, or else condemned [it] with neo-Olympian remoteness and contempt.”¹⁷⁶ Dontsov chose the latter course. However, in setting out his vision of an alternative modernity rooted in tradition, he adopted the avant-garde

¹⁷⁶ Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 24.

modernist forms of expressionism and futurism in literature, and of vitalism and voluntarism in philosophy, which rejected the very idea of tradition as stifling and were incapable, in principle, of handing down new traditions to replace the old, apart from that of killing one's idols. Dontsov arrived at traditionalism by assailing the traditions—imperial Russian, classical and revisionist Marxist, Ukrainophile populist, etc.—in which he was reared. This path was typical for radical-minded intellectuals of his era. As an open-ended, accelerating process of self-negation and innovation, interwar Europe experienced a “tremendous shattering of tradition which is the obverse of the contemporary crisis and renewal of mankind.”¹⁷⁷ This caesura in the communication of experience and in the nature of memory cut generations off from one another, leaving youth disoriented before a foreboding infinity of possibilities.¹⁷⁸ Tradition implies a privileging of the past over the present (its steward) and the future (its anticipated mimesis), but in order to exist it must be willfully chosen and preserved by each succeeding generation. Modernity, tradition's seeming antithesis, obliterates a multitude of specific traditions, but it also produces an entirely novel, transcendental idea of “Tradition” as its dialectical opposite, something timeless and eternal that does not permit modification or critique. Dontsov came to regard tradition in the latter sense as the solution to the post-World War I crisis. He yearned for a great simplification of communication and politics that would restore to the people, and especially the youth, the firm bedrock of authority and dogma upon which to stand in their struggle for survival and dignity.

Dontsov's early 1920s doctrine—closely related to the Eurasianism of the Russian émigrés, the Conservative Revolutionary movement in Germany, and Italian Fascism—was a

¹⁷⁷ Benjamin, “Art in the Age,” 221.

¹⁷⁸ The loss of the practices of apprenticeship and the relatively stable social ranks of earlier times exacerbated these anxieties. Also see Walter Benjamin, “The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov,” *Illuminations*, 83-85.

form of reactionary modernism, aestheticized politics, and generic fascism, which developed in reaction to defeat and sought the spiritual and political transfiguration of the nation through a resurrection of its supposed mythic-heroic roots. The practical, theoretical, and aesthetic imperatives laid out in *Pidstavy* went a long way toward making Dontsov into the paradigmatic ideologue of interwar Ukrainian nationalism, providing the foundations upon which a new generation of like-minded students, militants, and writers organized themselves. Years later he repudiated modernism in art and literature as a cosmopolitan threat to the native culture of Ukraine, switching his allegiance to a more restrained, disciplined, and “traditional” classicism, but the program he set forth in the early 1920s dominated the nationalist literary scene in East Galicia until World War II. His hopes of exerting the same degree of influence in the realm of practical politics, however, were dashed by the quick death of the UPNR and his deteriorating relations with Konovalts’ and the UVO. In the next chapter we will explore Dontsov’s role, or lack thereof, in the formation and activities of the OUN, and his reactions to developments in Soviet Ukraine and events affecting the Ukrainian community throughout Europe in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

CHAPTER 4: NATIONALISTS, COMMUNISTS, AND NATIONAL COMMUNISTS: DMYTRO DONTSOV, THE OUN, AND SOVIET UKRAINE, 1926-1933

“Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster.
And when you look long into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you.”¹
—Friedrich Nietzsche

At the height of his creative power and influence in the years 1926-1933, Dontsov published his most famous work, *Natsionalizm* (Nationalism), pursuing what I have called his authoritarian iconoclasm and cosmopolitan ultranationalism to their logical (or illogical) conclusion. In this and myriad other books and articles, he expounded the moral, cultural, and political implications of his “worldview” in light of the rise of Italian Fascism and Soviet Communism—Dontsov’s exemplars for the cultivation of a new Ukrainian: youthful, brutal, “with stone heart and burning faith,” inspired by legendary ancestors and bloody myths, disciplined, intrepid, fanatically devoted to the national idea, and prepared to sacrifice anything and anyone for it. Embracing these teachings, the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO) and the various Western Ukrainian nationalist youth groups merged to found the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) between 1927 and 1929. Despite repeated acknowledgements of the primacy of his ideology for their movement and invitations to join it, Dontsov refused to take partake in the leadership of the OUN or assume any responsibility for it.

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1989), 89.

The reason for his caution and distance was the OUN's status as an underground terrorist group, committed to the destruction of the Polish state in Galicia and Volhynia, and, eventually, the creation of a nation-state incorporating all ethnically Ukrainian territories. Affiliation with the OUN would have ended Dontsov's career as a publicist in L'viv/Lwów, and likely forced him to relocate to another European country to avoid arrest, joining one of the sizable Eastern Ukrainian émigré communities in Czechoslovakia or Germany, where most of the top OUN commanders resided. Relations between the Ukrainian minority in Poland and the Polish state and society rapidly deteriorated during these years, empowering and radicalizing nationalists on both sides. In May 1926, Piłsudski carried out an armed coup, establishing the so-called Sanacja regime (from the Latin, *sanatio*, meaning "healing"), which concentrated power in the executive (Piłsudski himself), restricted civil rights, and promised a stabilized economy and the speedy resolution of social, political, and ethnic conflicts. Piłsudski served as Poland's dictator until his death in 1935. Facing the OUN's escalating assassination and sabotage campaign, Warsaw in the fall of 1930 launched the widely criticized Pacification against suspected Galician Ukrainian nationalists. Gradually, the Sanacja regime moved away from the protection of national minority rights toward the forced assimilation (Polonization) of Ukrainians and other non-Poles in the country's eastern regions, as advocated by the increasingly powerful Polish integral nationalists (the National Democrats or *Endecja*) under Roman Dmowski's leadership.

The Soviet state and the Communist Party sought to capitalize on this strife by condemning the "fascist" Polish state for its oppression of Ukrainians, and by presenting Soviet Ukrainians as better treated, more autonomous, and more advanced, culturally, politically, and socioeconomically. After the conclusion of the Treaty of Riga, the Soviet leadership had abandoned War Communism in favor of the New Economic Policy (NEP), which permitted farmers to retain more of their produce and sell surplus grain on a semi-open market. A separate

Treaty on the Creation of the Soviet Union (December 29, 1922) created a “federation” of four original republics—the Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, and Transcaucasian—national in form yet socialist in content, and assured the signatory nations of their right to self-determination, up to and including secession from the union. Recognizing the power of nationalism, the Bolsheviks sought to both disarm and harness it, differentiating the tolerant Soviet system from the “Russian chauvinist,” imperialist one that it superseded.² Beginning in 1924, they adopted a series of “indigenization” (*korenizatsiia*) policies designed to promote the titular nationalities of the republics into positions of cultural, economic, and political authority, to improve education in the indigenous language, and to bring about a flowering of previously oppressed national cultures, thereby infusing nationalist sentiments with pro-Soviet, socialist content. Terry Martin has likened these policies to “affirmative action”—a scheme of nation-building for the sake of modernization that was arbitrarily abandoned by Stalin in the early 1930s in favor of a return to primordialism and Russian chauvinism—but the long-term goal was the creation of a new Soviet socialist supranation.³ Initially, Ukrainization led to real successes in the cultural development of Soviet Ukraine, spurring a national renaissance in literature and art.

Dontsov believed that this process would sublate the smaller, colonized nationalities of the periphery (such as the Ukrainian) around a hegemonic, ethnic Russian core, depriving them of their native identities, traditions, and political freedoms. Early Soviet Ukrainian leaders intended NEP and Ukrainization to assuage the local peasantry, which violently resisted the new

² The Bolsheviks decided the internal boundaries and jurisdictions of the Soviet Union on the basis of an ambitious ethnographic survey of the former Russian Empire’s constituent nationalities. Francine Hirsch has called the thinking behind this project as “state-sponsored evolutionism”: nationhood was a step on the path of modernization from precapitalist tribes, to socialist nations, to communist conglomerations of many nations, which the Soviet state sought to accelerate. See her *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 7-9.

³ Terry Martin, *The Affirmative-Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

regime, to bridge the gap between Ukraine's Russophone, proletarian cities and its Ukrainophone, peasant countryside, and to win the support of the "progressive" elements of the Ukrainian intelligentsia who had supported the UNR and fled west during the Bolshevik conquest of the country, ideally resulting in the secession of Western Ukraine from Poland and its annexation into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (UkrSSR). Many Ukrainian émigrés chose this "Sovietophile" path, returning to Kyiv and Kharkiv (the UkrSSR's capital city until 1934) to participate in the development of Soviet Ukraine and what grew into a renaissance of Ukrainian culture lasting until the late 1920s. Even Dontsov found cause for enthusiasm about the boldest exponents of Soviet Ukrainization, applauding the Cultural Renaissance of writers and artists who, sometimes under the influence of his ideas, defiantly called for a reorientation of Ukrainian culture toward Western Europe, away from the Moscow's stifling oversight and mediation. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, however, the Communist Party denounced the most avid proponents and talented exponents of Ukrainization as "bourgeois nationalists" who had fallen under the spell of the "fascist" Dontsov and his journal, *LNV*. Stalin's first Five-Year Plan (1928-1932), the disastrous collectivization of agriculture in Ukraine, and the suppression of the Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia brought an end to Western Ukrainian Sovietophilism, and seemed to confirm Dontsov's predictions that Bolshevism, as an alien, hostile doctrine, could bring only ruin to Ukraine, strangling the life out of its culture and people. Just as his writings, based upon a damning critique of Russian imperialism and Ukrainian provincialism, crossed the border and affected developments in the UkrSSR, so, too, did Soviet reality, or what he could discern of it, shape his worldview.

In these years, Dontsov interpreted the world more and more in terms of race, ethnicity, and violence. He alleged that Bolshevism was merely the latest manifestation of a nomadic, Asiatic, Jewish-Muscovite essence, which had emerged from the "racial chaos" of the Mongol

khanates to build the Russian Empire. As such, Bolshevism was innately hostile to the Ukrainian nation, which belonged to the racially and spiritually antithetical civilization of the Occident, despite centuries of degrading foreign domination. Nevertheless, Dontsov urged Ukrainians to emulate the Bolsheviks, who had proven the superiority of their mentality and practices by winning. In order to become more European and destroy Russian Communists, Ukrainians would have to mimic their cruelty, barbarism, courage, and dogmatism. This stance left him vulnerable to accusations, from the Left and Right, that he himself was a Russian who reasoned like a morally nihilistic, anti-Christian Bolshevik and corrupted the Ukrainian youth with revolutionary ideas no less foreign and dangerous. Dontsov collided with Lypyns'kyi over this and other issues, engaging in bitter polemics that gripped the Western Ukrainian nationalist community and brought his camaraderie with the conservative Agrarian-Statists and Hetmanites to a permanent end. Meanwhile, he continued voicing his approval of Fascism, but with fewer and fewer reservations. One of the primary advocates of an anti-Semitic account of Ukraine's historic and present oppression, Dontsov helped set the OUN on a path toward collaboration with Nazi Germany years before Hitler's rise to power in 1933.

The Assassination of Petliura and Dontsov on Jewish-Ukrainian Relations

On May 25, 1926, Sholom Schwarzbard (1886-1938), an anarchist of Russian-Jewish background from southern Ukraine, confronted Symon Petliura on the rue Racine in the Latin Quarter of Paris. "Here's my chance, I thought," Schwartzbard recounted in his testimony to the court:

'Are you Petliura?' I asked him. He did not answer, simply lifting his heavy cane. I knew it was he. I shot him five times. I shot him like a soldier who knows how to shoot, and I shot straight so as not to hit any innocent passersby. At the fifth shot he fell. He didn't say a word. There were only cries and convulsions. When I saw him fall I knew he had received five bullets. Then I emptied my revolver. The crowd had scattered. A

policeman came up quietly and said: 'Is that enough?' I answered: 'Yes.' He said: 'Then give me your revolver.' I gave him the revolver, saying: 'I have killed a great assassin.' When the policeman told me Petliura was dead I could not hide my Joy. I leaped forward and threw my arms about [the policeman's] neck.⁴

Schwartzbard freely admitted to the crime and its premeditation, claiming that he had kept a photograph of Petliura in his pocket and walked the streets in search of him. He had shared his plan with Nestor Makhno, who had also been living Paris since the Bolsheviks forced him out of southeastern Ukraine. Schwartzbard claimed that he was terminally ill and hoped to take the exiled Ukrainian leader to the grave with him. Makhno forbade him from going through with the murder, having already intervened once before to prevent Schwartzbard from making an attempt at a gathering of Ukrainian émigrés for Petliura's birthday, probably in view of Petliura's gestures of good will to Makhno and his supporters. In 1919, Petliura had offered care and sanctuary in the UNR to 3,000 of Makhno's typhoid-stricken men. When the two erstwhile enemies encountered each another in a POW interment camp in Poland in 1921, Petliura prevented the veterans under his command from murdering Makhno in retaliation for his opposition to the UNR. Despite the latter's cultural Russification and closeness to the "Russian" anarchist movement, his opinion of Ukrainian national sentiments had improved while in exile; though he continued to oppose any effort to build a national or any other state in principle, he advocated a Ukrainization of the anarchist movement in Ukraine.⁵

⁴ "Petlura Trial" *Time* 10, no. 9 (November 7, 1927).

⁵ Makhno distinguished the authoritarian-statist Bolshevik-dominated "Russian revolution in Ukraine" from the libertarian-antistatist "Ukraine Revolution" that for a time superseded it, and held a high opinion of the Ukrainians' innate revolutionary spirit. In his memoirs (which he regretted not being able to write in Ukrainian, "the language of my people"), he wrote: "I began to lose my equanimity and almost cried for joy at the breadth of development of the Ukrainian workers' and peasants' souls. Before me arose the peasants' will to freedom and independence, which only in the breadth and depth of the Ukrainian soul could so quickly and strongly manifest itself." Elsewhere he wrote of the necessity of an anarchist acknowledgment of Ukrainian national aspirations: "The working masses sympathize with the idea of self-determination. At times they even affirm it in their life style. Thus, for example, they uphold their language and their culture, which in pre-revolutionary times were in the position of step-children. They keep up their life style, their customs, accommodating them to the achievements of their new life. The gentlemen state-builders have nothing against using . . . all these natural manifestations of Ukrainian reality, against

In any case, Makhno's rebuke of Schwartzbard's plan did not prevent the murder, which sent shockwaves through the Ukrainian émigré and international Jewish communities.

Schwartzbard's defense presented the assassination as an act of revenge on behalf of the 50,000 Jews killed in the pogroms that had beset Ukraine during Petliura's time in power as leader of the Directorate of the UNR, 1919-20. The plaintiff accused him of being a Soviet agent and denied Petliura's complicity in the pogroms.⁶ The trial in the French capital was a sensation, focusing international attention, for the first time and in an extremely negative light, on the recent struggle for Ukrainian independence. It turned on the guilt of the UNR rather than that of Schwartzbard (which was not in doubt) and lasted just eight days (October 18-26, 1927). Moved by the gruesome eyewitness accounts of the violence perpetrated against Ukraine's Jewish population of Odessa, where Schwartzbard's parents had been killed along with the other fourteen members of his family, the jury acquitted the defendant (who went into hiding in South Africa soon thereafter).⁷

which the Bolsheviks would be powerless to struggle, even if they wished . . . for their goal of the creation of an independent Ukrainian state." Making a point similar to Dontsov's critique of the Ukrainophiles' distance from the peasantry, Makhno argued that, "the Ukraine speaks Ukrainian, and because of this nationalism at times it does not listen to strangers who do not speak Ukrainian. One ought to consider this practically. If until this time anarchists have exerted a weak ideological influence on the Ukrainian village, it is because they cluster in the cities and do not take into consideration the national language of the Ukrainian village. Quotes from Frank E. Sysyn, "Nestor Makhno and the Ukrainian Revolution," in Hunczak, *The Ukraine, 1917-1921*, chap. 11. See also Nestor Makhno, *Russkaia revoliutsiia na Ukraine* (Paris: Federatsiia anarkho-kommunisticheskikh grup Severnoi Ameriki i Kanady, 1929); *Pod udarami kontr-revoliutsii* (Paris: Izdanie Komiteta N. Makhno, 1936), *Ukrainskaia revoliutsiia* (Paris: Izdanie Komiteta N. Makhno, 1937); and "Neskol'ko slov o natsionalnom voprose na Ukraine," *Delo truda* 19 (December, 1926): 4-7.

⁶ Historians have debated the veracity of these claims. For the case that Petliura was not an anti-Semite, was not responsible for the pogroms, and took significant measures to stop them, see Taras Hunczak, "A Reappraisal of Symon Petliura and Ukrainian-Jewish Relations, 1917-1921," *Jewish Social Studies* 31, no. 3 (July, 1969): 163-83. For a combative riposte, see Zosa Szajkowski, "A Reappraisal of Symon Petliura and Ukrainian-Jewish Relations, 1917-1921," A Rebuttal," *Jewish Social Studies* 31, no. 3 (July, 1969): 184-213.

⁷ "I shall never forget the reddened snowsleds, filled with the hacked bodies, going to the cemetery to deposit their sad burden, in a common pit," one woman testified before the court. "They brought the wounded to the hospital—armless and legless men, mutilated babies and young women whose screams became faint as their wounds overcame them. . . . Petlura was responsible. Even Ukrainian officers said so. His soldiers killed our people, shouting his name. One regiment had a band and it played while knives fell on the heads of innocent babies. Petlura could have stopped it, but he wouldn't listen to our pleas." "Petlura Trial," *Time*.

The trial's outcome, a twentieth-century Dreyfus affair, sent shockwaves through Europe, scandalizing conservative opinion in France, vindicating Jewish accounts of terrible abuse in the former Russian Empire, and outraging Ukrainian nationalists. With regard to this last group, Golczewski argues that the whole affair had three consequences: 1) the belief that Schwartzbard had acted as an agent of the NKVD discredited the Soviet regime, turned Sovietophile Ukrainians (such as Vynnychenko, Hrushevs'kyi, and Petrushevyh) into pariahs of the Ukrainian emigration, and generally damaged the appeal of leftwing ideas among this community; 2) the trial strengthened the identification of the Jews with Bolshevism in the Ukrainian imagination, thereby justifying anti-Semitic currents in Ukrainian politics; and 3) because a French court handed down the verdict, the trial undermined Ukrainians' faith in the democracies of the Entente, which seemed to be united with the Soviet Union and international Jewry against Ukrainian national aspirations, and by extension their faith in democracy per se.⁸ Schwartzbard's time in the French Legion during World War I, as compared to Petliura's dealings with the Germans, was thought to have biased the court. The originally Russian idea that Ukrainian nationalism was a German invention gained currency in the West, as did the notion that self-identified Ukrainian patriots were inherently anti-Semitic. Ultimately, these mutual recriminations spurred the Ukrainian turn to the right.⁹ In the eyes of Ukrainian nationalists, Petliura's death elevated him from being a hated failure of a leader who had sold out to the Poles and was rewarded with betrayal, to being a hero, martyr, and symbol of Ukrainian suffering, who was even forgiven by many Galicians.¹⁰ As one Petliura biographer notes, Ukrainians became more sympathetic to his ill-fated alliance with Piłsudski to fight the greater

⁸ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 496.

⁹ Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 50-51, 72.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 49.

enemy of Russian imperialism and Bolshevism, while their appreciation for the anti-Russian orientation in Ukrainian geopolitics that had justified the Polish-Ukrainian alliance, and which Dontsov had been urging for over a decade, grew.¹¹

Dontsov seized the opportunity to press his longstanding agenda, but the assassination of Petliura, his personal friend and mentor, also shifted his own views, considerably darkening his outlook and exacerbating whatever Judeophobic sentiments he already harbored into full-blown political (though not yet racial) anti-Semitism. The event convinced him that the enemies of Ukrainian independence were more ruthless, implacable, and omnipresent than even he had imagined. As recently as 1918, Dontsov had regarded the Jews of Ukraine as anti-Russian chauvinism and thus favorably, or at worst neutrally, disposed toward Ukrainian national culture and statehood.¹² He certainly had in mind Zionist figures such as Ze'ev Jabotinsky, who blamed Russian, not Ukrainian, nationalism and the inherent problems of imperialism for the pogroms and "blood libel"-crazed anti-Semitism that had plagued Ukraine since the assassination of Alexander II, as well as the chaos injected into the country by the Bolshevik invasions between 1918 and 1921. Jabotinsky considered Ukrainian national aspirations natural and just, and hoped for the destruction of the Russian Empire, which, like all empires, was an enemy of national cultures—the flowers of human civilization and the highest manifestations of the species' biological and spiritual essence.¹³ In 1921, he even reached an agreement with Petliura through the latter's agent in Prague, Maxim Slavinskyi, promising the creation of a Jewish police force

¹¹ Volodymyr Kosyk, "Zovnishnia polityka Symona Petliury," in Volodymyr Kosyk, ed., *Symon Petliura: Zbirnyk studiino-naukovoi konferentsii v Paryzhi (traven' 1976): staty, zmitky, materialy* (Munich, Paris: Ukrains'kyi vil'nyi universytet, 1980): 27-46, 41.

¹² Dontsov, *Mizhnarodne polozhennia Ukrainy*, 20.

¹³ Marina Mogilner, "Defining the Racial Self: Russian Contexts of the Anti-Imperial Nationalism of Vladimir Jabotinsky," (paper presented at a Carolina Seminar of the center for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies, Chapel Hill, NC, February 25, 2016).

that would prevent further pogroms in Ukraine upon the UNR's restoration to power following a projected invasion of the country that would also incorporate Jewish fighting units. Other Zionists condemned Jabotinsky's deal with Petliura, but he defiantly upheld it, causing a schism at the Twelfth Zionist Congress in Carlsbad that led to his founding of a separate "Revisionist" Zionist movement (the anti-Communist Jewish-Ukrainian alliance never came to fruition).¹⁴ Despite all that, now, by association with Sholom Schwartzbard, Ukrainian Jews came to represent insidious agents of Russian imperialism and Bolshevism for Dontsov.

Shortly thereafter, Dontsov published openly anti-Semitic articles in *LVN* commenting on Petliura's legacy and assassination, the Schwartzbard trial, and its implications for Jewish-Ukrainian relations.¹⁵ Petliura, he wrote, had made many errors, but always acted pragmatically with his heart set on the best interests of Ukraine. The faults of Petliura, thought Dontsov, were his meekness; his appointments of untrustworthy, often pro-Bolshevik Jews, Ukrainian socialists, and Russians to important, autonomous posts; his Judeophilia, not his alleged anti-Semitism.¹⁶ Dontsov denied that anti-Jewish pogroms had taken place at all (much as Roman Dmowski had done seven years prior with regard to the first L'viv Pogrom [November 21-23, 1918], which Polish troops perpetrated upon their triumphal entry into the city at the end of the [Western] Ukrainian-Polish War).¹⁷ "What pogroms? There were no pogroms in Ukraine. There was a civil

¹⁴ Joseph B. Schechtman, "The Jabotinsky-Slavinsky Agreement," *Jewish Social Studies* XVII (1955): 289–306.

¹⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, "Symon Petliura," *LVN* 90, no. 7 (1926): 321-28, and "Memento (do paryz'koho protsesu)," *LVN* 94, no. 11, (1927): 261-66. He published the first immediately after Petliura's assassination, and the second during the Schwartzbard trial.

¹⁶ Dontsov, "Petliura," 323, and "Memento," 264-65.

¹⁷ Dontsov, "Memento," 261. On Dmowski's denials of the L'viv Pogrom in the international press and before the diplomatic community, see, Alexander Victor Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland: War, Ethnicity, and Anti-Jewish Violence in East Galicia, 1914-1920* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), chap. 5.

war in which masses of Jews, Russians, and Ukrainians perished.”¹⁸ According to Dontsov, it was the Jews, motivated by a desire to rule and exploit Ukraine, who were hostile toward Ukrainians, not the reverse. The Jews and the Russians had allegedly taken the Directorate’s 1919 declaration of Jewish rights and cultural autonomy and Petliura’s creation of a ministerial position for Jewish affairs (exceptionally liberal policies on the issue at the time), as a sign of Ukrainian nationalism’s weakness.¹⁹ Petliura’s “womanly” qualities, such as his idealistic love for the motherland, had clouded his judgment, though the times called for a much more “masculine” approach—clearheaded, frank, capable of mobilizing the masses, and, when necessary, intolerant, aggressive, and ruthless.²⁰ Petliura’s “interpretation of the Ukrainian idea” lacked a “clear delimitation from others” (i.e. non-Ukrainians, particularly Jews and [Russian] Communists). Dontsov applied his by now well-formed ideology of “might-is-right” voluntarism to the matter, arguing that the tragedy of Petliura and his generation was their unwillingness to rule, despite being granted the opportunity and the mandate to do so, which sprang from their spiritual, moral, and intellectual defects. Perhaps the next generation, Dontsov hoped, would learn the lesson that “history avenges weakness, not inhumanity.”²¹

Dontsov saw Jews as “guilty, terribly guilty, because it was they who helped Russian domination in Ukraine to solidify, but ‘the Jews are not guilty of everything.’ Russian imperialism is guilty of everything. Only when Russia is defeated in Ukraine will we be able to address the Jewish question in accordance with the interests of the Ukrainian people.”²² This may

¹⁸ Ibid., 261.

¹⁹ Dontsov, “Petliura,” 324.

²⁰ Ibid., 328.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 327-28.

be the most oft-quoted passage in Dontsov's entire oeuvre. Commentators have generally interpreted it in one of two ways: *either* it is taken to mean that the Jewish menace to Ukrainians is entirely secondary to the problem of Russian imperialism, and the destruction of the latter would solve the former without need for additional measures against Ukraine's Jews—thus, at this point, Dontsov did not hate the Jews per se, but only their unfortunate, historically contingent role as agents of Russian imperialism and Bolshevism; *or* it is presented as damning proof of its author's inveterate anti-Semitism as early as 1926, and a thinly veiled threat to the Jewish population of Ukraine in the event that Ukrainians once again become masters in their own land.

Both readings contain some truth. Russia and Russians remained the prime enemy of the Ukrainian people in Dontsov's worldview and it was chiefly through the divide-and-conquer practices and nationally oppressive structures of tsarism and Bolshevism that the Jews had come to be opponents of Ukrainian national aspirations. When read in light of his other texts from the same period and the vitriolic tone of his prose when the subject turns on the Jewish problem, however, it seems clear that Dontsov had ceased to think of the Jews as a group that should be welcome in Ukraine for the foreseeable future; they constituted an alien, parasitic presence with distinct national interests, and they had already proven their disloyalty to and contempt for their Ukrainian hosts. "We must and . . . will struggle with the Jews' attempts to play the inappropriate role of masters in Ukraine, but we will not break their strength until we have broken Russia's power among us."²³ Ending Russian hegemony in Ukraine would disarm them, but there is no reason to suppose that "address[ing] the Jewish problem in accordance with the interests of the Ukrainian people," as Dontsov understood it, would *not* involve an application of the bellicose,

²³ Dontsov, "Petliura," 237.

authoritarian, xenophobic, and pitiless values and methods that he was vigorously promoting at the time. In the same article on Petliura's assassination, he calls for a new, "nonbourgeois" ideology that views "the corpses of thousands and hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian farmers"²⁴ as an entirely acceptable sacrifice to escape slavery and gain independence; why should the same principle not apply to the Jews, especially given their "fundamental hostility to Ukrainian statehood?" "The praise with which the Bolshevik and Jewish press showered the murderer [Schwartzbard] was unanimous," Dontsov complained, attributing the contempt for Ukraine of the Jewish-Russian community to the incompatibility of Jewish messianism (as fulfilled in Ukraine ["our country"] rather than in Palestine, with the Ukrainian independence movement.²⁵ Russians and Jews are carriers of their own Messianisms, which cannot coexist with that of the Ukrainians on Ukrainian soil.²⁶ Still, Dontsov insisted that none of this had anything to do with anti-Semitism, "the socialism of fools": "we are not socialists and do not wish to be fools."²⁷ "We will struggle by all means against pogroms, but we will bring the real culprits [the Jews —T.E.] to justice," he writes, leaving the reader to wonder what percentage of Ukraine's Jews qualify as "real culprits" and what form "justice" would take. For Dontsov, the possibility of peace between Ukrainians and Jews depended on the outcome of the Schwartzbard trial: "If the process ends with the acquittal of the murderer, then only traitors or idiots will speak of an understanding with the Jews."²⁸ Looking ahead, the subsequent anti-Semitic, yet putatively antipogrom, tendency in Ukrainian nationalism, as expressed in Point 17 of the OUN(B)'s

²⁴ Ibid., 326.

²⁵ Dontsov, "Memento," 263.

²⁶ Ibid., 269.

²⁷ Ibid., 264.

²⁸ Ibid., 266.

pronouncement concerning the Jews in April 1941,²⁹ originated, not under the influence of Nazism, but from Dontsov's assertion that Ukraine's Jews were merely agents of Russian imperialism and Bolshevism, a secondary evil subordinate to a primary one.³⁰ Despite the rhetorical sidestep—implicitly justifying violent anti-Semitism while explicitly denouncing it—from this point forward a rising (and increasingly racial) antipathy toward the Jews *as such*, irrespective of their alleged role in the oppression of Ukrainians, is detectable in Dontsov's writing.

²⁹ "The Jews in the USSR are the most devoted support of the ruling Bolshevik regime and the advance guard of Muscovite imperialism in Ukraine. The Muscovite-Bolshevik government exploits the anti-Jewish moods of the Ukrainian masses in order to divert their attention from the real source of evil and in order to direct them during the time of uprising into pogroms against Jews. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists struggles against the Jews as the support of the Muscovite-Bolshevik regime, at the same time making the popular masses aware that Moscow is the main enemy." However, the OUN(B), acting with German encouragement and assistance, organized two pogroms in L'viv following the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union and a short-lived declaration of Ukrainian independence (June 30, 1941). The first pogrom lasted from June 30 to July 2; the second, called the "Petliura Days," lasted from July 25 to July 29, 1941. Altogether roughly 6,000 Jews were killed in the violence, which was justified as revenge for the "Jewish-Bolshevik" NKVD's massacre of about 4,000 prisoners being held in L'viv during the hasty Soviet retreat from the Nazi advance just days prior. Taras Hunczak and Roman Solchanyk, eds., *Ukrains'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka na 20 stolitti. Dokumenty i materialy*, vol. 3. (N. p.: Suchasnist', 1983), 15, quoted in John-Paul Himka, "The Lviv Pogrom of 1941: The Germans, Ukrainian Nationalists, and the Carnival Crowd," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 53 (2-4): 209-43. Dontsov's understanding of the Jewish problem as of the mid-1920s was also reflected in a statement made by the OUN(B) leader and head of the Ukrainian state declared on June 30, under the aegis of Hitler's new order, Iaroslav Stets'ko (1912-1986). Presenting his autobiography to the Germans after they had arrested him (along with much of the OUN[B]'s membership) for his role in the unapproved declaration of Ukrainian statehood, he wrote: "I consider Marxism to be a product of the Jewish mind, which, however, has been applied in practice in the Muscovite prison of peoples by the Muscovite-Asiatic people with the assistance of the Jews. Moscow and Jewry are Ukraine's greatest enemies and bearers of corruptive Bolshevik international ideas. Although I consider Moscow, which in fact held Ukraine in captivity, and not Jewry, to be the main and decisive enemy, I nonetheless fully appreciate the undeniably harmful and hostile role of the Jews, who are helping Moscow to enslave Ukraine. I therefore support the destruction of the Jews and the expedience of bringing German methods of exterminating Jewry to Ukraine, barring their assimilation and the like." Quoted in Karel C. Berkhoff and Marco Carynnyk, "The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Its Attitude Toward Germans and Jews: Iaroslav Stets'ko's 1941 Zhyttiypys," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 23, no.3-4 (December 1999): 147-84, 170-71.

³⁰ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 500.

Making Ukraine “Faustian” Again

When Dontsov published *Natsionalizm* (Nationalism) in 1926,³¹ he advertised it as a systematic exposition of his ideology, fulfilling a task that his experience with the UPNR and *Zahrava* had taught him was needed before the practical work of making a national revolution could begin to succeed. The book was not republished until 1958, but its circulation quickly expanded from L’viv to the neighboring territories of Volhynia, Zakarpattia, and Bukovina, reaching Ukrainian audiences abroad from Kharkiv to North America, achieving a wide resonance and polarizing audiences. His most radical up to that point, the text is a consummation of ideas that he had embraced by the early 1920s, pushing them to their limits and fleshing out their consequences and corollaries for a Ukrainian nationalist worldview. Stylistically more expressionistic and emotive than Dontsov’s previous prose, *Natsionalizm* includes a more developed argument for the use of avant-garde forms of futurism and expressionism in the production of nationalist myths. The rage and bitterness of *Natsionalizm*’s author radiates from every page, which he wrote with the express intention of inflaming the same sentiments in those who read it. Dontsov expected the book to define more than a political program or an orientation; *Natsionalizm* purportedly conveyed a total worldview that would transform, empower, purify, and unify a new generation of Ukrainian nationalists, preparing them for the terrible struggle for independence that lay before them. Dontsov, their “spiritual father,” had delivered his “gospel” to them.

Natsionalizm is divided into three parts. The first sets forth a critique of “Ukrainian provençalism” (*provansal’s tvo*)—Dontsov’s umbrella term for a whole range of doctrines that he regards as having exerted a degenerative influence on the Ukrainian national movement. He

³¹ Dontsov, *Natsionalizm* (1926). Republished on the basis of this first edition in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 7, 19-178.

devotes chapters to the evils of “primitive intellectualism,” “‘scientific’ quietism,” “small-farm [khutorians’ka] ‘universalism,’” “materialism” (including liberalism, democrats, pacifism, particularism, and anarchism), “antitraditionalism,” and “support for the symbiosis of Ukraine and Russia.” The second part describes the antithetical value system of “active” (*chynnyi*) nationalism, with a metaphysical foundation of voluntarism (“will as the law of life”), the imperatives (*vymohy*) of romanticism, dogmatism, “illusionism” (*iliuzionizm*), fanaticism, amorality, “creative violence,” and “the initiative minority.” Part two concludes with a theory of the division of peoples into two types, the “Faustian” (European) and the “Buddhist” (Asiatic), which Dontsov adopted from Oswald Spengler’s *The Decline of the West*, published in 1918. Finally, the third section sketches out the content of the “Ukrainian idea” (namely, “brightness,” “exclusiveness,” and “all-encompassing-ness” [*vseobiimaiuchist’*]), the prospect of a “new national eros,” and the connection between mysticism (*mistyka*) and “real life.”

Presenting the whole of modern Ukrainian history as an era of decadence and ruin, with the exception of a few voices in the wilderness (Shevchenko, Ukrainka, and Mikhnovs’kyi), *Natsionalizm*’s point of departure is Dontsov’s diagnosis of a chronic, cultural-political illness. It picks up where Dontsov left off with his critique of Ukrainophilia as represented by Mykhailo Drahomanov, Ivan Frank, and the members of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Their first sin is “primitive intellectualism”: an excessive emphasis on reason, contemplation, logic, and harmony that renders one passive, afraid to fight, deprived of healthy instincts, and thus vulnerable to domination by the aggression and willfulness of others. Following Spengler, Dontsov blames Europe’s relative decline and weakness in the face of an existential threat to its civilization (emanating from Russian Communism) on this hyperrationalism.³² The nineteenth

³² Dontsov, *Natsionalizm*, in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 7, 26.

century was the “golden age of reason,” the residual symptoms of which have been especially severe in Ukraine, emasculating its intelligentsia and national liberation movement through the tyranny of intellect, as if the national idea were a theory to be proved by recourse to facts and arguments, rather than an axiom to be accepted without question and foisted upon the world. The overdevelopment of intellect blinded the older generation to the underlying realities of social, national, and international life, the perennial calamities and conflicts of which are chocked up to “misunderstanding” and “ignorance” rather than the beastly fundamentals of nature (survival of the fittest, and the iron laws of struggle and domination between races). They naively proffer education, persuasion, and dialogue as the solution to war. Dontsov’s (Social) Darwinism, one of the centerpieces of nineteenth-century positivism, contradicts his stated desire to replace the scientific, teleological “laws of human development” with the “will to power” (Nietzsche’s voluntarism incorporated a critique of Darwinism that Dontsov was apparently unaware of or disinterest in). But to fault Dontsov for logical fallacies and factual inaccuracies is to have already missed his point: the problem is precisely the intellect-heavy approach that demands reason and evidence instead of motivation and action. There is no system in *Natsionalizm*, though it gives that outward appearance, but a collection of impressions and expressions designed to have an emotional effect and undermine the reader’s trust in reason per se. Patent falsehoods, such as Dontsov’s (mis)representation of the Ukrainian anarchist Drahomanov as a “convinced Russian statist,” either evade detection and are accepted prima facie, or anger the reader and turn her immediately against the book.³³ (It is likely, ironically, that Dontsov inadvertently popularized Drahomanov with his tirades against him.)³⁴ To resume tracing his

³³ Ibid., 29.

³⁴ Volodymyr Martynets’, *Ideolohiia orhanizovanoho i t. zv. vol’evoho natsionalizmu. Analitychno-porivnial’na studiia* (Winnipeg: Novyi shliakh, 1954), 33.

“argument,” however, we should note that one of the most detrimental consequences of Ukrainophile intellectualism, according to Dontsov, is its interpretation of nation and nationalism as “superstition” and the artifice and trickery of the ruling classes. It is thus no surprise that they were resoundingly defeated in the Ukrainian Revolution by forces that did not stop to be persuaded, persuade others, or engage in enlightened self-critique but, already convinced of their own correctness, immediately deployed violence.³⁵

The second defect of Ukrainophilia, or Ukrainian provençalism, “‘scientific’ quietism,” consists of a pseudoscientific faith in “unbreakable social laws” that assure the perpetual betterment of humanity through “evolution” and “progress.”³⁶ Dontsov presents his nationalism as a dose of healthy skepticism for this teleology, in the true spirit of science, but he immediately resorts to what Schopenhauer calls the *qualitas occulta* (mystical quality)—“will, the independent driving force in history, which creates from [within] itself” (*tvoryt’ z sebe samoi*).³⁷ Dontsov opposes the mechanical reduction of all social and historical change to a material base, arguing that ideas and “conscious strivings” in seeming contradiction with physical reality can alter that same reality through defiant acts of will. Marxism, he notes, had lost its explicatory power in light of the Russian Revolution, in which an ideologically motivated initiative minority introduced socialism into a country that had not even reached the capitalist “stage of development,” as well as the “counterrevolutionary” rise of the “unhistorical nations” of Eastern Europe to independent statehood. The idea that capitalist modernization would inevitably wipe out national individualities and conglomerate smaller states into larger ones was untenable after World War I. The purportedly “iron laws of social development” proved to be far more malleable

³⁵ Dontsov, *Natsionalizm*, in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 7, 32.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

than anyone had expected. Determinism and the notion that “history is on our side” breed fatalism, flagging willpower, and acquiescence in the face of oppression because the passage of empty, homogeneous time is taken to be the sole and inevitable resolution of the problem.³⁸

By “small-farm ‘universalism’” Dontsov means the Ukrainophiles’ refusal to recognize “the truth that what may be truth for one people is a lie for another.”³⁹ The belief in a “universal truth,” knowable to all peoples and sects as participants in humanity, also follows from “primitive intellectualism.” The Ukrainian socialists’ universalism puts the Ukrainian people, their culture and desire to determine their own destiny, in an entirely subordinate position vis-à-vis the wider world: “These same socialists and radicals only permit national slogans, only justify an independent national ideal, when it is in agreement with ‘the thoughts of global humanity,’ with the general truth. Nationalism is permissible *only when* it can be ‘proven’ that it ‘*doesn’t contradict*’ socialism, ‘but on the contrary aids its development.’”⁴⁰ But such “universal truths” all consider the “self-sufficient national ideal a dangerous utopia.”⁴¹

Inveighing against “materialism,” one passage in *Natsionalizm* could serve as a (loquacious) definition for “integral nationalism”: This eternal arational [sic] right of the nation to life will take its place above everything *temporal, phenomenal, ‘graspable,’ rational*, above the life of a particular individual, above the blood and death of thousands, about the prosperity of a particular generation, above abstractly reasoned calculations, above a ‘general-human’ ethics.⁴² Materialism is blind to the eternal and changeless plane of existence that the nation, properly

³⁸ Ibid., 35-36.

³⁹ Ibid., 37.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 38.

⁴¹ Ibid., 39.

⁴² Ibid., 40.

understood, inhabits. Citing Hegel and Spengler, Dontsov criticizes this modern fixation on observable, material phenomena and objects a “prosaic” worldview that fails to appreciate the overriding importance of the metaphysical “form” of the nation (a term he uses interchangeably with “species”), which alone gives individuals and generations meaning. He opposes it to the utilitarian idea (here attributed to Jean-Jacques Rousseau) that the foundation of ethics is the happiness of concrete individuals; the good of the nation is the good of its transient manifestations (you and me), not the reverse. On these grounds Dontsov rejects a series of materialist doctrines: “liberalism, which placed the interests of the masses as a collection of individuals above the interest of the nation as the higher end; democratism, which placed the interests of ‘the people’ as an unorganized formless crowd above the interests of the nation; socialism, which placed the interests of a class above the interests of the nation.”⁴³ Anarchism (a “form of liberalism” for Dontsov), humanitarianism, pacifism, provincialism, the “destructive principle” of *laissez faire*, all followed the same logic—they all oppose “the idea of statehood as a value in itself.” Here, Dontsov shifts from “nation” to “state” without explanation, as if the two concepts were synonymous and might serve interchangeably as the *summum bonum* of his worldview.

In Dontsov’s thinking, nation and state, in essence, uphold the same principle—a vaguely defined authoritarian sublime—without which human existence would lack all form and order. As two facets of the same principle, nation and state seek and consummate one another. If a nation is stateless, or a state is not coextensive with a certain nation (containing more than one as empire or less than one as province), then there is an imbalance, a sin against nature, which must be redressed. Dontsov does not deny the anarchist critique of the state as a tool of the ruling

⁴³ Ibid., 41.

class that operates solely through violence and the threat thereof—on the contrary, *this is what he likes about it*.⁴⁴ All human achievements (creative, spiritual, intellectual) can be traced back to the state, sphinxlike, bloodthirsty, and terrible, for which no sacrifice is too great or satisfying. It is the “willingness to sacrifice the individual life,” Dontsov avers, which “sets the great races apart.”⁴⁵ War is more than mass murder and death; it is a profound and beautiful expression of the nation’s will to life, sanctified by the destruction of its ephemeral parts (individual human beings). Dontsov takes great offense at the idea that one is free to choose a different nationality than the one into which they were born, as if it were a matter of personal choice. To submit, live, kill, and die at the disposal of an uncompromising, unmerciful (nation)state—that is the duty, destiny, and freedom of the individual.

Dontsov’s ideology calls for a temporal reorientation away from the “present,” the fleeting “now,” the pleasantness of which is the sole concern of “materialists,” and for sacrificing it in the name of a “future ideal.”⁴⁶ Nationalism totalizes the succession of generations, from the primordial to the distant future, giving each an identity and a purpose that is eternal and all-encompassing. Incapable of this, the Ukrainophiles were “antitraditionalists” who did not respect the nation’s dead and yet to be born, ignoring the “mystical voice” of blood, opportunistically seeking only the advantage of the moment and the welfare of the living.⁴⁷ Instead, they chose the

⁴⁴ Dontsov did not engage with Nietzsche’s critique of the modern state as “the new idol,” even though he was certainly aware of it and quotes other passages from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* throughout *Natsionalizm*. According to Nietzsche, the (modern) state brings the “death of peoples,” it reeks of decay, it lies, it is a “cold monster,” it creates nothing, but merely steals from those who do. “Where there is still a people, it does not understand the state and hates it as the evil eye and sin against customs and rights,” according to Nietzsche’s Zarathustra. Were the “anarchistic” Ukrainians assailed by Dontsov not such a people? But he had no use for the parts of Nietzsche that inveigh against nationalism and statism. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Modern Library, 1995), 48-51.

⁴⁵ Dontsov, *Natsionalizm*, in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 7, 42.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 49.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 67.

path of “political symbiosis” with other nations in the forms of Pan-Slavism, the Soviet Union, the League of Nations, and so on.⁴⁸ This leads only to foreign domination and never a mutual understanding of equals. (Already in the habit of purging inconvenient facts from his autobiography, Dontsov does not mention the World War I-era Central Powers, the idea of a German-dominated *Mitteleuropa*, and the attempts, in which he enthusiastically participated, to incorporate Ukraine into it.) Pushing the biological metaphor, Dontsov argues that Ukraine’s relationship with Russia has never been symbiosis, but parasitism, and that it can regain its health only as an independent organism with its aggressiveness and immunity fully restored.⁴⁹

“Violence” (*nasył'stvo*) is an even more fundamental concept in *Natsionalizm* than nation. Dontsov asserts that an unwillingness to use violence against others springs, not from a love of humanity, but from a sick and cowardly lack of faith in one’s own rightness and strength.⁵⁰ The Ukrainophiles lost because they recoiled from the thought of violently foisting their own vision onto the amorphous masses (the “spirit of hierarchy”). They sought an understanding with the enemy rather than its uncompromising destruction. Their “atomistic conception of the nation” as the sum of its individual members, springing from a general refusal to recognize a higher order, the primacy of the collective and the universal (epitomized, for Dontsov, by the Roman and British Empires), left the followers of Drahomanov incapable of the violence needed to liberate Ukraine. “The ideal of provençalism, an essentially plebeian ideal, was the happiness of the individual, the happiness of all, freedom from all the ‘occult’ powers [*okul'ni syly*] standing

⁴⁸ Ibid., 55-56.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 66.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 87.

above them.”⁵¹ They abhorred the basic “principle of state violence,” toying with utopias that inspired no one instead of fanatically embracing myths and legends that inflamed the passions and justified the butchering of great numbers, dispatching them into “the abyss” (*bezodna*). Dontsov cannot stand their Christ-like cheek turning, their humaneness and tolerance, which lacks hatred, chauvinism, and cruelty entirely, invoking the meek and conformist swamp folk in Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*: “And then there are such as sit in their swamp and speak thus out of the reeds. ‘Virtue—that is sitting still in a swamp. We bite no one and avoid those who want to bite; and in all things we hold the opinion that is given to us.’”⁵² But it is only through “creative violence,” through bloody acts of aggression, wars, and revolutions, that “new ideas” enter history.⁵³

Dontsov’s debt to the conception of the interrelation of violence, myth, and history found in Sorel’s *Reflections on Violence* was substantial. “Myths,” he quotes Sorel, “are not a description of things, but an expression of will. Utopia, by contrast, is an invention of intellectual labor.” Myths are the motors of history; they inspire revolutionary epochs. Perhaps the most powerful myth is the apocalyptic “Last judgment,” the “final battle.” Even Marx foretold a “catastrophe” (within capitalism) that would usher in a new era. The more terrible the vision of the vengeance and destruction to come, the more effective its power to make that violence a reality and thus alter the course of history. “The myth that inspires the adherents of a new faith—this is the expectation of the active strata. The expectation of the passive strata is utopia.”⁵⁴

Utopianism left the Ukrainophiles with no stomach for violence, struggle, and action, lulled into

⁵¹ Ibid., 90.

⁵² Ibid., 93. Nietzsche, *Zarathustra*, 95.

⁵³ Dontsov, *Natsionalizm*, in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 7, 151.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 94.

a sweet slumber by idylls, lacking any appreciation for tragedy and the abyss, like “a noontime siesta in the tropical south, when sky, water, earth, [and] air seem frozen, as if in a dream.”⁵⁵ Their literature, with its “photographic realism” and “vulgarizer’s clarity,” was devoid of all movement and drama, exhibiting a “passive relation to the external world and material,” afraid to plumb the depths of the irrational. With the exceptions only of Lesia Ukrainka and the Soviet writer Mykola Khvyl’ovyi (discussed below), Dontsov dismisses the Ukrainian literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as stagnant and uninspiring.⁵⁶ The aging Ukrainophiles did not recognize the “law of struggle and competition,” and thus favored an ethics by and for “the weak in body and in spirit.”⁵⁷ He calls this “lowly sentimentalism” of “small-farm (*khutorians’ka*) ‘*kalos kagathos*’” (*kalokahatiia*—from the ancient Greek concept of “the good and the beautiful”), which he characterizes as the eagerness to compromise among men too moderate, prudent, and peace-loving to inspire or execute great deeds. In the face of oppression it offers only tears and lamentations, or provincial, agrarian escapism. In place of *kala kagathos*, Dontsov calls for a return to a starkly black/white, either/or worldview (hardly distinguishable the dualistic Russian Platonism that he was condemning as “primitivism” just six years prior) that permits no middle or common ground, and no possibility of rapprochement, between (national) heroes and villains, between the realm of perfect forms and ideals and the realm of transient phenomena. A dynamic new Ukrainian literature of “expressionism” and “romanticism” would be needed to produce the kinds of “myths” and “legends” that can inflame the nation’s revolutionary will to power.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 97.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 98-99.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 102-3.

A smattering of precedents for Dontsov's ideal—the ethos, mythos, and poetics of a fully “self-sufficient nationalism”—existed in modern Ukrainian culture. There was Shevchenko, Mikhnovs'kyi, Ukrainka, and Iuliian Bachyns'kyi (author of *Ukraina irredenta* [see chapter 1]). Even Nikolai Gogol (Mykola Hohol') was on the right track when he “sought happiness in the cruel and bloody virtues of the Middle Ages.”⁵⁸ But Dontsov disparaged the rest of modern *ukrainstvo* as the worldview of a “Buddhist,” as opposed to “Faustian,” culture, embracing the then popular theory of an “Aryan master race.” “Was Buddhism not a reaction, an uprising of the non-Aryan races against the Aryan?” he asks.⁵⁹ “Our [Ukrainian] Buddhism was a reaction against the philosophy of the strong, a reaction of ‘weak creatures’!”⁶⁰ The teaching of “Buddhism”—to be understood here, not so much as a specific religion, but as a civilizational type, which Dontsov adapts from the Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West*—counsels men to purge themselves of all desire, to detach themselves from the worldly “veil of tears,” and thereby transcend suffering and attain enlightenment. But Dontsov warns that renouncing desire and striving—the will to life and power—saps the strength of individuals and peoples. The “Buddhists” “love their enemies.” In forbidding themselves to engage in wars of aggression, they ultimately come to reject wars of defense as well. Buddhist peoples, “degenerate races,” as Dontsov calls them, can expect to be conquered and enslaved by “strong races,” above all the “Faustian” nations of the Occident.⁶¹ The “Faustian” worldview recognizes the primacy of the irrational, of passions and instincts. It is driven to “blind activity” and relentless expansion, in

⁵⁸ Ibid., 117.

⁵⁹ He quotes a French cultural historian of India's pontifications on this mythical *Urvolk*, which allegedly ruled the ancient world from the South Asia to Scandinavia, giving rise to the Nordic nations of present-day Europe (a theory formulated by the early scientific racist Arthur de Gobineau [1816-1882]). Henri Cazalis, *Histoire de la littérature hindoue. Les grands poèmes religieux et philosophiques* (Paris: G. Carpentier, 1888).

⁶⁰ Dontsov, *Natsionalizm*, in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 7, 115.

⁶¹ Ibid., 156-58.

time and in space, toward ever-greater conquests and discoveries, toward the domination of all being. According to Spengler, it is the “European spirit,” which struggles against whatever is “near,” against the “stupefactions of the moment,” but seeks “the universal and enduring.”⁶² Dontsov quotes the heresy of Goethe’s *Faust*, “*Im Anfang war die Tat*” (“In the beginning was the act”), not “the word,” let alone “the thought.” There is, according to Dontsov, a wholesome measure of anti-intellectualism in the heedless adventurism and domineering brutality of the “Faustian.” Embracing the “right of might” as an unbreakable “law of nature,” the “Faustian” relishes the “joy to kill” (a reference to Jack London’s *The Call of the Wild*). His “will to power” is a desire for victory, a constant striving to remake the universe in his own image.

Dontsov makes a strained effort bring this into line with Christianity and the church. Dr. Faustus’s deal is with the Devil (Mephistopheles), after all, so how could a Christian nation such as Ukraine embrace this “Faustian” vision of unbridled Satanic arrogance, hatred for the enemy, contempt for the weak, boundless greed, and bloodlust? But the Jesus found in *Natsionalizm* is an avenger, the conduit of God’s wrath, the harbinger of the apocalypse. He comes to mankind bearing “a sword.” He heralds strife between fathers and sons, and the ruination of kingdoms. Reimagining the “Prince of Peace” as a god of war, Dontsov asserts that every instance of pacifism implies war, which permeates everything in nature (as Heraclitus thought). War (and militarism) leads dialectically to the higher peace and oneness of the struggle between opposing forces, like the tonal dissonance without which there can be no music or the tension without which the strings of a violin cannot produce notes. First Armageddon, *then* the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth—first the bloody revolution, *then* harmony.⁶³ As far as Dontsov is concerned,

⁶² Ibid., 156.

⁶³ Ibid., 129.

there is more to admire and emulate in the history of the Catholic Church than there is in the life and teachings of the Jesus of the Gospels. He extols the “pathos of fanaticism” and intolerance that animated the Crusades and the Inquisition. Doubts lead only to death and defeat, so the national idea must be closed to discussion, requiring no proof or sanction, drawing strength from its very illogicality. Dontsov hails the dogmatism and “religious intensity” born of “mass fantasies” (what he calls “illusionism”), citing the crowd psychology of the French polymath and political reactionary Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931). It is “the promise of the unreal” and “the chimerical” that sparks mass movements. “Couldn’t all these ‘Eternal Jews’ [*vichni zhydy*] among us lead humanity to new impulses and new promised lands?”⁶⁴ Dontsov asks, implicitly invoking anti-Semitism as precisely the kind of “noble lie” or “mass fantasy” needed to rouse the folk to action.⁶⁵ Dontsov counsels a principled “amorality” in the choice of means, physical and rhetorical, by which to appease the nation’s will to life and power. Only fanatics found great movements, states, and religions, and only through extreme violence, anti-intellectual conviction, and deceit. The triumph of the strong over the weak is the real agent of progress (*postup*), Dontsov asserts, before launching into an apologia for British and American imperialism and the genocide of indigenous peoples around the world.⁶⁶ The great empires of the West are, paradoxically, the highest exemplars of nationalism because they cause the death of (other, lower) national cultures and the globalization of their own (the “civilizing mission,” the “white man’s burden”).⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Ibid., 135.

⁶⁵ As for Ukraine’s actual Jews, *Natsionalizm* advocates denying them cultural autonomy. Ibid., 171.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 146.

⁶⁷ Dontsov was a big fan of Rudyard Kipling, whom George Orwell called a “prophet of British imperialism.” Dontsov translated several of Kipling’s shorter works, including “The Cat that Walked By Himself” (an allegory for the irreconcilable conflict between nationalism and cosmopolitanism), and regarded the English author as a model

This logic moves Dontsov to make a variety of provocative statements, such as “Caesar and Cecil Rhodes were better internationalists than Lenin and Marx,” and “only imperialist nations, whose imperialism is in a kinetic state, at least potentially, have the right to self-determination.”⁶⁸ The reason for this state of affairs is simple: “Nature does not know humanity and justice, she knows merits and rewards.” Ukrainians, too, must learn to embrace “all *manly* (not eunuch-like) doctrines.”⁶⁹

“Creative violence” is the “how,” but *who* would carry out the national revolution and build an independent Ukrainian nation-state? Dontsov’s answer: people of an “entirely new spirit” (Fichte); not *the* people, which is quite incapable of the task, but an “initiative minority” from within yet above it. Every revolution comes about through the action of a fanatical minority. The Bolsheviks and the “class-conscious proletariat” (a small minority of the Russian Empire) and the Italian Fascists are Dontsov’s models. Such groups “give form to ideas that are incomprehensible to the masses, make them approachable for these masses, and, finally, mobilize ‘the people’ for the struggle for this idea.”⁷⁰ The Ukrainian nationalist “initiative minority” would need recruits of a new type—“the strong man” (*syl’na liudyna*)—to be drawn, Dontsov envisions, from the ranks of the peasantry (which he idealizes, much like the Ukrainophile populists he savagely critiques)⁷¹. In addition to “imperialism in politics, a church free from the

for Ukrainian literature. Dmytro Dontsov, “Try roky vidnovlenoho L. N. Vistnyka,” *LNV* 87, no. 7-8 (1925): 333-40, 335.

⁶⁸ Dontsov, *Natsionalizm*, in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 7, 147-48.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁷¹ Sosnovs’kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 243. Dontsov only strayed from this idea once, in a 1929 article “Do mist!” (To the cities!), in which he gives Ukraine’s urban centers a first-order role in the life of the nation. Dmytro Dontsov, “Do mist!” *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 2, 270-75. One of the book’s most adamant critics commented on the irony: “the funniest thing is that Dontsov imagines that all the illusions of his *Natsionalizm* must be accomplished by—whom?—the peasants! And them by themselves!” (Osyp Nazaruk, *Natsionalizm Dontsova ta inshi myshugizmy*, (L’viv:

state in religion, [and] occidentalism in culture,” Dontsov’s national ideal included the promise of “free initiative and growth in economic life,” reflecting a fascination with unfettered markets and private property that is characteristic for his thought during this period.⁷² But the actual form an independent Ukrainian state might take is secondary to its creation by any means necessary.

At the outset, *Natsionalizm*, a self-contradictory and paradoxical work, proclaims the nonexistence of all laws of human development and social phenomenon, then declares the ineluctable reality of a whole series of such laws (the “iron laws” of “struggle,” of “survival of the fittest,” of “oligarchy,” and so on). It asserts that idealism is the philosophical basis of “active nationalism,” then proceeds to explain nations and states in terms of reductive biological metaphors. One finds the notion that the nation precedes the state, but also the claim that a non-self-governing nation is not a nation at all (and hence that the Ukrainian nation does not yet exist). If will is “elemental”—a blind and unconscious force or instinct without cause or reason, as the book argues—then how can “the cultivation of a new will” come about as the result of a conscious human effort? In accordance with its own logic, aporias such as these only increase the book’s mystique, just as irrational passions strengthen the “national ideal” that it celebrates. The book appeals to the emotions first and foremost, holding the method of rational persuasion to be beneath the gravity of the matter at hand.

Written at the peak of his creative powers, *Natsionalizm* best encapsulates what I call Dontsov’s “authoritarian iconoclasm” and “cosmopolitan ultranationalism.” The iconoclastic side of “active nationalism” praises avant-garde experimentation; mercilessly critiques past

Biblioteka Ukrain’skoi nardonoï obnovy, 1934), 25. Some have argued that Dontsov’s “rightwing populist” focus on the peasantry as the point of departure for Ukraine’s future corresponds to a general disinterest in the problem of Ukrainian modernization and socioeconomic development. Shlikhta, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 107-20.

⁷² Dontsov, *Natsionalizm*, in *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 7, 176. Motyl considers the yankophile Dontsov of the 1920s a proponent of laissez-faire capitalism, suggesting that his “active nationalism” contained elements of (classical) liberalism, despite appearances. Motyl, *Turn to the Right*, 82.

generations; calls for revolution, heretical innovation, nonconformity, feats of individual genius and will power, amorality, Anglo-American libertarianism, and creative violence. But its authoritarian side demands submission to previous generations, to the state, and to cultural and religious tradition, extolling mindless dogmatism, unflinching obeisance to the powerful, and fanatical self-sacrifice for the greater good of the whole. *Natsionalizm*'s cosmopolitanism is manifest in its adulation of the West, the "Faustian civilization" whose thirst for adventure and conquest has driven it to the farthest reaches the globe. But if imperial nations alone have the "right" to self-determination, why speak of Ukrainian independence at all? Why oppose Russian or Soviet imperialism, and on what grounds, if it is, after all, the consequence of a racial-biological "law of nature" and there are no universal moral standards by which to condemn it? How could the Ukrainian nation assert its uniqueness and wholeness, "the self-sufficiency of its idea," by mimicking international empires? As Mykola Riabchuk argues, Dontsov's cult of the West was ambivalent and artificial thanks to a contradiction between the (decadent, cosmopolitan, imperialist) modernity that European civilization represented, and the native traditions, ancestor worship, xenophobia, and attachment to the homeland that he purportedly wished to revive.⁷³

The Dontsov-Lypyns'kyi Polemic and the Formation of the OUN

After *Natsionalizm*'s success Dontsov became convinced of his prophetic abilities and spent the rest of the interwar period repeating the work's main premises, elaborating upon them in light of new events, and making minor revisions.⁷⁴ The book turned him into an idol for the

⁷³ Mykola Riabchuk, *Vid Malorosii do Ukrainy: paradoksy zapizniloho natsiietvorennia* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2000), 90-92, 94-95.

⁷⁴ Lysiak-Rudnyts'kyi, *Istorychni esei*, vol. 2, 400.

nationalistic youth in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and throughout Europe, who came to believe that he alone had set before them the task of heralding a glorious new epoch of Ukrainian history.⁷⁵ They were eager to become the stronger “people of a new spirit” described in *Natsionalizm*, ready to sacrifice everything—and commit any atrocity—for the national ideal.

But not everyone was so impressed. Lypyns’kyi, for instance, loathed the book, denouncing it as a bastardization and plagiarism of his own ideas. Dontsov’s *Natsionalizm* does not cite Lypyns’kyi’s work, but was it indebted to his ideas? As early as 1919,⁷⁶ Lypyns’kyi had expressed a number of the points found in “active nationalism”: 1) a critique of democracy that proposed the cultivation of a new ruling class, raised in the traditional, knightly values of the Cossack period, to give form to the unarticulated strivings of the peasantry; 2) a critique of the fatalism and anarchism born of determinist conceptions of history, advocating fervent belief in one’s own will (voluntarism) and the harnessing of irrational drives and elemental desires for the purposes of action (vitalism); 3) a critique of the leadership of the UNR, focusing on the Ukrainian intelligentsia’s estrangement from the peasantry, their subservience to Moscow, their inexperience and indecisiveness (here Lypyns’kyi and Dontsov agreed that the peasantry’s mentality is inherently anti-Bolshevik, conservative, private property-minded, xenophobic and patriotic—they just need a native, war-capable aristocracy that they can respect); 4) a critique of provincialism and regionalism (particularly in Galicia), in favor of nationalism; and 5) a critique of socialist cosmopolitanism (the myth of the proletarian revolution) as a source of demoralization and spiritual decadence, in favor of new (yet ancient) myths and legends to inspire a national revolution. However, many of these ideas can be traced to prior and external

⁷⁵ Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi integral’nyi natsionalizm*, 169.

⁷⁶ Lypyns’kyi, *Lysty do brativ-khliborobiv*, xx-xxiv.

influences that Lypyns'kyi and Dontsov shared in common, such as Georges Sorel, Gustave Le Bon, Charles Maurras, Roberto Michels, and the rightwing Italian economist Wilfred Pareto (1848-1923), not to mention Edmund Burke, G.W.F. Hegel, and other classic conservative thinkers. Lypyns'kyi and Dontsov were nearly the same age and, although the former had embraced a Ukrainian identity despite a “Polonized” background while the latter arrived at the same national subjectivity from a “Russified” background, the two developed in parallel, responding to the same events, living in the same cities, working for the same government, and moving in the same circles. This makes the disentanglement of their intellectual paths and the discernment of who influenced whom, when, and how, next to impossible.

From the inception of Lypyns'kyi's party and the Hetmanite movement in 1918, Dontsov was active in the politics of Ukrainian conservatism, which, there is no doubt, provided the foundations for his “active,” “volitional” (*vol'ovyi*) nationalism. But he departed from Lypyns'kyi on several key points. For Dontsov (as of the mid 1920s) the nation precedes the state, in time and in importance, and a Ukrainian nation still needed to be cultivated before a Ukrainian state would be possible; Lypyns'kyi, a statist, thought the opposite. They took opposing approaches to the legitimacy of power and legality (irrelevant for Dontsov but essential for Lypyns'kyi). They defined “the will” differently (“conscious striving” for Lypyns'kyi versus “irrational feeling” for Dontsov). Finally, their strategy for building a Ukrainian state diverged: Lypyns'kyi's decidedly top/down vision gave the leading part to the landed (re-Ukrainized) gentry, conspiring with a narrow circle of followers to place a monarch (hetman) in power in Kyiv; for Dontsov the national revolution would have to be of, by, and for the Ukrainian

peasantry, with the gentry playing an auxiliary role (the goal being to incite massive popular upheavals, not to engineer coups d'état.⁷⁷

Practical and theoretical differences aside, relations between the two ideologues had already deteriorated beyond to point of repair by 1926. Dontsov had failed to provoke Lypyns'kyi on the pages of *LVN* the previous year first by attacking the legalism central to the latter's thinking.⁷⁸ Then he called Lypyns'kyi's commitment to the idea of Ukrainian independence from Russia into question. Lypyns'kyi responded with a letter to the New Jersey newspaper *Svoboda* (Freedom) and mailed a copy to Dontsov:

In issue 94 of your newspaper dated 23 April of this year you wrote that I 'agitate for dropping the goal of independence and for voluntarily recognizing Ukraine's place in the Russian Empire.' I know you Ukrainian intelligentsia snakes too well to be surprised by these lies, to have any desire to answer them, or to engage in polemics with you. Keep lying. The more your lies besmirch the Ukrainian name, which you yourselves represent, the more your baseness will drive away all honest Ukrainians, and the sooner the branch on which you sit will fall, and you boors will die, blinded by your own spite.⁷⁹

But the polemic continued. Dontsov responded the next month with a private letter addressed to "Wacław Lipinski" (a Polonized version of Lypyns'kyi's name) expressing "extreme concern" about the latter's sanity and urging him to seek professional psychiatric care.⁸⁰ Previously theoretical squabbles became even more personal and public in Lypyns'kyi's introduction to *Lysty do bratir-khliborobiv*. Dontsov's ugly divisive tone introduced chaos into Ukrainian

⁷⁷ "That foundation of the Ukrainian nation and state can be only the peasant class. Who argues with this? And who argues with the fact that, in reality, and not in words, the state-building elements of the former agrarian aristocracy need to be drawn into the process of the state's construction? But — in this process — they [the aristocrats] [must] play a subordinate and not leading role (regardless of status), and if they also play [this role] (as individuals), then it [must be after] having subordinated their group aspirations to the aspirations of the whole peasant class." Dontsov, "Targovitsa chy Poltava?," 164.

⁷⁸ "Everywhere in Europe now, legal authority is losing luster, everywhere the search goes on for a new principle of power, and if dictatorship is not able to find this new principle of power, then so too is monarchical 'legal' power now exposed for the very same failures." Dontsov, "Targovitsa chy Poltava?," 170.

⁷⁹ BN, Mf. 83984, 108. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 89.

⁸⁰ Dmytro Dontsov to Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi, May 15, 1926. BN, Mf. 82671, 78.

politics. Dontsov had slandered him as “a Moscovite who struggles against the idea of Ukrainian independence.”⁸¹ But Lypyns’kyi insists that Dontsov became a Ukrainian nationalist only thanks to his influence, trying to claim all the credit for his ideas years later after it had become fashionable and profitable to do so.

Much of Lypyns’kyi’s obloquy does not engage in a sustained critique of the actual content of *Natsionalizm* (he lumped Dontsov’s doctrine with the varieties of Ukrainian socialism, which “can bring only what is already brought: the ruin of Ukraine”).⁸² Instead, he dwells on Dontsov’s Russianness, his hollow imitation of Bolshevism, and pettiness, referring to him as “Mit’ka” (a Russophone diminutive): The problem is not that he [Dontsov] is a Moskal’ [i.e. a Russian —TE]. Honest Ukrainians are and have been Moskals. Ultimately, just as there are no pure-blooded Americans, there are no pure-blooded Ukrainians. . . . A Ukrainian is anyone who wants Ukraine to cease being a colony; for her varied tribes, races, and faiths to become one Ukrainian State.” As a Moskal’, Dontsov might have contributed the virtues of “authority, organization, discipline—precisely what the Ukrainian national movement lacks. So the problem is not that he is a Moskal’.” Rather, Lypyns’kyi asserts, “the problem is that his egocentric and cowardly nature could not gather the courage, discipline, and organization of the Muscovite revolutionaries—the one thing that is good about them.” “[Dontsov] sought only to make an easy career among ‘stupid *khokhols*’ [a slur for Ukrainians —TE] out of the effrontery of revolutionary Muscovite courage.”

From the beginning [Dontsov] imitated the ‘enlightened’ Petersburg S[ocial] D[emocrat]s and chided the ‘*khokhols*’ for being petit-bourgeois, independentists, nationalists, not Marxists. Then [he] decided to speculate in nationalism and scolds them now for being Marxists, Moscovites, provincialists, and not nationalists. Being a socialist Moscovite

⁸¹ Lypyns’kyi, *Lysty do brativ-khliborobiv*, xx-xxiv.

⁸² Viacheslav Lypyns’kyi, “Lyst do p. Bohdana Shemeta, pysanyi u Raikhenav dnia 12.XII.1925 u vidpovid’ na postavlene pytannya: natsionalizm, patriotizm, i shovinizm,” *Suchasnist’*, no. 6 (1992), 72.

he struggled against the rotten West, noble Poland and the bourgeois prejudices of Catholicism. But, having seen that he will not make a great career in this, suddenly recloaked himself in a 'Western' costume, began to denounce Asiatic Moscow and Orthodoxy, insinuated himself under the family of Cardinal Mercier, and began to promote an orientation toward Austria from the beginning, and now toward Poland.⁸³

According to Lypyns'kyi, Dontsov's texts are rife with internal contradictions: "In one month he writes that Ukrainians 'have a womanly psychology' [because they are guided in the first place by feeling instead of logic] (*Pidstavy nashoi polityky*); in another, that they are rationalists, that is, dominated by logic and not feeling (*Natsionalizm*).” Dontsov draws upon “a mass of citations of 'Western European works,' which he has never read. 'Stupid provincials' and the like all take this for genius. What's actually 'genius' is only his skunk-like means of building a literary career for himself.” Dontsov is a plagiarist who steals ideas and presents them as his own. He relies on ad hominem attacks, misrepresentation of opponents, and falsification of texts. He claims to be Ukraine's only representative to the West, but Mit'ka is really a product of Muscovite, socialist, revolutionary ideas, not of conservatism. Ever since Khmel'nyts'kyi, people such as Dontsov have been “the first cause and clearest manifestation of the provincialism of Ukraine.” When the time came, during the Ukrainian Revolution, for the “direct action” and “creative violence” that he harps on about, Dontsov “hid under his wife's skirt.” Hence his biography of betrayals, shape-shifting, and careerism. He was never loyal to the Hetmanate and ultimately betrayed Petliura and the UNR as well, charting a ridiculous pro-Polish course in *Pidstavy nashoi polityky*. Lacking discipline and courage, he is incapable of organized political action, which is to say, loyalty to a party: “Suppose that today a respected nationalist organization were to appear and say: come, Mit'ka, work with us as a disciplined member. Mit'ka's answer would certainly be: nationalism is the most provincial stupidity; not a nationalist, but a true [*pravdyva*] Ukraine was

⁸³ Lypyns'kyi, *Lysty do brativ-khliborobiv*, xxii-xxiii.

born in my head today!’⁸⁴ Lypyns’kyi hoped that this opprobrium would be withering for Dontsov, but it seems to have had the opposite effect of building the latter’s fame and resolve.

The polemic between Dontsov and Lypynsk’yi became one of the main themes of discussion among Ukrainian nationalists from this moment forward. The prominent theorist of Ukrainian conservatism was highly regarded by the leadership of the future OUN still taking shape in the late 1920s, but Dontsov’s popularity with the youth (and hence with the nationalist rank and file—the next generation of Ukrainian leaders represented by Bandera, who differed from the older, more conservative leaders, such as Konovalets’ and Andrii Mel’nyk) surpassed Lypyns’kyi’s following the publication of *Natsionalizm*. Ukrainian nationalists generally considered Dontsov’s writing easier to understand and more inspiring than Lypyns’kyi’s more measured and academic political works. Dontsov was poised to emerge as, perhaps, the foremost ideologue of Ukrainian integral nationalism at the moment of its self-organization into a united force.

According to Volodymyr Martynets’, he and Konovalets’ approached Dontsov with an offer of collaboration and material security, including the recognition of the author of *Natsionalizm* as the spokesman and ideological authority of the UVO abroad, which would be autonomous.⁸⁵ The three met in December 15, 1927, in L’viv, but Dontsov refused to sign on. Martynets’ attributed this to Dontsov’s personal distaste for Konovalets’, who offended him with insufficiently active support for the *Zahrava* group,⁸⁶ but Petro Mirchuk (1913-1999), another leading OUN member, blamed the failure of the recruitment mission on Martynets’ rude

⁸⁴ Ibid., xxiii.

⁸⁵ Martynets’, *Ideolohiia orhanizovanoho*, 42.

⁸⁶ Martynets’ attributes this to Dontsov’s personal distaste for Konovalets’, who offended the latter by insufficient supporting the *Zahrava* group. Martynets’, *Ukrains’ke pidpillia vid U.V.O. do O.U.N.*, 229.

behavior: “Martynets’ not only did not bring Dm[ytro] Dontsov to collaboration, but, on the contrary—shocked the latter with his annoying disposition, cockiness, and tactlessness.”⁸⁷ Other future members of the OUN leadership—which called itself the *Provid Ukrain’s’kykh Natsionalistiv* (Leadership of the Ukrainian Nationalists), or PUN—attempted to bring the ideologue on board with the practical organization underway, but all were decisively rebuffed.⁸⁸

Years later, members of the PUN disagreed as to why they failed to pull Dontsov into their ranks; some claimed that he was not amenable to collaboration under any conditions.⁸⁹ Zenon Pelens’kyi, a regional leader of the OUN in Galicia, later compared these oftentimes rude exchanges to “nationalist barbs in the ass,” while Dontsov spoke of a “psychological chasm” separating him from the organized nationalists, arguing that their worldview was not the one he propounded.⁹⁰ Dmytro Andriievs’kyi (1892-1976)—a former colleague of Dontsov’s from the Ukrainian Diplomatic Mission to Switzerland and one of the founding leaders of the OUN—contacted Dontsov repeatedly, growing frustrated with his rejection of the “organized nationalists” (as they called themselves and their doctrine). Andriievs’kyi wrote from Brussels on June 18, 1927, on the occasion of the founding of a new nationalist journal, *Rozbudova natsii* (Nation Building)⁹¹—the official organ of the PUN—and of rumors that Dontsov’s nonengagement with it was evidence of a rift within the nationalist camp:

⁸⁷ Petro Mirchuk, *Narys itsorii Orhanizatsii Ukrain’s’kykh Natsionalistiv*, ed. S. Lenvav’skyi, vol. 1 (Munich: Ukrain’s’ke vydavnytstvo, 1968), 84.

⁸⁸ Sosnovs’kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 375-83. Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi inetgral’nyi natsionalizm*, 170-71.

⁸⁹ Knysh, *Stanovlennia OUN*, 61.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi inetgral’nyi natsionalizm*, 170.

⁹¹ Published by Mykola Stsibors’kyi and edited by Volodymyr Martynet’s, *Rozbudova natsii*, banned in Poland, was based in Prague and in publication from January 1928 to 1934. Despite Dontsov’s immediately hostile reaction to it, he regularly received and read copies of it at his home and office. M.V. Mandryk, *Stanovlennia ideolohii intehral’noho natsionalizmu v intelektual’nii spadshchyni ukrains’koi emihratsii (1920-1930 rr.)* (Diss. [Kandidat istorichnykh nauk], Natsional’nyi pedahohichnyi universytet imeni Mykhaila Drahomanov, 2004), 154.

The situation is all the more paradoxical that for every layman our genetic connection with you, with your declared thoughts, is obvious. I again emphasize, that we are your spiritual sons. You deny us, at least in letters to me, but we nonetheless properly make you responsible for our appearance in the world. Even if one takes only the formal aspect, the very name of our movement, as a “nationalist movement,” we are created by you . . . I cannot suggest that you step out against us, because then the situation would become entirely false. Because in sincerity we would not be able to explain that this is a fundamental divergence, because we don’t have that. Thus it stands with every guess about your unwillingness [to work with us —TE], which has nothing to do with ideology. . . . You properly prepared [the youth] for the acceptance of our organization and our discipline, and you prepared it such that if you wanted to change something about this, you would scarcely succeed. . . . Excuse us that we use your work and even your terminology—nationalism—but believe that we were certain to be formed by your work, together with you, and that it is not our fault that you still have your reservations.⁹²

Elsewhere he beseeches Dontsov to assume a role in the leadership of the nascent OUN: “Surely it is clear to all that we are your spiritual sons, raised on your writings, baptized by your spirit. You can of course drive us away with a cross and object to some of our ‘deviations,’ but in vain. We feel ourselves your kinsmen and that’s how it is. It would be a pity, if we confined ourselves to repetitions of your thoughts and did not build something of our own.”⁹³ Nevertheless, “it would be wonderful if you found the opportunity for yourself to take part in our organization, and did not avoid us. I promise to you from my side total sincerity and openness.”⁹⁴

Dontsov did not budge. Offended by the rejection, Andriievs’kyi came to agree with Lypyns’kyi’s evaluation of Dontsov as a man incapable of organized political work and loyalty. “I read the introduction to the *Lysty do brativ khliborobiv* . . . Unfortunately, I cannot give much consideration to the matter of your competition with Lypyns’kyi, but he does not seem tragic to me. Of course you feel otherwise . . . I must acknowledge that I consider the work of Lypyns’kyi

⁹² BN, DD, mf. 82673, 76. Letter of Dmytro Andriievs’ky to D. Dontsov. June 18, 1927, Brussels.

⁹³ Ibid., 78. December 7, 1927.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

to be of great use in our confused community. Moreover many of his thoughts are mine.”⁹⁵

Andriievs'kyi later asserted that Dontsov was too egocentric to join the OUN, and was never able to accept the fact that a group had realized his ideas in practice without his leadership.

“Thus,” he writes “it is as if we usurped Dontsov’s ‘invention,’ and took the wind out of it. In fact, he missed the right moment to fall into line with us, and now he is disoriented.”⁹⁶ Dontsov, Andriievs'kyi asserted in a letter to Konovalts' in 1928, offered “absurd, maximalist precepts,” including the disastrous idea of conducting a “war against all.”⁹⁷ Dontsov also fell into conflict with Ukrainian nationalist leaders over the content and direction of *LNV*, ultimately refusing to engage in further communication with them in his capacity as editor.⁹⁸

Dontsov’s rebuffs and criticisms of the émigrés were noted at the OUN’s founding congress, which took place from January 28 to February 3, 1929, in Vienna.⁹⁹ The OUN incorporated the various Ukrainian nationalist youth and veterans groups into a single political formation under the leadership of Konovalts'. Like the UVO before it, the OUN upheld violence as a necessary and desirable method in the struggle for Ukrainian independence, but it was considerably larger and more radicalized than its predecessor. The OUN’s membership, mostly young Galician Ukrainians, engaged in targeted attacks against the Polish regime, including the assassinations of high-profile figures, such as the diplomat and politician Tadeusz Hołówko (1889-1931) (a

⁹⁵ Ibid., 85.

⁹⁶ *Dokumenty i materialy z istorii OUN*, vol. 2, part 2, 91. Quoted in Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi inetgral'nyi natsionalizm*, 170.

⁹⁷ Iuryi Cherchenko, ed. *Dokumenty i materialy z istorii Orhanizatsii Ukrains'kykh Natsionalistiv*, vol. 2, part 2, “Lystuvannia Ie. Konovaltsia z D. Andriies'kym (1927-1934 rr.)” (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihi, 2007), 98, 101.

⁹⁸ V. S. Lovyts'kyi, Iu. A. Levenets', V. A. Smolii, eds., *Ukrains'ka politychna emihratsiia, 1919-1945: Dokumenty i materialy* (Kyiv: Parlaments'ke vydavnytstvo, 2008), 410.

⁹⁹ Volodymyr Muravs'kyi, *Kongres Ukrains'kykh Natsionalistiv 1929 r.: Dokumenty i materialy* (L'viv: Natsional'na Akademiia Nauk Ukrainy, 2006), 239.

leading theorist of “Prometheism” and an advocate of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation), and the Polish interior minister, Bronisław Pieracki (1895-1934). The OUN also attacked Ukrainian “collaborators” with the Polish regime, including government officials, members of the liberal UNDO party, and educators, notoriously murdering Ivan Babii (1893-1934), the esteemed L’viv academician and veteran officer of the Ukrainian Galician Army of the ZUNR. In retaliation for the Great Famine of 1932-1933 (the Holodomor), OUN members also killed a Soviet consular officer, Alexei Mailov. The membership of the OUN’s Homeland Executive, based in Galicia and mostly comprised of young people, embraced Dontsov’s promotion of “creative violence” and put it into action, frequently acting independently and without the approval of the older leadership abroad (the PUN or *Provid*). A fringe minority in Western Ukrainian politics, they took the initiative, exerted their will, and displayed a fanatical dedication to the national idea, just as Dontsov had counseled them. Stepan Lenkavs’kyi, a proponent of expanding the OUN’s use of terrorism, praised the “recklessness and fanaticism,” voluntarism, and “amoral” rejection of “a sentimental sense of justice toward others,” with which Dontsov had imbued young Ukrainian nationalists.¹⁰⁰ Lenkavs’kyi used philosophical and psychological categories to expose the internal contradictions in Dontsov’s thought, but praised his ideas, regarding them as the spiritual basis for a new nationalist movement.¹⁰¹

Still, Dontsov refused to assume command over them as his own “spiritual children.”¹⁰²

Shortly after the founding of the OUN, Konovalts’ sent a student delegation to Dontsov to

¹⁰⁰ Lenkavs’kyi, “Filosofs’ki pidstavy,” 272-76.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Reflecting on Dontsov’s prophet-like relation to the OUN, Oleh Bahan, an avid promoter of “active nationalism” in Ukraine today, has compared Dontsov to Jesus Christ, who never joined his own church. Bahan argues that Dontsov’s ideology was an organic outgrowth of native Ukrainian traditions (above all those associated with the national poet, Taras Shevchenko), not an imitation of Western, let alone Russian, precedents. Bahan, *Pomizh mistykoïu i politykoïu*.

inform him of the OUN's existence and encourage him to collaborate closely with it. They were not to insist on Dontsov's joining the OUN as a leading member because the Poles, as Konovalets' understood, would in that case drive the ideologue out of Galicia, where he was needed to carry on his "educational" work.¹⁰³ His answer, again, was negative: no collaboration, secret or otherwise, would occur. That summer, Martynets' made another attempt to reach a mutual understanding with Dontsov and include him in the propaganda side of the OUN's activities. Dontsov recalled this in a letter to his wife, on August 29, 1929: "I again received a terrible invitation from Martynets' and Co. to write to them and so on and so on (this time they use flattery). They say that they are issuing some kind of crude journal. . . . I again thanked [them] and, regarding the journal, answered that there is a place for everyone in *Lit[eraturno] Nauk[ovy] Visnyk*, let them write, and whoever has a good heart can help to make *this* journal better."¹⁰⁴ Dontsov was not interested in relinquishing any control over the ideological vision that he claimed to have been alone in propounding. He stuck to his own platform, *LNV*, and, although he invited the members of the OUN *Provid* to contribute to it, only a few articles by Andriievs'kyi and Ievhen Onats'kyi (1894-1979) (a representative of the OUN in Rome) appeared on its pages. Dontsov was afraid to assert his authority and take control over the practical results of that vision, despite numerous invitations to do so, and despite claiming full credit for the "trendiness" (*modnist'*) of integral nationalist ideas and passions in Ukrainian politics.

Because Dontsov refused to cooperate, relations between him and the PUN went from mutually suspicious to openly hostile in the following years. By 1930, Andriievs'kyi and other

¹⁰³ Lenkavs'kyi, *Ukrains'kyi natsionalizm*, 215, 218.

¹⁰⁴ Dmytro Dontsov to Mariia Dontsova. TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 16, ark. 152

members of the “organized” Ukrainian nationalist leadership had begun to consider Dontsov a dangerous competitor to the OUN for influence over the youth, a “provocateur” with impractical, divisive, “fanatical,” and “diabolical” ideas.¹⁰⁵ The émigré PUN sought to attenuate and regain control over the outbreak of unsanctioned political violence in Galicia, arguing that, although “our circumstances demand the greatest firmness, determination, and élan,” “violence is a double-edged sword and hides as many dangers as it does advantages. The use of violence can as soon reduce a society to anarchy as restore it to health. To achieve the second and not the first, violence should be ethical.”¹⁰⁶ On this point, Onats’kyi attacked Dontsov, without naming him, for promoting selfish, antisocial deeds.¹⁰⁷ In a 1933 speech to fellow nationalists, Andriievs’kyi bemoaned the fact that a failure to demonstrate perfect adherence to Dontsov’s teachings was liable to discredit one as a sellout in the eyes of Galician youth.¹⁰⁸ He called him an “epochal phenomenon,” but a “dangerous” one.¹⁰⁹

Developing this line of critique in a 1926 review of *Natsionalizm*, Martynets’ rejected Dontsov’s amorality, his iconoclasm vis-à-vis Ukrainian traditions, and the lack of positive, inspiring images and exemplars drawn from Ukrainian history (a critique of the OUN leadership’s fundamental disagreements with Dontsov that he further developed after World war

¹⁰⁵ Cherchenko, *Dokumenty i materiialy z istorii OUN*, vol. 2, part 1, 321, 330; Cherchenko, *Dokumenty i materiialy*, vol. 2, part 2, 91, 101. Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi inetgral’nyi natsionalizm*, 171. TsDAHO, f. 269, op. 1, spr. 175, ark. 58.

¹⁰⁶ Inzh. D. “Pavuvannia I nasyl’stvo,” *Rozbudova natsii*, no. 11-12 (1933), 253. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 105.

¹⁰⁷ Ievhen Onats’kyi, “Natsionalizm i indyvidualizm,” *Rozbudova natsii*, no. 7-8 (1933): 159-61.

¹⁰⁸ Cherchenko, *Dokumenty i materiialy*, vol. 2., part 2, 231. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 104. The Galician Ukrainian liberals of the UNDO and the newspaper *Dilo* (The Deed, 1880-1939) also accused Dontsov of corrupting the youth. A UNDO representative in the Sejm and editor of *Dilo* Vasyl’ Mudryi gave a speech December 24, 1928, in which he accused Dontsov of “grafting elements of anarchy onto the souls of his supporters.” *Dilo* blamed Dontsov and the foreign influences under which he labored for the rise of authoritarianism and violence in Galician society and politics. Thanks to such criticism, the paper’s journalists became the targets of physical attacks by nationalist youth. Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 90-91.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 380.

II).¹¹⁰ Martynets' fell into a heated polemic with Dontsov over these issues during the summer of 1930, despite Konovalets's desire to avoid such a confrontation.¹¹¹ The PUN did not share Dontsov's unrestrained enthusiasm for Italian Fascism, rejecting the label as harmful slander by enemy propagandists. Thus, in 1929, the editors of the PUN's main organ, *Rozbudova natsii*, declared:

We underline the inappropriateness of the term 'fascist' that opponents have used to describe Ukrainian Nationalism. Fascism is the movement of a people with a state; it is a current born out by a social underpinning that has struggled for power in its own state. Ukrainian Nationalism is a national-liberation movement, whose purpose is the struggle to win a state, to which it has to lead the broadest masses of the Ukrainian people. . . . With even greater reason Ukrainian Nationalism cannot be compared to other social and politically reactionary currents among other state peoples that are similarly called fascist.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 106-8. See Martynets', *Zabronzovuimo nashe mynule!*

¹¹¹ Kentii, *Ukrains'ka Viis'kova Orhanizatsiia*, 39.

¹¹² O. Mytsiuk, "Fashyzm (Dyskusiina statia)," *Rozbudova natsii*, no. 8-9 (1929): 262-70, 262. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 108-09. Onats'kyi, the OUN's correspondent in Rome, concurred that the situation was entirely different with the Fascists in Italy. The PUN were concerned about the PR of their organization; ties to fascist regimes were likely to be used against them in the Polish, Soviet, and liberal emigre Ukrainian press. Nevertheless, Onats'kyi regarded Italy as one of the few states working against the post-Versailles order that had also ignored Ukrainian concerns and aspirations. He was especially impressed, as was Dontsov, with the way that Fascism had rapidly modernized Italy and transformed its culture in a spirit of martial solidarity and order. See Ievhen Onats'kyi, *U vichnomy misti. Zapysky ukrains'koho zhurnalista: Rik 1930* (Buenos Aires: Vydavnytstvo Mykola Denysiuka, 1954). Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 110-12.



Figure 4.1. The First Congress of the OUN in Vienna (February 1929). *Source:* Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine

Disputes between the *LNŮ* editor and OUN leaders persisted and worsened through the mid to late 1930s, diverging again on the issue of German National Socialism after Hitler's rise to power (see chapter 5). Meanwhile, Dontsov studiously avoided doing anything that might connect him to the OUN, despite his obvious ideological affinities with the organization. As Andriievs'kyi suggested, Dontsov feared the repercussions of association with an illegal political organization for his life and work in Poland.

There were barriers to collaboration at the level of personalities as well. Andriievs'kyi criticized Dontsov as "organically incapable of living with people, either in private or public life."¹¹³ Thus, in May 1932, when the unofficial weekly organ of the OUN, *Ukrains'kyi holos* (Ukrainian Voice), announced its intentions of celebrating the ten-year anniversary of the reestablishment of *LNŮ* under Dontsov's editorship, the latter wrote the paper's editor that this

¹¹³ Iuryi Cherchenko, *Dokumenty i materiialy z istorii Orhanizatsii Ukrains'kykh Natsionalistiv*, vol. 2, pt. 1 (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihiy, 2010), 231. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 104.

action might “give the impression, among the uninitiated public, of some kind of special ideational (and perhaps also organizational) intimacy, closeness of the two publications [*LNŮ* and *Ukrains’kyi holos* —TE] that does not correspond to reality.”¹¹⁴ In an oral interview with his friend and biographer, Mykhailo Sosnovs’kyi, near the end of his life, Dontsov explained that he trusted Konovalets’ and recognized his authority, but did not like his entourage, especially Martynets’ and Andriievs’kyi.¹¹⁵ Dontsov also did not care for Andrii Mel’nyk (the future leader of one of the two main splinter groups of the OUN after the schism that occurred following Konovalets’ assassination in 1938). Yet another reason for Dontsov’s refusal to join the OUN was his unwillingness to share (or subordinate himself to) authority, as evidenced by his dictatorial approach to editing *LNŮ* and, previously, *Zahrava*. It is likely that, had he entered the OUN’s leadership, personal and ideological conflicts would have followed him, just as they did previously when he joined other parties and organizations only to resign in disgust and deny ever having had anything to do with them.

Dontsov recognized the necessity of an organized movement as the only path to victory, but regarded it as a secondary concern of “active nationalism,” asserting the primacy of spiritual rebirth and the formulation of a national ideal to serve as the beacon for a new generation of nationalists, with or without an organizational basis.¹¹⁶ His doctrine commanded the loyalty of the younger members of the OUN—including Stepan Lenkavs’kyi (1904-1977), Volodymyr Ianiv (1908-1991), Stepan Bandera, and Iaroslav Stes’ko (1912-1986)—who went on to be the chief of the OUN(B) and the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN), based in Munich, during the Cold War. The older, more conservative leadership, by contrast, tended to favor Lypyns’kyi,

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi inetgral’nyi natsionalizm*, 172.

¹¹⁵ Sosnovs’kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 178.

¹¹⁶ Dontsov, *Problema pokolin’*, 327.

often distancing themselves from Dontsov's ideology in public.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, the OUN included almost all of Dontsov's works in its list (published in 1930) of mandatory books for the organization's libraries and reading rooms and his ideas were the basis for the OUN's authoritarianism and fixation on absolute leaders.¹¹⁸ "In the work of the ideological reeducation of the masses, it is not the cabinet of theories," the first program of the OUN states, "but the direct approach to the soul of the mass man, that has the decisive significance; the ability to inspire his feeling and imagination with the simple (despite all their greatness) truths of nationalism; to carry him away with examples of heroic, willful action."¹¹⁹ Dontsov's "myth of the final battle" and the notion of "permanent revolution" were manifest in the OUN's insurrection against Poland throughout the 1930s, as were his voluntarism, romanticization of "creative violence," and the "initiative minority." Ultimately, the OUN was both more and less extreme than Dontsov. On the one hand, it engaged in the real (as oppose to imagined or aesthetic) violence of a national insurgency. Unlike Dontsov, the OUN was willing to break Polish laws, kill the enemy, and face the consequences. On the other hand, because OUN's members' lives were on the line and certain acts of violence threatened to damage the organization's reputation, the nationalist leadership attempted to mitigate Dontsov's incendiary rhetoric and promotion of spontaneous, irrational action with calls to order and discipline. Moreover, since the OUN claimed to lead and represent the oppressed Ukrainian masses, Dontsov's elitist, antidemocratic, pro-Fascist, and Bolshevik-admiring statements had to be criticized or rejected outright, at least in public. After all, what were Ukrainian nationalists

¹¹⁷ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi inetgral'nyi natsionalizm*, 246-47.

¹¹⁸ TsDIAL, f. 205, op. 1, spr. 964, ark. 32; *ibid.*, spr. 1058, ark. 39.

¹¹⁹ *Politychna prohrama i Ustarii Orhanizatsii Ukrains'kykh Natsionalistiv* (Buenos Aires: Vydannia Provodu ukrains'kykh natsionalistiv, 1940), 9.

fighting against, if not despotic states? Would a Ukrainian authoritarian dictatorship be any better than the Polish or (more to the point) Soviet-Russian ones that the OUN had vowed to destroy? Was Dontsov, as Lypyns'kyi and other critics charged, a “revolutionary Moskal” who had opportunistically adopted a Ukrainian aesthetic?

Dontsov's Critics and the Image of the Russian Enemy

My aim here is to examine Dontsov's constantly evolving image of and relation to Russia, Bolshevism, and the Soviet Union. His contemporary opponents often accused him of secret Moscophilia (or Polonophilia), affinities for Bolshevism, and repressed Russianness. In large part, these allegations were intended simply to enrage and embarrass Dontsov by attributing his fanatical Ukrainian nationalism to the pathos of a self-hating Russian. Hitting their mark, these attacks dogged him for the rest of his life.¹²⁰ The commonness of the charge across the spectrum of non-Soviet Ukrainian politics reflects the extent to which anti-Russian sentiments had become the norm in the interwar period, thanks in no small part to Dontsov's own efforts (though it is important also to recall the extreme destructiveness of the imperial Russian occupations of Galicia during World War I, just a decade prior). There is, nevertheless, some substance to the charge that Dontsov's worldview bore the imprint of his origins in New Russia, his Russified (or simply “Russian”) family, his education in St. Petersburg, and his grounding in the classics of imperial Russian literature and philosophy. The ideologue's loathing for Muscovy and Russian Communism could hardly be denied, but he also seemed to despise the vast majority

¹²⁰ We saw in chapter 1 how Dontsov reacted to the accusation of Russianness from Dmytro Doroshenko in a private letter to Malaniuk. In an unpublished letter to Mykhailo Hikavyi on January 12, 1959, Dontsov reacted to the same accusation from the Canadian-Ukrainian Edmonton-based newspaper *Ukrains'ki visti* (Ukrainian News): “For what does [*Ukrains'ki*] *visti* call me a Russian? Let them speak for themselves. This is just what Lypyns'kyi wrote, that I am a Russian because I ‘was born in the country which Russians call New Russia’ . . . Why aren't Drahoman-ov, Fital'-ov, Vietukh-ov Russians? This is all the stupidity and the malice of these weak-spirited people.” Quoted in Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 82.

of his contemporary Ukrainians, claiming, to the shock of many, that they could all learn a great deal from the Bolsheviks. Had Dontsov imbibed the very evil (Eurasian despotism) that he had purportedly devoted his life's work to destroying?

Certainly his Western Ukrainian non-Communist socialist and liberal-democratic critics thought so. Karl Kobers'kyi (1880-1940), for example, a political activist, academic, and leader in the cooperative farming movement, proclaimed (under the pseudonym "Pushkar"): "D. Dontsov is a typical representative of Russian nihilism on our soil, despite his vocal critique of everything that comes from the East."¹²¹ Kobers'kyi dismissed Dontsov as an "antidemocratic fascist nationalist" whose ideology offered no positive, constructive program.¹²² Dontsov's "Russian nihilism" included a reactionary social teaching that serves only the ruling classes, which, given the circumstances of Ukraine's colonization by Poles and Russians, meant non-Ukrainians.¹²³ Instead of offering a path forward, Dontsov's "active nationalism" impeded progress with backward-looking, antidemocratic slogans that promised no solution to the Ukrainian question. Despite their "cult of tradition," Dontsov's followers attacked the best Ukrainian traditions of freedom of thought and democracy, replacing them with thinly disguised Russian traditions of dogmatism and absolutism.¹²⁴ The ethical relativism of Dontsov's worldview is as damaging as the class-based ethics of Marxism, leading to the rejection of ethics tout court (*amoral'nist*).¹²⁵ Kobers'kyi noted the "*purely opportunistic character*" of Dontsov's antidemocratic, authoritarian, "might is right" stance: it provided no moral basis for demanding a

¹²¹ Karl Pushkar (Kobers'kyi), "*Natsionalizm*": *Krytyka fraz* (L'viv: n.p. 1933), 18. All quotes from Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi Integral'nyi Natsionalizm*, 415-16.

¹²² Ibid., 73.

¹²³ Ibid., 38-42.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 121-24.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 125-27.

Ukrainian state, but justified its nonexistence, “because this people [the Ukrainians —TE] had lost their first battle for this state.”¹²⁶ Kobers’kyi also argued that Dontsov’s tirades against determinism rang hollow, noting the sociological deterministic outlook of his own ideology: in ways analogous to Marxism’s prophecy of the inevitable demise of capitalism (in accordance with certain unbreakable laws of social development), “active nationalism” regarded the crisis of democracy and the appearance of dictatorships across Europe since World War I as the onset of a new historical stage in which democracy is no longer tenable, no matter how much individuals and societies may desire it.¹²⁷ Ultimately, the “elite” that a Dontsovian ideology would usher into power would degenerate into a corrupt, nepotistic clique.¹²⁸ Kobers’kyi believed (rather too optimistically, as it turned out) that “active nationalism” would die a quick death in (Western) Ukraine owing to the lack of a social or cultural basis for fascist and “Russian nihilist” ideas to grow there.¹²⁹

The Western Ukrainian Social Democrat Volodymyr Levyns’kyi (1880-1953) also accused Dontsov of being Russian at heart. As we saw in chapter 1, Levyns’kyi recalled meeting Dontsov’s older brother, Vladimir, in Switzerland during World War I, and being struck by the latter’s self-identification as a Russian and a Bolshevik, and his hostility toward everything Ukrainian. His recollections of the younger Dontsov, published in 1936 as *Ideoloh ukrains’koho fashizmu: zamitky pro Dmytra Dontsova* (The Ideologue of Ukrainian Fascism: Notes on the Dmytro Dontsov) offered more evidence of Dontsov’s foreignness on (Western) Ukrainian soil.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 75.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 125-27. Zaitsev notes the similarities of Kobers’kyi’s critique to that of the British philosopher Karl Popper’s critique of historicism. Individuals face a moral choice no matter what “historical forces” surround them. Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi Integral’nyi Natsionalizm*, 417.

¹²⁸ Kobers’kyi, “Natsionalizm,” 79.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 137.

Levyns'kyi claims to have met Dontsov as a USDRP comrade shortly after he had emigrated from the Russian Empire to Austro-Hungarian L'viv. Dontsov was "an 'orthodox' Marxist" who possessed "only the weakest command of the Ukrainian language. His language was, properly speaking, a Muscovite-Ukrainian jargon."¹³⁰ "The influences of Russification," Levyns'kyi continues, "had clearly left their mark on him. He made efforts to purge himself of them, but slid from one gutter pipe into another, for he fell under the strong influence of Poland," which "subjected his language to a great desolation, from which he has not yet recovered to this day. Just read his *Pidstavy nashoi polityky* from 1922 and you will be perfectly convinced of this."¹³¹ Dontsov was unable to distinguish between Ukrainian and Polish because both were alien to him, and his grasp of the former was superficial and forced. Levyns'kyi states: "It appears that Dontsov is a Moskal' by origin." But, he hastens to add: "These moments [from Dontsov's assimilation into Galician Ukrainian culture from a Russian background —TE], which I raise now, are not for me the basis from which I would make even the smallest reproach against Dmytro Dontsov. If, however, I bring them up, then it is only because Dontsov himself is an adherent of so-called *racism* and has more than once reproached his opponents or enemies for racial impurity of blood."¹³² (This, Levyns'kyi reminds us, is precisely what happened between Dontsov and Lypyns'kyi.)

Levyns'kyi then surveys Dontsov's prewar writings, highlighting his statements of principled, socialist-internationalist opposition to Ukrainian independence at the time.

Levyns'kyi assesses the ideologue's stretch as press minister in Pavlo Skoropads'kyi's

¹³⁰ Levyns'kyi, *Ideoloh ukrains'koho fashizmu*, 12. Examining the drafts of his earlier works, it is clear that Dontsov often had to cross out Russian words and Russianisms to be replaced by the appropriate Ukrainian equivalent (the Ukrainian "*bahato*" instead of the Russian "*mnogo*," "*zavzhdy*" instead of "*vsegda*," and so on).

¹³¹ Ibid., 12-13.

¹³² Ibid., 13.

government, in which he sat at the negotiating table with Bolsheviks, Whites, “Little Russians,” and other false patriots—“all working to make Ukraine a province in ‘a united and indivisible Russia’”—while Ukrainian socialists (such as Levyns’kyi) were fighting for it, against the Hetmanate and its various foreign masters.¹³³ Dontsov’s innate hostility toward Ukrainian culture, also symptomatic of his Russian background, is reflected in his contempt for the vast majority of his Ukrainian contemporaries and immediate predecessors (Ukrainophiles), with the exception of his ridiculous reimagining of Shevchenko, Ukrainka, Mikhnovs’kyi, Olena Pchilka, and Panteleimon Kulish as protofascists. Levyns’kyi’s chief purpose in writing *Ideoloh ukrains’koho fashizmu* was to defend Mykhailo Drahomanov and his legacy from Dontsov’s constant diatribes. According to Levyns’kyi, Drahomanov was, for his era, a truly radical Ukrainian nationalist, which is more than can be said of Dontsov and his followers decades later, who owe everything to Drahomanov.¹³⁴ Unlike Drahomanov, Dontsov hides “a reactionary, misanthropic face” behind a mask of false (because non-liberationist and antidemocratic) nationalism, “speculating on the national feelings of the popular masses.”¹³⁵ Levyns’kyi takes Dontsov at his word when he calls himself a fascist, but challenges the compatibility of that stance with nationalism properly understood. According to Levyns’kyi, nationalism has been bound with democracy from its inception, citing the examples of Mazzini and Garibaldi during the unification of Italy. Stripping nationalism of democracy, as fascism does, leaves nothing but a hollow shell, the cynical exploitation of national culture in the name of a small elite (not the

¹³³ Ibid., 22.

¹³⁴ On this score, Levyns’kyi singles out Mykhailo Mukhyn (1894-1974), literary critic and member of the *Vistnykivtsi*, who produced a philosophical critique of Drahomanov. Mykhailo Mukhyn, *Drahomanov bez masky* (L’viv: Tyktor, 1934).

¹³⁵ Levyns’kyi, *Ideoloh ukrains’koho fashizmu*, 7.

nation).¹³⁶ Dontsov popularizes a “cult of Mussolini, Hitler, and other fascist strongmen” in Galician society, corrupting naive students for his own personal gain. Given the “nonsense” of fascism for a stateless nation, his views can bring about only civil war to Ukrainian society. “Fortunately, Dontsov’s ‘voluntarism’ is only on paper.”¹³⁷ Like Kobers’kyi, Levyns’kyi predicted a short life for the alien ideology: “The twilight of Dontsovism (*Dontsovshchyna*) will be complete when even the most naive of Dontsov’s pilgrims recover from all ‘voluntarisms’ and the other ‘imponderables’ of his idiocy.”¹³⁸

Dontsov’s fiercest Hetmanite critic was Osyp Nazaruk (1883-1940), a conservative Catholic writer and political activist who took part in the Ukrainian Revolution as chief of the UNR’s press and propaganda division, then emigrated to the US, where he edited the Ukrainian-language newspaper *Ameryka* in Philadelphia from 1926 to 1927. He read Dontsov’s *Natsionalizm* at that time initially liked it, even republishing excerpts from the work in *Ameryka*,¹³⁹ but soon thereafter expressed a concern that this cult of the nation would “transform men into beasts.”¹⁴⁰ Under Lypyns’kyi’s influence, Nazaruk turned decisively against “active nationalism.”¹⁴¹ Nazaruk returned to L’viv, where he edited the official organ of the Ukrainian Catholic Organization, *Nova zoria* (New Star), and became a leading ideologue of the

¹³⁶ Ibid., 24-28.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 29.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 37.

¹³⁹ Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi Integral’nyi Natsionalizm*, 379.

¹⁴⁰ Quoted in Bohdan Budurowycz, “Poland and the Ukrainian Problem, 1921-1939,” *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 25, no. 4 (1983): 473-500, 483.

¹⁴¹ Lypyns’kyi did not, however, condone Nazaruk’s approach to attacking Dontsov, which arguably did more harm to the Hetmanites than it did to the integral nationalists. In 1930, Lypyns’kyi broke ties with Pavlo Skoropads’kyi and his followers over tactical and ideological disagreements, dissolving the USKhD and starting a new group—the short-lived “Brotherhood of Ukrainian Classocratic Monarchists.” By late 1931 Nazaruk was denouncing Lypyns’kyi as “crazy” (*bozhevil’nyi*) in *Nova zoria*. BN, DD, mf. 82761, 79-80. Copy of a letter from V. Lypyns’kyi to T. Hornykevych, November 2, 1931.

conservative Catholic political party, Ukrainian Popular Renewal (*Ukrains'ka narodna obnova*) (UNO), called the Ukrainian Catholic Popular Renewal (UKNO) after 1931.¹⁴²

From this position, Nazaruk wrote a lengthy anti-Dontsov article for *Nova zoria*, which he republished as a brochure, *Natsionalizm Dontsova i inshi Myshugizmy* (The Nationalism of Dontsov and Other Myshugizms), detailing the reasons why all Christian Ukrainians should abhor “active nationalism.”¹⁴³ To begin, Nazaruk repeats Lypyns'kyi's claim that Dontsov had plagiarized his work.¹⁴⁴ Christian ethics, Nazaruk argues, were entirely incompatible with—indeed, antithetical to—the sinister “science” of “creative violence” found in *Natsionalizm*.¹⁴⁵ The anti-Christian Dontsov is a provocateur who incites Ukrainian youth to commit terroristic acts of violence that send them to prison and the gallows, and are generally harmful to Ukraine and its prospects of achieving independence.¹⁴⁶ Nazaruk describes Dontsov an easterner with a “nomadic mentality,” a “Moskal' by birth” with all the worst but none of the better features of a Russian¹⁴⁷: “Dontsov descended from the steppe vagabonds who invaded Ukraine, bringing everyone to ruin, to the praise of covert murderers, and so on.”¹⁴⁸ As Zaitsev observes, Nazaruk is here guilty of the same xenophobia for which he reproaches Dontsov, attributing his pernicious

¹⁴² Ivan Lysiak-Rudnyts'kyi, “Nazaruk i Lypyns'kyi: istoriia ikhn'oi druzhby ta konfliktu,” *Istorychni esei*, vol. 2, 173-245. The UKNO's leader was Hryhoriy Khomyshyn (1867-1947), a bishop of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic church, an avid proponent of Westernization and Latinization, and a detractor of Dontsov, the OUN, and anti-Semitism. Arrested and tortured by the NKVD, Khomyshyn died in Lukianivs'ka Prison. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2001. Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 31-32.

¹⁴³ By “Myshugizm” Nazaruk meant a foolish political doctrine. Its etymology is twofold: 1) Luka Myshuga (1887-1955), who was the editor of the most popular Ukrainian-American weekly at the time, *Svoboda*; 2) the Yiddish word, “mishegas,” meaning insanity. Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi Integral'nyi Natsionalizm*, 379n.

¹⁴⁴ Osyp Nazaruk, *Natsionalizm Dontsova*, 7-14.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁴⁶ Osyp Nazaruk, *Gogy i Magogy* (L'viv: Biblioteka Ukrains'koi narodnoi osnovy, 1936), 55.

¹⁴⁷ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi Integral'nyi Natsionalizm*, 380.

¹⁴⁸ Nazaruk, *Natsionalizm Dontsova*, 13. Quotes in Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi Integral'nyi Natsionalizm*, 380.

views and behavior to the evil traits of Russian ethnicity.¹⁴⁹ In the course of the 1930s, both Nazaruk and Dontsov began to regard the Eurasian steppe, including Eastern Ukraine, as a chaotic mixture of Asiatic races formed under the Mongol Yoke.¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Nazaruk's subsequent correspondence with Skoropads'kyi suggests that the Hetmanite strategy of the years 1937-38 accepted that members of "all local 'nations' that desire a Ukrainian state on the territory of the Ukrainian people" could join the "Ruling Stratum" of "classocratic monarchists."¹⁵¹

Like Dontsov, Nazaruk drew upon the political wisdom and methods of the Bolsheviks, including the example of effective leadership and fanaticism found in Lenin and his close circle of conspirators.¹⁵² He did not have the same admiration for the OUN, which "spoils the atmosphere in Galicia," and blamed Dontsov for its appearance. "His activity among the Ukrainian youth is extremely harmful," Nazaruk writes, suggesting that Skoropads'kyi, "may be able to better understand a type such as Dontsov, simply because he was raised in a Russian (*Rossiis'kii*) atmosphere."¹⁵³ "Dontsov's theory of the 'luxury of knife and blood' is a hodgepodge of old Ukrainian *haidamatstvo*¹⁵⁴ with Russian *pugachevshchyna*"¹⁵⁵ combined with

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 381. This is nearly the same view taken by the Russian Eurasianists, but as a point of Muscovite pride rather than shame. Dontsov embraced a racial conception of Ukraine in his 1941 work, *Dukh nashoi davnyiny*, which was a decisive break with the subjective-voluntarist definition of the nation to which he adhered during the period under consideration here. See chapter 5.

¹⁵¹ TsDIAL, f. 359. op. 1, spr. 8, ark 140. O. Nazaruk to P. Skoropads'kyi, December 4, 1937.

¹⁵² TsDIAL, f. 359. op. 1, spr. 8, ark 75-88. O. Nazaruk to P. Skoropads'kyi, October 27, 1937.

¹⁵³ TsDIAL, f. 359, op. 1, spr. 8, ark. 165-68. O. Nazaruk to P. Skoropads'kyi, March 25, 1938.

¹⁵⁴ From the word "*haidamak*" (from Turkish, "*hajdemak*"—"to pursue"), meaning a participant in one of the spontaneous Cossack-peasant uprisings against the Polish state in the eighteenth century. The Haidamaks are the subject of some of Shevchenko's most famous works and heroic figures in the Ukrainian national mythos, but they are also associated with anti-Semitic pogroms and senseless, chaotic violence in the Jewish and Polish historical memories.

“the modern theories of anarchism in various shades,” and “Dostoevskyism (but with the faith in God that Dostoevsky had thrown out),” “Bakuninism,” “the ancient steppe wildness of every Black Hat,”¹⁵⁶ from Pugachev to the modern ruination, which grew on the propaganda of Marxism.”¹⁵⁷ Nazaruk compares “active nationalism” to Bolshevism, describing it as another manifestation, albeit a farcical one, of modern Russian atheism, moral nihilism, and bloodthirsty eastern barbarism. Linking Dontsov’s “Muscovite” background to an alleged hostility toward Christian mores and institutions, Nazaruk accuses Dontsov and the OUN of attempting to create a pseudoreligion and to co-opt and subordinate the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church¹⁵⁸ for their own ends.

Some of the most active opponents of Dontsov and the OUN were members of the Greek-Catholic Church, who publicly condemned the nationalists’ terrorist acts and insisted on the fundamental incompatibility of the universalist morality of nonviolence and international institutions of Catholicism. There were anticlerical currents in the OUN (as well as instances of overlap and cooperation between nationalist elements within the Church and the OUN).¹⁵⁹ In the spring of 1933 young members of the organization targeted the Easter parade of a Catholic

¹⁵⁵ From Emel’ian Pugachev (1742-1775), pretender to the throne who led a failed Cossack insurrection against Catherine II.

¹⁵⁶ *Chorni Kolobuki*, (*chernye klobuki* in Russian) denotes a group of semi-nomadic Turkic tribes that settled the lands south of Kyiv in the eleventh century.

¹⁵⁷ TsDIAL, f. 359, op. 1, spr. 8, ark. 165-68. O. Nazaruk to P. Skoropads’kyi, December 30, 1938. 204-06.

¹⁵⁸ Also known as the Uniate Church, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church combined Orthodox rituals and liturgies with Roman Catholic doctrine and authority. It was and is chiefly active in Western Ukraine—territories with a history of Polish (Catholic) rule over originally Orthodox Ukrainian (Ruthenian) populations.

¹⁵⁹ Anton Shekhovstov, “By Cross and Shield: ‘Clerical Fascism’ in Interwar Western Ukraine,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 2 (2007): 271-85. Zaitsev critiques this article in more detail in *Natsionalizm i relihiia* (13-14), generally takes issue with Shekhovstov’s arbitrary and inadequate interpretation of the sources.

group, “Ukrainian Youth for Christ” (*Ukrains’ka Molod’ Khrystova*), throwing stones at them.¹⁶⁰ The Galician Ukrainian press roundly condemned the violence, accusing the OUN of heretically deifying of the nation and engaging in immoral, unjustifiable methods of struggle.¹⁶¹ The OUN harassed other nonnationalist youth groups (such as the youth sports clubs *Luh* and *Sokil*), which it accused of being either pro-Polish or insufficiently anti-Polish. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts’kyi (1865-1944), the head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church from 1927 to 1944, denounced the OUN’s killing of Ivan Babii, warning that nationalist hatred and violence would inevitably turn against Ukrainian society, most of which did not live or think in accord with the organization’s ultranationalism. “Because we have for years affirmed, and will affirm, and not cease to repeat that a crime [*zlochyn*] is always a crime, that a sacred cause can never be served with bloody hands. We will not cease to assert that [he] who demoralizes the youth is a criminal and an enemy of the people.”¹⁶²

The Ukrainian Catholic movement and press amplified Sheptyts’kyi’s condemnation of the OUN and its Dontsovian ideology, dealing a major blow to the nationalist underground’s image in Galician society. The Ukrainian Catholic journal *Dzvony* (Bells), for example, claimed that Dontsov “disseminates an evil Nietzschean worldview under the guise of nationalism. No, his nationalism is not nationalism . . . True nationalism is the good of the nation, not its ruin, the raising of human dignity, not its degradation to bestiality. True nationalism is the compound of religious feelings with national ones, not setting them at odds, the raising of personal and social

¹⁶⁰ Oleksandr Zaitsev, Oleh Behen, and Vasyl Stefaniv, *Natsionalizm i relihiia: Hreko-Katolyts’ka Tserkva ta ukrains’kyi natsionalistychnyi rukh u Halychyni (1920-1920-ti roky)* (L’viv: Vydavnytstvo Ukrains’koho Katolyts’koho Universytetu, 2011), 265-78.

¹⁶¹ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 30.

¹⁶² Andrei Sheptyts’kyi, *Pastyrs’ki poslannia*, ed. Oksana Haiova and Roman Terekhovs’kyi, vol. 2: 1918-1939 (L’viv: Aptos, 2009), 177-78.

morality to the highest level, and not amorality in all areas.”¹⁶³ Nevertheless, Dontsov praised Andrei Sheptyts’kyi, alongside Cardinal Mercier (1851-1926) (known for his role in leading the Belgian resistance to Germany during World War I), as an ideal church activist.¹⁶⁴ As of the late 1920s, Dontsov believed that Sheptyts’kyi recognized the constructive role of “active nationalism,” albeit with considerable moral reservations: “The metropolitan was very outraged at me for the ‘predatory’ nationalism,” Dontsov wrote to Mariia Dontsova in 1927, “but confessed—to himself, as it were—the reasons why my propaganda, as an antidote to the leftwing current, is good and must take extreme forms.”¹⁶⁵ Whatever the Dontsov’s impressions of Sheptyts’kyi’s inner dialogue were, the clergy and laity of the Church in Western Ukraine largely rejected *Natsionalizm* as a work of dangerous blasphemy and the OUN as a criminal, anti-Christian group engaged in the moral destruction of the young. As one recent study of the relationship between Ukrainian integral nationalists and the Greek-Catholic Church concluded: “We can affirm that the Catholic camp found Ukrainian integral nationalism deeply unacceptable, especially in its Dontsovian version, which proclaimed the superiority of action over thought and a particular morality that was incompatible with Christian ethics. The greatest alarm among representatives of the Church was caused by the tendency to transform nationalism into a secular religion that threatened to marginalize or engulf rational Christianity.”¹⁶⁶

Then again, as far as Dontsov was concerned, the creation of a totalizing “secular religion” was Bolshevism’s greatest achievement, and something to which Ukrainian nationalists should also aspire: “Bolshevism is not only a religion, it is an organized religion, a communist

¹⁶³ “Favnyzatsiia ukraintsiv i ukr. natsionalizmu,” *Dzvony*, no. 1 (1934): 72-73.

¹⁶⁴ D. Varnak [Dmytro Dontsov], *Kardynal Mersiie. Oboronets’ narodu* (L’viv: Knyhozbirnia Vistnyka, 1935).

¹⁶⁵ Dmytro Dontsov to Mariia Dontsova, September 11, 1927. TsDAVO f. 3849, op. 1, spr., 16, ark., 154.

¹⁶⁶ Zaitsev, Behen, and Stefaniv, *Natsionalizm i relihiia*, 317. Shkandrij’s translation, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 32.

church, with martyrs, canons, its own books, cathedrals, synods, and an inquisition. . . .

Dogmatism in faith and autocracy in discipline, these are the foundations of the religion of Bolshevism.”¹⁶⁷ Throughout the interwar period, Dontsov interpreted Bolshevism as a savior of “eternal Russian principles,” the only possible form of Russian statehood, and the latest incarnation of Russian imperialism, messianism, and nationalism. Bolshevism, he was quite convinced, was doomed as an economic system, especially on Ukrainian soil. Nevertheless, Bolshevism served as one the chief models, alongside Italian Fascism, for the politics of a mythologically galvanized new Ukrainian man envisioned in *Natsionalizm*. The way that the Soviet system was cultivating the next generation especially impressed Dontsov. Youth and the cult thereof were at the heart of “active nationalism,” the theory and practice of the OUN, Italian Fascism, and Soviet Communism—all of which imagined themselves as the midwives of a revolutionary break with the old and decrepit, and the birth of a brighter, healthier, more juvenescent future. These radical Central and Eastern European ideologies were, Dontsov thought, inspired by the idea of lifting their respective nations up to the level of Great Britain or the US, which naturally got to where they were by embodying the racial and civilizational traits lauded in *Natsionalizm*. Thus, in his 1928 brochure, *Iunatstvo i Plast*’ (The Youth and Plast)—written for the patriotic Ukrainian equivalent of the Boy Scouts, *Plast*, of which Dontsov was a member—he encouraged young Ukrainians to follow the example of the “Anglo-Saxon race”: “The potent ideas of this most healthy, most courageous, most brutal, yet also most noble, fully idealistic race of the Occident; the ideas upon which the civilizations of Europe and America were built can lead us from ruin.”¹⁶⁸ “Look at the great European or, better yet, American city,”

¹⁶⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, “Borot’ba za molod’,” *LNV* 106, no. 7-8 (1931): 717-23, 720.

¹⁶⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, *Iunatstvo i Plast* (L’viv: Vydavnytstvo Ukrains’koho Plastovoho Uladu, 1929), 8.

Dontsov writes, and one will find the glorious result of a “cult of success and victory in mutual competition” that is totally foreign to the Orient. Americans, the descendants of brave colonists, hardened in the “war with the ‘red-skins’ [*chervonoskiry*my] and other white races,” epitomize the love of conquest, danger, struggle, industry, expansion, youthfulness, and victory at any cost. Young Ukrainians needed to emulate Americans:

Because only the cult of personal initiative, instead of the cult of the mass; only the thirst to surpass others, instead of jealous equality; the cult of competition for competition's sake, instead of peace; the cult of irrefutable national dogmas, instead of debates and doubts; the cult of courage, instead of humanity; the cult of the will to perform the common of one's conscience, instead of will-less dreaming; finally, only the cult of great ideas, instead of bondage to the temporal, and of a conquering idealism that stands above your compassion—will lead the nation from moral decline!¹⁶⁹

However, it was not from the American, but from the Soviet example that Dontsov drew the most concrete lessons for the Ukrainian situation. He discussed the matter at length in the 1933 article, “Sovits’ka molod i my” (Soviet Youth and Us), arguing that the generation rising under the tutelage of the Bolsheviks already possessed all the traits that he had called for in *Natsionalizm*: fanaticism, dogmatism, unwavering faith in collective myths and ideals, hardness, combativeness, and voluntarism.¹⁷⁰ Dontsov considered Bolshevism to be a form of Russian chauvinism despite its claims to being the vanguard of the proletarian international, but it also exemplified a nationalism that was internationalist in the sense that it affected all of humanity, as the British Empire had done, driving the progress of world history through the strength of its ideas and expansionary will to power. Soviet youth were growing into “wolves,” so it was imperative that Ukrainian youth not grow into “sheep.”¹⁷¹ The antiliberalism, antidemocracy, and anti-intellectualism of Soviet education, society, culture, and politics were giving Communist

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 11.

¹⁷⁰ Dmytro Dontsov, “Sovits’ka molod’ i my,” *Vistnyk*, no. 1 (1933): 17-32.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 26.

youth a decisive edge over their freer, more thoughtful, but soft and irresolute counterparts in Europe. Again, Dontsov found the theological character of the Bolshevik approach to molding young minds and bodies for “class” (actually imperialist) warfare most appealing. The Soviet mythos was simple, compelling, manichaeian, and all-encompassing:

First, there was the chaos of capitalism and exploitation before daybreak. Then Marx arrived—the forerunner of ‘Ilich’ [i.e. Lenin —TE], and behind him the ‘liberator’ himself. Thanks to the sacred god-carrying, all-Russian proletariat, the capitalist ‘gates of hell’ were forced open and chaos reigned. The new ‘sermon from the mount’ gave the world a new law—the law of the “five-year,”¹⁷² the law of the all-liberating machine. To teach all peoples this law is the duty of the red ‘apostles’: ‘Go ye therefore and study all languages.’ Until the arrival of the second Messiah, the world revolution, when Moscow will appear before the entire world.¹⁷³

Ukrainians, and Europeans in general, needed an equal but opposite political religion to triumph over Russian Communism, which, if victorious, would assuredly bring about the ruin of Western civilization and its myriad achievements.

Dontsov’s appreciation for the enemy, Russia—or Bolshevism, the two being essentially identical to his mind after 1917—led him to count it as one of the great “world-historical” nations in the Hegelian sense. That is, Russia was an agent in the rising self-consciousness of the freedom of absolute spirit (or God) via the tragedy and suffering of humanity through time (historical theodicy). Dontsov highlighted Russia’s prodigious creation of internationalist doctrines, such as Orthodox Christianity, Slavophilia (Pan-Slavism), Leninism, and so on, all of which promised universal salvation in one form or another.¹⁷⁴ In the late 1920s, Dontsov expressed his admiration for the Messianism in Russian literature, even though he rejected its

¹⁷² That is, the Five-Year Plan—Stalin’s breakneck modernization campaigns, the first of which began in 1928 and involved the collectivization of agriculture (which devastated Ukraine’s cities and villages) to pay for rapid industrialization with a focus on steel production and heavy machinery.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 18.

¹⁷⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, *Shcho take internatsionalizm* (L’viv: Drukarnia Stavropigiiis’koho Instytutu, 1927). Also see Chuhuienko, *Formuvannia ta rozvytok ideolohii Dmytra Dontsova*, 97.

content as a plebeian “philosophy of the envious unlucky” and a cult of “quantity against quality.”¹⁷⁵ Critics then and since have argued that Dontsov imported more of “Russian” culture and thought into Ukrainian culture, through *LNv* and the *Vistnykivtsi*, than anyone else during the interwar period.¹⁷⁶

This accusation baffled and infuriated Malaniuk, who defended Dontsov, “the most determined publicist of Ukraine’s present,” from a “united front” of detractors from “*all* parties, *all* groups, and *all* organs of the press. Most surprising about this ‘united front’ is its unnatural method of linking—in confusion, it would seem—Dr. Dontsov to the whole of Russia, the former (the empire) and well the modern (the USSR).”¹⁷⁷ Malaniuk maintained that the Ukrainian socialists’ and conservatives’ accusation that Dontsov was either “Russian” or “pro-Russian” were baseless. There was no proof that Dontsov’s “Occidentalism, Western European voluntarism, sermons of hierarchy, of quality of character, of moral value, of talent and personality, sermons of anti-Russian cultural hygiene,” all of which appalled his more moderate countrymen, were, “entirely to the contrary, the spirit of Asiatic mass devastation and revolt.”¹⁷⁸ Malaniuk denied that Dontsov, whom he regarded as having had a singularly positive, conservative, pro-Western influence on Galician youth, was somehow “Oriental” and moved by the “spirit of the haidamaks.” One could hardly disagree with Malaniuk that Russophobia and anti-Communism were two of the central pillars of “active nationalism,” but the fact remains that he found a great deal in Russian culture and Soviet reality to be edifying.

¹⁷⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, *Rosiia chy Ievropa?* (London: Soiuz ukrainstiv u V. Britanii, 1955), 22-23. This was first published as an article in *LNv* in 1929.

¹⁷⁶ Ihor Kachurovs’kyi maintains that the *Vistnykivtsi* stood at the point where Ukrainian poetry was most strongly and tightly interwoven with Russian poetry. I. Kachurovs’kyi, “Visnykivstvo i rosiis’ka poeziia,” *Suchasnist’*, no. 3 (1961): 67-73.

¹⁷⁷ Ievhen Malaniuk, manuscript sent to editorship of *LNv*, February 9, 1932. DD, BN, mf. 82652, 551.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 554-55.

Shlikhta attributes Dontsov's praise for and desire to mimic aspects of Russia to his "inconsistency, even in the most important elements of his conception,"¹⁷⁹ but his residual affinity for the Russian world, despite his avowed hatred for it, was also critical. His struggle against Soviet Russia kept bringing him back to the Russian "idea" and the reasons for its tenacious stranglehold on Ukrainian cultural and political life. Dontsov studied Moscow's strengths as closely as its weaknesses, incorporating them into his strategy for a national spiritual revolution. As cultural critic Anatol' Kamins'kyi argues, Dontsov's ideology thus suffered from a "paradoxical weakness"—it was fiercely anti-Russian, yet carried "Russian" habits of thought—nihilism, intolerance, authoritarianism, exclusivity, etc.—onto (Galician) Ukrainian ground.¹⁸⁰ Thus, when Dontsov advocated the use of "Bolshevik methods against Bolshevism," he had in mind much more than conspiratorial undergrounds, armed insurrections, and secret police. The aggressiveness, ruthlessness, esprit de corps, and general psychology of Bolshevism, its power to create its own traditions and future, to remake countries and generations in its own image, were even more commendable traits. Russian despotism and Messianism suddenly became something that Ukrainians would have to replicate in order to defeat; that this would represent a triumph for Russian despotism over European freedom, even if the Soviet Union were smashed to pieces in the process, seems not to have troubled Dontsov.

National Communism, "Active Nationalism," and the "Executed Renaissance"

Setting aside the acrimonious rhetoric, a muted kinship, potentially embarrassing to both sides, existed between Dontsov and parts of the Russian-Soviet world. He was as indebted to the

¹⁷⁹ Shlikhta, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 129.

¹⁸⁰ A. Kamins'kyi, "Bil'she, iak til'ky 'politychnyi portret' Dmytra Dontsova," *Suchasnist'*, no. 10 (1974), 120.

Russian Right as to its Left, though he did not make an essential distinction between the two. When it came to understanding the October Revolution and the state to which it gave rise, for example, he relied on Fyodor Dostoevsky's fictional account of Russian nihilism in *Demons*, calling the Russian novelist "Lenin's predecessor." Dostoevsky knew and hated the Bolshevik leader before he was even born when he wrote "of the vile slave, of the stinking, depraved lackey, who'll be the first to clamber up the staircase, a pair of scissors in hand, to slash the divine countenance of the great ideal in the name of equality, envy, and digestion."¹⁸¹ This description, thought Dontsov, summed up Leninism perfectly, whereas European social categories were quite useless for understanding Soviet reality. Bolshevism had little to do with Marxism as it was understood in the West, relying upon a benighted peasantry (not the Russian proletariat) to build a state that was "socialist" in name only—an empty plagiarism. The essence of Bolshevism, rather, is "a will to simplification [*uproshchennia*], a metaphysical will to savagery," thought Dontsov, quoting Dmitrii Merezhkovsky.¹⁸² However much Dontsov disapproved of Russian Communism's *ressentiment*-driven "leveling" of humanity, he relied upon the authority of Russian thinkers whom he obviously respected to explain it, and applauded Lenin's singular role in making it work in practice despite the lack of a constructive program or an ideal higher than "buckwheat porridge." For Dontsov, Lenin was a political genius who recognized the necessity of giving the masses a clear and simple goal.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Quoted in Dmytro Dontsov, "V. Lenin," *LNV*, no. 3-4 (1924): 322-33, 322. Translation taken from Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Devils*, trans. Michael R. Katz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 361.

¹⁸² Dmytro Dontsov, "V. Lenin," *LNV* 82, no. 3 (1924): 322-33, 323.

¹⁸³ Speaking of leveling and simplification, one of the chief consequences of Dontsov's critique of Russia, according to Lysiak-Rudnyts'kyi, was the neglect of the Russian problematic as such among Western Ukrainian nationalists, their misunderstanding of Russian Soviet reality, and the lowering intellectual level of their discourse. Lysiak-Rudnyts'kyi, *Istorični esei*, vol. 2, 325. Others have accused Dontsov of actually popularizing Bolshevism among non-Soviet Ukrainians through his sometimes appreciative critiques of it, whatever his real intentions were. According to one account, this earned Dontsov the distinction of being one of the first Ukrainian theorists of totalitarianism. Chuhuienko, *Formuvannia ta rozvytok ideolohii Dmytra Dontsova*, 146.

The Soviet press saw the good in Dontsov too, like the begrudging acknowledgment of an estranged relative's redeeming qualities, despite bygone quarrels. In the early 1920s, Soviet journalists and scholars had denounced the *LNV* and its editor as "fascist," but they began reevaluating Dontsov's ideas in the mid to late 1920s. Unlike Italian Fascism, the ideology of a reactionary, imperialist state, "active nationalism" had progressive potential because it sought to direct the "spontaneous brutality" of the oppressed and stateless Ukrainian minority against "fascist" Poland, whose own anti-Ukrainian assimilationist policies had created the nationalist underground.¹⁸⁴

To understand this variance of opinion it is necessary to step back and examine the trajectory of Soviet policy concerning the Ukrainian question in the 1920s. In addition to disarming Ukrainian nationalism by appeasing its core demands of cultural autonomy, nationalized education, and government by Ukrainian co-ethnics, one of the original intentions of Soviet Ukrainization was to project an image of life in Soviet Ukraine that would appeal to Ukrainians living abroad, especially within the borders of Poland, the early Soviet state's prime foreign enemy. The Soviet leadership and press projected the UkrSSR as a Ukrainian "Piedmont"—the ideal basis for a unified nation-state. In the expanded UkrSSR, all "toiling" Ukrainians would be empowered to work toward the cultural and economic progress of their nation as a free and equal member of the Soviet "friendship of peoples," a socialist internationalist federation of autonomous, yet cooperative, national republics, which would in the course of time draw closer together to form a new "Soviet people." As far as Dontsov and similar-minded critics were concerned, if a unified "Soviet people" is created then its unifying

¹⁸⁴ The irony, of course, is that Dontsov was not anti-Polish. Gregorz Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka, 1942-1960: Działalność Organizacji Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów i Ukraińskiej Powstańczej Armii* (Warsaw: Instytut Studiów Politycznych Pan. Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, 2006), 73.

characteristic will be Russian hegemony, resulting in the cultural death of non-Russian peoples, not a “friendship” between them and the Russia.

There were, however, alternative visions for the future of the nationalities of the Soviet Union within the Communist Party. An oppositional current of Ukrainian “national communism” appeared during the Ukrainian Revolution and took part in the formation of the Soviet Union and the development of Soviet Ukraine.¹⁸⁵ One such national-communist group broke ranks with the Bolsheviks in 1919, calling for a fully independent Soviet Ukraine, and founded the Ukrainian Communist Party (UKP) in January 1920. The UKP alleged that the economic exploitation of Ukraine by Russia, a holdover from the colonial policies of the tsarist era, had continued into the Soviet system, which was centralized around the Russian heartland, focused on industrialization and urbanization, and thus reliant upon the heavy extraction of resources from agricultural regions such as Ukraine. Annoyed with the UKP’s criticism, which struck at the heart of the Leninist claim that national conflicts and the other legacies of imperialism would be quickly resolved without further measures by the workers’-peasants’ revolution, the Soviet regime nevertheless tolerated the party as a legal, but powerless, opposition. The Communist International (or Comintern) forced the UKP to dissolve in 1925, but allowed its members to join the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine (KP[B]U) and assume leading roles in Ukrainization. (Most former UKP members were later executed in the purges of the 1930s.)

Another Ukrainian national-communist formation, the “Borotbists,”¹⁸⁶ a left faction of the Ukrainian Party of Socialist Revolutionaries (UPSR) that allied itself with the Bolsheviks after the Red Guards’ invasion of Ukraine in 1919, also insisted upon Ukrainian independence,

¹⁸⁵ Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas*, chaps. 2-3.

¹⁸⁶ The name comes from the Ukrainian word for “struggle,” *borot’ba*, also the name of their weekly publication.

as well as separate representation (by themselves) in the Comintern. Lenin compromised with the Borotbists, who enjoyed more support among the Ukrainian peasantry, promising that Ukraine would have a separate, national republic in the Soviet Union on the condition that the Borotbists voluntarily merge with the KP(B)U, which they did in March 1920. One former Borotbist leader, Oleksandr Shums'kyi (1890-1946), was elected to the Central Committee of the KP(B)U and rose to become Commissar of Education of the UkrSSR from September 1924 to February 1927. From this post, Shums'kyi spearheaded Ukrainization, urging Stalin to accelerate the program and replace First Secretary of the KP(B)U Lazar Kaganovich (1893-1991) with an ethnic Ukrainian. Under Shums'kyi's leadership, Ukrainization gave rise to a tremendous outpouring of literary, artistic, and scholarly productivity in Soviet Ukraine known as the Cultural Renaissance, which sought to reorient Ukrainian cultural toward Europe and remove all Russian intermediaries.¹⁸⁷ In the recollections of political leader Mykola Kovalevs'kyi (1892-1957), the same idea had electrified the Ukrainian intelligentsia before World War I, when Dontsov had expressed it.¹⁸⁸ Now, it seemed, they had been given an opportunity to Occidentalize Ukrainian art and literature under Soviet conditions. The UkrSSR's self-promotion in southeastern Poland enjoyed considerable success in the mid 1920s, prompting numerous prominent émigré leaders of the Ukrainian Revolution to return to Kyiv, Kharkiv, and other Soviet Ukrainian cities to

¹⁸⁷ The other key activists of the Cultural Renaissance included: the Marxist historian Matvii Iavors'kyi (1885-1937), who produced a national history of Ukraine as an entity distinct from Russia (its conqueror); the economist Mykhailo Volobuiev (1900-1972), who contributed an economic analysis of Ukraine's past colonization by Russia, criticizing Soviet centralization as a perpetuation of the Russian chauvinist exploitation of the UkrSSR; the poet, literary critic, and scholar Mykola Zerov (1890-1937), leader of the Soviet Ukrainian "Neoclassicist" group, which pursued the creation of a national high art, drawing inspiration from the ancient cultural forms of Western Europe, and disdained propaganda and didactic writing for the masses; and the avant-garde film and theatre director Les Kurbas (1887-1937), who called for an orientation of Ukrainian culture toward Europe "without intermediaries or models." All four encountered severe criticism within the Party for their positions and were purged, arrested, and, in the cases of Zerov and Iavors'kyi, shot in the 1930s. George S. N. Luckyj, *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine, 1917-1934* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 26. Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas*, chaps. 5 and 7.

¹⁸⁸ Mykola Kovalevs'kyi, *Pry Dzherelack borot'by: Spomyny, vrazhennia, refleksii* (Innsbruck: Mariia Kovalevs'ka, 1960), 146.

participate in Ukrainization.¹⁸⁹ Even Dontsov admitted that the Cultural Renaissance had produced some literature of great merit, although he consistently denied that high Ukrainian culture could grow and thrive under the circumstances of the Bolshevik occupation, and that the Bolshevik occupation would survive in Ukraine.

Of all the writers of the Cultural Renaissance, Dontsov was most impressed with Mykola Khvyl'ovyi (1893-1933), whose aesthetic and political convictions, despite being couched in the language of Soviet Communism, overlapped with his own in important ways. Hailing from the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, Khvyl'ovyi participated in the resistance to the Hetmanate in 1918 and joined the KP(B)U the following year. In 1921 he published his first works of poetry, *Velektrychnyi vik* (In the Electrical Age) and *Molodist'* (Youth), and signed the manifesto of the Ukrainian Proletarian Artists, "Our Universal." Fiery, militant, iconoclastic, and futurist, the manifesto nevertheless promised to cherish and enrich the Ukrainian language, preserving the ancient heritage and traditions of the Ukrainian peasantry. Khvyl'ovyi's first collections of short stories, *Syni etiudy* (Blue Etudes) and *Osin'* (Autumn) appeared in 1923 and 1924, winning the acclaim of critics, including the émigrés Malaniuk and Dontsov, who wrote about the literary scene in Soviet Ukraine:

There are such poets there, or writers with talent, such as Khvyl'ovyi or the already deceased Mykhailychenko,¹⁹⁰ but the whole! The whole searches for noisy forms. . . . With regard to content, the burden of the sentimental worldview of the apostles of 'beauty' weighs on the 'new,' as they would call themselves, poets of the future (or Communists). They will not succeed in cultivating a dynamism of creative power for the sake of borrowed Russian Communist motives, and they cannot strengthen it with the nation's

¹⁸⁹ The three most prominent Ukrainian emigre Sovietophiles, each disillusioned in his own way, were Hrushevs'kyi, Vynnychenko, and Petrushevych. See Christopher Gilley, *The "Change of Signposts" in the Ukrainian Emigration: A Contribution to the History of Sovietophilism in the 1920s* (Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2009).

¹⁹⁰ Hnat Mykhailychenko, 1892-1919, a Borotbist poet and novelist, and one of the founding fathers of the defiant strand of Soviet Ukrainian literature championed by Khvyl'ovyi. Mykhailychenko was executed by the White Army. The Party later declared his writings to be counterrevolutionary, banning them in the 1930s.

natural forces. Lacking originality in their creative work, they slavishly ape the Muscovite and cannot distinguish the idea of revolution from the Muscovite revolution.¹⁹¹

Dontsov praised the “dynamism” and “originality” of Khvyl’ovyi’s prose, which used the techniques of impressionism and expressionism, and represented an ethics of fanatical, unscrupulous devotion to abstract ideals.¹⁹² The latter wrote experimental satires and psychodramas depicting infatuation, then disillusionment, with a revolution snuffed out by insipid bureaucrats and boorish, colonial-minded philistines. Dontsov already detected a tragic desire to escape westward in these stories, implying that it would destroy the author: “And Khvyl’ovyi too, strangled by the Muscovite scorpion, will cry out, like a groan before death: ‘Memories glimmer . . . of what? —Of the steppe! The steppe! Away from you, steppe, I go!’”¹⁹³ “Such notes,” Dontsov observes, “are not to be heard in Russian revolutionary poetry; there was no breach between thought and feeling in the Moskals, who extolled their own and not, as our freshly baked communists did, a foreign revolution.”¹⁹⁴

Aware of the “split personality,” as Dontsov called it, that Soviet Ukrainians suffered from thanks to this contradiction, Khvyl’ovyi published a series of highly controversial pamphlets in the years 1925-28,¹⁹⁵ sparking the so-called Literary Discussion—a republic-wide

¹⁹¹ Dmytro Dontsov, “Kryza ukrains’koi literatury,” *LNV* 79, no. 4 (1923): 351-370, 352.

¹⁹² For instance, the protagonist of his semiautobiographical 1924 novellas, *Ia* (I), is a Cheka officer who orders the death of his own mother in the name of the Revolution.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 366.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ Myroslav Shkandrij has translated these pamphlets into English. They were published in three series: *Kamo hriadeshy?* (Whither goest thou?) (1925), *Dumky proty techii* (Thoughts against the Current) (1925), and *Apolohety pysaryzmu* (The Apologists of Scribbling) (1926). The completion and publication of a fourth series, *Ukraina chy Malorosiia?* (Ukraine or Little Russia?), planned as a radical, comprehensive statement on the issues surrounding Ukrainization and the Cultural Renaissance, was cut short by Stalin’s condemnation of “Khvyl’oviyism” and Shums’kyism (see below). *Ukraina chy Malorosiia?* circulated as a manuscript within the Party and was subjected to harsh criticism in the press, but has survived only in fragments. Mykola Khvylovyi, *The Cultural Renaissance in Ukraine: Polemical Pamphlets, 1925-1926*, trans. Myroslav Shkandrij (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1986).

debate about the ideal orientation of Soviet Ukrainian writers. Should Soviet Ukrainian literature look to Russia or to Western Europe for inspiration, tutelage, and a way out of its perceived crisis? Khvyl'ovyi's answer was unequivocal: "*Het' vid Moskvu!*" (Away from Moscow!). Dubbing Moscow "the center of all-Union Philistinism," Khvyl'ovyi argued that Ukrainians should instead find their own path, taking their lessons in civilization directly "from the source"—Western Europe—without Russian interference.¹⁹⁶ Even more sensationally, Khvyl'ovyi attributed the painfully slow progress of Ukrainization to the resistance of the CP(B)U, whose predominantly Russian or Russified membership, still under the spell of prerevolutionary chauvinism, despised Ukrainian language and culture.

A close analysis of Khvyl'ovyi's brilliant, challenging pamphlets is beyond the scope of this study, but following Myroslav Shkandrij (Khvyl'ovyi's translator), I will summarize them in terms of four central symbols.¹⁹⁷ The first is "Europe," which Khvyl'ovyi defines as "the experience of many ages. Not the Europe that Spengler announced was 'in decline,' not the one that is rotting and that we despise. It is the Europe of a grandiose civilization, the Europe of Goethe, Darwin, Byron, Newton, Marx and so on and so forth."¹⁹⁸ "We conceive of Europe," he continues, "also as a psychological category that thrusts humanity forward, out of *prosvita* and

¹⁹⁶ "This is absolute and unconditional. Our political union must not be confused with literature. Ukrainian poetry must flee as quickly as possible from Russian literature and its styles. . . . The point is that Russian literature has weighed us down for centuries as master of the situation, as one who has conditioned our psyche to play the slavish imitator. And so, to nourish our young art on it would be to impede its development. The proletariat's ideas did not reach us through Muscovite art; on the contrary, we, as representatives of a young nation, can better apprehend these ideas, better cast them in the appropriate images. Our orientation it to Western European art, its style, its techniques." Khvylovyi, *Cultural Renaissance*, 222-23. Shkandrij's translation. First published as Mykola Khvyl'ovyi, "Aplohety pysaryzmu," *Kul'tura i pobut* 13 (March 28, 1926).

¹⁹⁷ Myroslav Shkandrij, "Introduction," in Khvylovyi, *The Cultural Renaissance*, 8-11.

¹⁹⁸ Mykola Khvyl'ovyi, *Kamo hriadeshy. Pamflety* (Kharkiv: Knyhospilka, 1925), 42. Shkandrij's translation.

onto the great highway of progress.”¹⁹⁹ “*Prosvita*”—the Ukrainian word for enlightenment and the name of the popular education societies that operated in the villages of late nineteenth-century Ukraine—is Khvy’lovyi’s second symbol. It represents the provincialism and backwardness weighing down the nation’s culture. It is the ethnography-obsessed populism of the Ukrainophile intelligentsia, and the literature of simple-hearted odes to the idiocy of rural life so common in pre- and postrevolutionary Ukrainian poetry. *Prosvita* may entertain and uplift the benighted masses, but what Ukraine truly needs is an elite literature capable of satisfying the rising intelligentsia of nationally conscious Ukrainians then pouring into the still-Russified cities of the UkrSSR. Khvy’lovyi’s third trope is the “Asiatic Renaissance”—a utopia in which the October Revolution would bring about a cultural revival of all the peoples of the East, including Ukraine, by drawing upon the great traditions of European antiquity and embracing a “Romantic vitalism.” As a country on the frontier with the West, then in the midst of throwing off centuries of oppression, (Soviet) Ukraine would serve a Messianic, double-vanguard function: projecting the Asiatic Renaissance into Europe and the European Renaissance into Asia. Khvy’lovyi’s fourth symbol, “art,” was his creative ideal. It would display “Romantic vitalism,” plumb the depths of human irrationality and conflict, provoke strong revolutionary emotions and instincts in the masses, but also engage the most sophisticated intellects and aesthetes.²⁰⁰

Khvy’lovyi’s utopian vision of an anti-imperial yet antiprovincial national cultural revolution; his Europhilia and Moscophobia; the tension between traditionalism and iconoclasm in his thinking; his idealism, elitism, romanticism, and moral nihilism; his voluntaristic critique of economic determinism (heretical for a member of the Communist Party); his focus on the

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 61. Shkandrij’s translation.

²⁰⁰ Shkandrij, “Introduction,” Khvylovyi, *Cultural Renaissance*, 8-9.

creative power of youthful rebellion and violence; the content, tone, and lexicon of his pamphlets: all of this betrayed the influence of Dontsov's writings, which were available in Kharkiv and Kyiv at the time, and which Khvylovyi read "diligently and gladly."²⁰¹

Dontsov saw a kindred spirit in Khvylovyi, commending him for his courage in the face of Bolshevik oppression, as well as his literary and ideological virtues on the pages of *LNV*. Diagnosing the young Soviet writer's restless discontent as a symptom of colonial schizophrenia or "pseudomorphism,"²⁰² Dontsov compared him to Nikolai Gogol (Mykola Hohol'): "The specter of insanity will visit [Khvylovyi] just as it did [Gogol]. Both were tormented by corrosive doubts, seeking in vain for a synthesis of their feelings with the science of the East, pouring out their grief in satire. Both yearned for the virtues of the Middle Ages. Both wrote about their divided 'I.'"²⁰³ Dontsov believed that something momentous was happening in Soviet Ukraine beneath the surface: "Our eyes are turned toward the East. Unfortunately, however, our press pays attention only to official expressions of life there. . . . This is a great pity! For what is hidden on that shore [i.e., on the Soviet one] is a hundred times more interesting than any Ukrainization. We are witnessing a major change in Ukrainian consciousness, a profound change, pregnant with incalculable consequences."²⁰⁴ In December 1925, Dontsov expressed the hope that Khvylovyi might finally be the one "to kill the enlightenment [*prosvitianshchynu*] in

²⁰¹ This is according to Iuryi Shevel'ov. Mykola Khvylovyi, *Tvory u piat'okh tomakh*, vol. 4 (New York: Ukrain's'ke vydavnytstvo Smoloskyp imeni V. Symonenka, 1978), 55.

²⁰² The geological process whereby a crystal retains its shape but is replaced internally by a different substance.

²⁰³ Dmytro Dontsov, "Ukrains'ko-soviets'ki psevdomorfozy," *LNV* 88, no. 12 (1925): 321-36.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. Quoted by Khvylovyi but with his emphases removed, and translated by Shkandrij. Khvylovyi, *Cultural Renaissance*, 171.

our heads from one side, and the ideology of eastern Messianism from the other,” replacing both with “a yellow-blue ideology of force, fanaticism, and cruelty (*zhorstokosty*).”²⁰⁵

Observing the Literary Discussion from abroad, Dontsov returned to the subject of Khvył’ovyi in April 1926, this time comparing him to the Russian philosopher Petr Chaadaev (1794-1856), and wondering if he will soon pen his own *Apologie d’un Fou* (Apology of a Madman), after the Muscovites inevitably decide to destroy him.²⁰⁶ Dontsov was less impressed with Khvył’ovyi’s “Asiatic Renaissance,” rejecting it as a “chimera” and bristling at the inclusion of Ukraine within “Asia.” Dontsov denied that such a renaissance could occur under the Bolshevik regimes: “For a renaissance the free competition of talents is needed, but where is this allowed by the official ideology?!”²⁰⁷ Still, Dontsov was delighted by the effect that his “active nationalist” ideology had had on Soviet Ukrainian literature and politics via Khvył’ovyi. “They begin to speak, not only among eastern Ukrainian emigres, but also (I emphasize with pleasure) in the home country, about ‘psychological Europe,’” and about “the need to construct within oneself this spirit of Occidental civilization natural to us.”²⁰⁸ As of early 1926, Dontsov’s and Khvył’ovyi’s vision of a de-Russified, (re)Europeanized, and genuinely independent Ukrainian culture seemed to be gaining ground, even in the Soviet Union.

But then Stalin personally intervened in the Literary Discussion, rebuking Khvył’ovyi and his chief patron, Shums’kyi, for what he perceived as their dangerously nationalistic, non-

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Dmytro Dontsov, “Do staroho sporu,” *LVN* 89, no. 4 (1926): 355-69. Chaadaev’s apologia, published in 1837, presents Russia as inferior to Europe. It helped spark the Westernizer-Slavophile controversy, earning him acclaim from the former, condemnation from the latter, and a declaration of insanity and house arrest from the imperial government.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, “Krok vpered: do ‘literaturnoho sporu,’” *LVN* 91, no. 10 (1926), 167-183, 167.

Leninist deviations in a letter to Kaganovich on April 26, 1926.²⁰⁹ Shortly thereafter, Khvyl'ovyi and Shums'kyi found themselves under a general attack by forces within the Soviet press and Communist Party that sought to decelerate or even reverse Ukrainization. Initially, Shums'kyi defended the young writer, blaming the implementation of the languid progress of Ukrainization: "I am deeply convinced that Khvyl'ovyi wants to build Socialism," Shums'kyi assured the Central Committee of the KP(B)U: "But I also know that Khvyl'ovyi has not been given any clear, defined perspective by the party as to the development of Ukrainian culture and literature. He is choking in the provincial backwardness of Ukraine. He cannot see those broad vistas for the young, boisterous culture process and is attempting to chart them."²¹⁰

In an attempt to salvage his name, Shums'kyi publicly turned against Khvyl'ovyi in February 1927, forswearing the latter's ideas in the KP(B)U journal, *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy* (Bolshevik of Ukraine). He alleged that Khvyl'ovyi had committed the "heresy" of "zoological nationalism" and joined the bourgeois Ukrainian chauvinist camp, citing as proof the "fascist" Dontsov's acclaim for Khvyl'ovyi in *LNV*.²¹¹ Shums'kyi argued that NEP and the return of

²⁰⁹ "Comrade Shums'kyi does not realize that in the Ukraine, where the Communist cadres are weak, such a movement, led everywhere by the non-Communist intelligentsia, may assume in places the character of a struggle for the alienation of Ukrainian culture from the all-Soviet culture, a struggle against 'Moscow,' against the Russians, against Russian culture and its greatest achievement, Leninism, altogether. I need to point out that such a danger grows more and more real in Ukraine. I should like to mention only that even some Ukrainian Communists are not free from such defects. I have in mind that well-known article by the noted Communist, Khvyl'ovyi, in the Ukrainian press. Khvyl'ovyi's demands that the proletariat in Ukraine be immediately de-Russified, his belief that 'Ukrainian poetry should keep as far away as possible from Russian literature and style,' his pronouncement that 'proletarian ideas are familiar to us without the help of Russian art,' his passionate belief in some messianic role for the young Ukrainian intelligentsia, his ridiculous and non-Marxist attempt to divorce culture from politics—all this and much more in the mouth of this Ukrainian Communist sounds (and cannot but sound) more than strange. . . . Comrade Shums'kyi does not understand that in order to dominate the new movement for Ukrainian culture in Ukraine the extreme views of Khvyl'ovyi within the Communist ranks must be combated; Comrade Shums'kyi does not understand that only by combating such extremist views is it possible to transform the rising Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian social life into a Soviet culture and Soviet social life." Quoted in Shkandrij, "Introduction," Khvylovyi, *Cultural Renaissance*, 11-12.

²¹⁰ Quoted in Shkandrij, "Introduction," Khvylovyi, *Cultural Renaissance*, 15.

²¹¹ Shums'kyi also denounced the Zerov and the Neoclassicists as non-Marxist "internal émigrés," and Hrushevs'kyi, whose work suggested parallels and continuities between imperial Russia and the Soviet Union. O.

Ukrainian emigres were to blame for the resurgence of local nationalism in Soviet Ukraine. Ultimately, however, this repudiation of Khvyl'ovyi did little to redeem Shums'kyi in the eyes of the Party. Their opponents invoked Stalin's fear that Ukrainization was being forced upon Russian workers and alienating them from the Party, while emboldening Ukrainian "bourgeois nationalists" and weakening the Soviet state's grip on the country. Although the slogan "Away from Moscow!" referred only to literature, its political implications were clearly subversive in a Marxist regime that regarded structure and superstructure as inexorably bound together, and subordinated art to the objectives of the state as determined by the Party; if Ukrainian culture moved away from Moscow, then its politics would have to follow suit, despite Khvyl'ovyi's insistent that the two not be confused.

Khvyl'ovyi faced repeated accusations of being under Dontsov's influence, which were not entirely unfounded given the similarities between their positions and the former's previous expressions of agreement with the editor of *LVN* in his published works.²¹² Under attack, Khvyl'ovyi defended himself from Communist opponents, such as Serhii Pylypenko (1891-1943), leader of the union of Ukrainian peasant writers *Pluh* (Plough), and advocate of "massism"—the idea that a new literature should come from the people themselves, even if this meant lowering aesthetic standards. He also distanced himself from and polemicized with Dontsov, especially in his series of pamphlets *Apolohety pysarymzu. Do problem kul'turnoi revoliutsii* (The Apologists of Scribbling: On the Problem of Cultural Revolution), which

Oleksandr Shums'kyi, "Ideolohichna borot'ba v ukrains'komu kul'turnomy protsesi," *Bil'shovyk Ukrainy*, no. 2 (February 1927), 13. Quoted in Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas*, 110.

²¹² He repeatedly invoked the *LVN* editor with approval: "Literature is the looking glass in which trembles the rhythm of the national soul," says Dontsov and with complete justification." "Here we agree with Mr. Dontsov: we will not hand the country over to petty-bourgeois fools and egoists." "We are witnessing a serious moment—the meant at which, to use Mr. Dontsov's words, 'the October psyche is beginning to break down,' when, also in his words, 'a demobilization of the revolutionary spirit is commencing along the entire front.'" Khvylovyyi, *Cultural Renaissance*, 173, 197, 205. Khvyl'ovyi quotes from Dontsov, "Ukrains'ko-soviets'ki psevdomorfozy."

appeared between February and March 1926. He went so far as to threaten Dontsov with a violent death, but could not restrain himself from adding that “the most intelligent and consistent of the Ukrainian fascists,”²¹³ was still a worthy foe: “When it becomes necessary and the possibilities are there, rest assured we will dispatch not only Mr. Dontsov to ‘Dukhonin’s General Staff’; but we will also know how to respect intelligent foes.”²¹⁴

Khvyl’ovyi then went further and began to hail Moscow and Russian culture, joining in the attacks on his erstwhile supporters in the Literary Discussion, such as the O. Vlyz’ko (arrested and shot along with twenty-seven other Ukrainian poets in 1934), rebuking the latter for his praise of Hetman Mazepa and degradation of Peter I. During these years, Shevel’ov notes, Khvyl’ovyi found a bevy of sins against the state and Marxism-Leninism in the writings of the new generation that once admired him: “anti-Russianism, Trotskyism, nationalism, pro-americanism, . . . provincialism, i.e. kulakism [*kurkul’s tvo*],²¹⁵ idealism, ‘kulak propaganda,’ the bourgeois idealism of Spengler, Dontsov, ‘and other ideologues of fascism,’ following in the footsteps of Dontsov, Petliura, and Iefremov²¹⁶ and the ideology of ‘winded Ukrainization’.”²¹⁷

But the public volte-face and mea culpas did not save Khvyl’ovyi, who was forced to publicly renounce his “errors” in December 1926, and leave the ranks of VAPLITE (an acronym of *Vil’na akademiia proletars’koi literatury* [Free Academy of Proletarian Literature])—the

²¹³ Ibid., 171.

²¹⁴ The reference is to General Dukhonin, the last commander of the Imperial Russian Army. Bolshevik soldiers bayoneted Dukhonin to death and used his corpse for target practice. Khvyl’ovyi insinuates that Dontsov and his ilk will meet a similar fate. Khvylovyyi, *Cultural Renaissance*, 174.

²¹⁵ From *kurkul’*, the Ukrainian word for “kulak” (Russian for fist), originally meaning a wealthy peasant, but denoting a class enemy and counterrevolutionary in the Soviet context.

²¹⁶ Serhii Iefremov (1876-1939), Ukrainian populist literary critic, historian, and political activist, former UPSF member, and member of the Central Rada.

²¹⁷ Khvyl’ovyi, *Tvory*, vol. 4, 40. Quoted in Roman Rakhmannyi, *Dmytro Dontsov i Mykola Khvyl’ovyi* (London: Ukrains’ka vydavnycha spilka, 1984), 17.

Kharkiv-based writers' group to which he belonged—the following month. Ultimately, this did not save VAPLITE either as the tide turned against Ukrainization. Shums'kyi, too, was accused of nationalism and dismissed from his post in February 1927, replaced as commissar of education of the UkrSSR by the more moderate, yet committed, Ukrainizer, Mykola Skrypnyk (1872-1933). After a stint in Berlin and Vienna, Khvyl'ovyi chose not to remain an emigre and returned to Kharkiv in 1928 to write works that he hoped would appease the Party, restore his reputation, and allow him once again to contribute to the cultural development of Soviet Ukraine. Success eluded him, however, and his new publications flopped. Reflecting on this turn of events “on the other side of the border,” Dontsov wrote that “the whole of Soviet literature in Ukraine is the best proof that creative literature can grow only from one's own sensual and spiritual grounds; that cleft souls will not create a new literature.”²¹⁸ Ostracized from the existing writers' unions, Khvyl'ovyi founded two short-lived groups of his own, but found himself isolated and powerless to resist the harsh turn in Soviet governance of Ukraine of the late 1920s and early 1930s.

²¹⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, “Nevil'nyky doktryny (Kharakterystyka chil'nykh pys'mennykh Radians'koi Ukrainy),” *LNV* 97, no. 9 (1928): 69-87. Republished in Dmytro Dontsov, *Dvi Literaturny nashoi doby* (Toronto: Homin Ukrainy, 1958), 92.



Figures 4.2-3: Mykola Khvyl'ovyi and Oleksandr Shums'kyi. *Source*: Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine

With “Shums’kyism” and “Khvyl’ovism” now officially censured as Dontsov- or Petliura-inspired “national deviations,” the Soviet state began a piecemeal abandonment of Ukrainization in the UkrSSR, in accordance with the logic of centralizing power in Moscow, dismantling the political and cultural autonomy of the UkrSSR, and preventing a revival of anti-Bolshevik Ukrainian nationalism. In 1930, the show trial of the “Union for the Liberation for Ukraine” (SVU) (*Spilka vyzvolennia Ukrainy*)—a fictitious organization not to be confused with the SVU that Dontsov briefly led in 1914 and had ceased to exist by the end of the First World War—inaugurated a campaign of repression against the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Soviet prosecutors alleged that the SVU had “united the anti-Soviet intelligentsia, the former participants in the Petliurist movement, activists in the autocephalous church,²¹⁹ and representatives of the kulaks,” all under the leadership of Serhii Iefremov, and had conspired to

²¹⁹ The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was founded through a declaration of independence from the Russian Orthodox Church and the Moscow Patriarchate in 1921.

incite a major anti-Soviet nationalist uprising in Ukraine.²²⁰ The Party leadership (Stalin, Molotov, and Kaganovich) and the Soviet Ukrainian secret police—the GPU (*Gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravleniia*)²²¹—proceeded to arrest, exile, or execute as many as 30,000 individuals in connection with the show trial, targeting educators, writers, members of the Autocephalous Church, and former employees of the UNR. While the Party continued to issue statements in favor of Ukrainization for several more years, the SVU affair terrorized the people most needed to implement it and continued the policy’s practical dismantlement, which had begun with the pillory of Khvyl’ovyi, Shums’kyi, and their supporters. Stalin followed the show trial closely, personally intervening with a directive at one point, and began to speak often of the dangers of “local nationalism” in Ukraine, while praising the “great” Russian nationality.²²² These were the beginnings of a Stalinist fusion of Russian nationalism with Marxism-Leninism that deepened in the 1930s. Dontsov had long argued that Bolshevism is an inherently Russian nationalist, imperialist ideology, which hid behind internationalist words but would never permit the flowering of Ukrainian culture, let alone political independence; these events seemed to substantiate his stance.

In the following decade, Dontsov’s warnings that the Soviet regime would initiate the physical, and not just cultural, destruction of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and peasantry were tragically validated. Stalin’s first Five Year-Plan (1928-1932) ended the NEP and commenced the collectivization of agriculture throughout the USSR. The stakes of collectivization were highest

²²⁰ Quoted in Matthew D. Pauly, *Breaking the Tongue: Language, Education, and Power in Soviet Ukraine, 1923-1934* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 258.

²²¹ This is the Russian name for the bureau. In Ukrainian it is *Derzhavne politychne upravlinnia*, but using the Russian GPU seems more appropriate given the general anti-Ukrainization sentiments of UkrSSR’s *siloviki*—Soviet police and military forces—many of whom had recently fought a war against the UNR and continued to regard Ukrainian-speaking intellectuals as politically suspect throughout the 1920s and beyond. Pauly, *Breaking the Tongue*, 265.

²²² Martin, *Affirmative-Action Empire*, 253.

in the Soviet Union's black-earth breadbasket, Ukraine, where it provoked staunch resistance from the Ukrainian peasantry, which, as Dontsov had insisted for years, was an inherently conservative, individualistic, and private property-minded class at odds with (Russian) Bolshevism. The state's response, "dekulakization"—a campaign of terror to "liquidate the kulaks as a class"—was touted as a new revolution of the pro-Soviet "poor" peasants against the nationalistic, anti-Soviet "rich" ones, but it targeted anyone perceived as a political enemy in the countryside, with at least as much attention paid to (ascribed) ethnicity as to economic status.²²³ Collectivization involved the state-control, proletarianization, and, ideally, mechanization of farming, and was designed to boost the production of food for export, thus generating more capital for the heavy industrialization and urbanization of the USSR. In practice, however, collectivization caused a downward spiral of increasingly ruinous and untenable grain requisitions and police terror on one side, and livestock destruction, slowdowns, uprisings, and other forms of local resistance on the other, culminating in the Holodomor ("death by hunger")—a state-engineered and -aggravated famine that ended the lives of approximately four million inhabitants of Soviet Ukraine's cities and villages, a staggering 15 percent of the population, between 1932 and 1933.²²⁴ Famine gripped regions throughout the Soviet Union in 1932, but it was considerably more severe and lasted longer in the UkrSSR and the ethnically Ukrainian, agriculturally rich Kuban region, north of the Caucasus Mountains in the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (RSFSR). Between December 1932 and January 1933, the authorities in these

²²³ Indeed, those most likely to be "dekulakized" were members of politically suspect ethnicities, such as Soviet Poles and Germans, owing to their alleged connections to coethnics in enemy "fascist" states abroad. Kate Brown, *A Biography of No Place: From Ethnic Borderland to Soviet heartland* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 38-47.

²²⁴ Oleh Wolowyna, "The Famine-Genocide of 1932-33: Estimation of Losses and Demographic Impact," in Taras Hunczak and Roman Serbyn, eds., *Famine in Ukraine, 1932-33: Genocide by Other Means* (New York: Shevchenko Scientific Society, 2007), 98-114. For a concise statement of the argument for considering the Great Famine of 1932-33 genocide see Andrea Graziosi, "The Soviet 1931-1933 Famines and the Ukrainian Holodomor: Is a New Interpretation Possible, and What Would the Consequences Be?" *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 27 (2004-5): 97-115.

regions enforced specific draconian policies, handed down from the Politburo, which deliberately worsened the famine, such as a ban on movement to other parts of the USSR in search of food, and a resolution threatening “the strictest punitive measures” for collective farmers guilty of “misappropriating and concealing grain.”²²⁵

Stalin and his chief lieutenants, Kaganovich and Molotov, interpreted the famine in national terms, regarding it as a consequence of “the mechanical implementation of Ukrainization.”²²⁶ “The national interpretation of the grain requisitions crisis,” was propounded in a Politburo decree on December 14, 1932, and blamed the famine on counterrevolutionary cells of “Petliurites” and other Ukrainian “bourgeois-nationalist elements,” which had allegedly infiltrated the KP(B)U and were acting under the legal cover provided by Ukrainization.²²⁷ Stalin had already acknowledged the possibility of classes and nations coinciding or fusing together in his theoretical writings on nationalities policy; now he linked the antipeasant and antibourgeois logic of Marxian modernization with the anti-Ukrainian (and anti-Polish) logic of Russian chauvinism, utilizing famine and terror to crush the double threat to his power in Ukraine and the Cuban.

According to the new official position, Ukrainization, unlike indigenization (*korenizatsiia*) policies in other parts of the Soviet Union, had empowered rather than disarmed Ukrainian nationalism, and thus had to be reversed, quickly and brutally if need be. The Ukrainian GPU arrested thousands of civilians and hundreds of KP(B)U members in 1932. At

²²⁵ “Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) on the grain procurement in Ukraine,” and “Order from the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) on preventing the mass flight of starving villagers in search of food,” in Bohdan Klid and Alexander J. Motyl, eds., *The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2012), 251, 254.

²²⁶ Martin, *Affirmative-Action Empire*, 302-3.

²²⁷ Ibid.

the height of the famine in January 1933, Stalin dispatched Pavel Postyshev (1887-1939)—the “hangman of Ukraine,” as he came to be known—to head the KP(B)U. Postyshev replaced Skrypnyk, who was accused of a “national deviation” that had abetted the Ukrainian and Polish nationalist plot to “separate the Ukraine from the Soviet Union and convert it into a colony of Polish fascism or German imperialism.”²²⁸

Simultaneously, Stalin appointed the ruthless Vsevolod Balyts’kyi (1892-1937) to command the secret police of the UkrSSR, who proceeded to launch a reign of terror against Ukrainian intelligentsia, targeting former Borotbists, UKP members, and old Bolsheviks accused of being too enthusiastic about Ukrainization (such as Skrypnyk). In May 1933, the GPU absurdly accused Shums’kyi of being a member of the UVO, which had all but ceased to exist after the founding of the OUN, condemning him to imprisonment on the Solovets Islands. Thousands of Ukrainians were purged from the Party at this time, many later to be arrested on trumped up charges and, in many cases, shot (prefiguring the Great Terror of 1937-38). Meanwhile, Stalin praised the Russians as “the most talented nation in the world,” which “first raised the Soviet flag against the entire world” in a post-May Day speech on May 2, 1933. Finally, the KP(B)U ended Ukrainization with a November 1933 plenum declaring that the “greatest danger” with regard to Soviet nationalities policy was no longer “Russian chauvinism,” as it had been since 1923, but was now non-Russian “local nationalism.”²²⁹

Thus, the “Cultural Renaissance” became the “Executed Renaissance.” Driven to despair by the famine and Postyshev’s terror, Mykola Khvyl’ovyi committed suicide on May 13,

²²⁸ “The Results and Immediate Tasks of the National Policy in Ukraine. Resolution Adopted by the Joint Plenum of the central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of the Ukraine on the Report of Comrade S. V. Kosior” in Klid and Motyl, *Holodomor Reader*, 265.

²²⁹ Ibid.

1933.²³⁰ He shot himself in his study, leaving behind a letter that protested the Party's "betrayal of the Revolution." Thereafter, Khvyl'ovyi's works and memory were banned, and went unpublished in Ukraine until after its independence. At first, Dontsov denied the official story that Khvyl'ovyi's death had in fact been a suicide, accusing the Soviet secret police of assassinating him (an untenable conspiracy theory given the fact several of the writer's friends were with him in his apartment at the time). Dontsov took the event as proof that defiantly, authentically Ukrainian intellectuals and artists could not survive under Bolshevism:

The most terrible thing is the moral death that awaits everyone there [in the Soviet Union —TE] whom the conviction or feeling of self-respect will not allow to swear on every letter of the Leninist Koran. I did not think then [during the polemic with Khvyl'ovyi —TE] that soon I would have such a tragic illustration of this assertion; that between physical and moral death, Khvyl'ovyi would choose the former as less terrible.²³¹

Despite his failed efforts to reconcile the contradiction between Ukrainian nationalism and cultural striving on the one hand, and collaboration with the thuggish, Russian Communist occupation of Ukraine on the other, Khvyl'ovyi's convictions and writing could lead only to his downfall:

It would be strange if such a smart and nimble journalistic and literary career as his did not mobilize those who gathered around the 'center of federal Philistinism'—the Party, Moscow—against Khvyl'ovyi. . . . He preaches rebellion? But how dare he 'sing of an abstract uprising, and idealize historical romance?' This means 'to incite the petty-bourgeois element to active struggle against the dictatorship of the proletariat,' the time for 'chaos and natural force' [*stykhii*] is already finished! The proletarian was the rebel, now he is "a conscious member of the organized collective,' now he is a 'builder.' . . . How dare he propagate 'the struggle of two cultures,' when 'national enmity is a relic of the old relations?'²³²

²³⁰ Skrypnyk chose the same act of protest that July.

²³¹ Dmytro Dontsov, "Mykola Khvyl'ovyi," *Vistnyk*, no. 7-8 (1933): 591-601. Republished in *Suchasnist'* 5 (1973): 75-94, 75.

²³² *Ibid.*, 92.

When Khvyl'ovyi finally realized that “those who struggle, not for their own cause, but for the cause of a new empire, a new Moscow,” are merely “hired gladiators”—that “Moscow, with its ‘majority,’” represents “the all-leveling herd as a principle, not only of political, but also spiritual life”—he killed himself. Nevertheless, Dontsov admired Khvyl'ovyi's “final jest” as “a terrible moral blow for the deceitful politics of Russia in Ukraine.”²³³ Now there could be no question of returning to the old Sovietophilia; self-respecting Ukrainians, no matter their political ideology, would have to regard Bolshevism as the enemy.

Even the Communist Party of Western Ukraine (KPZU), which Moscow previously regarded as the vanguard of the Ukrainian national liberation movement in Poland, turned against the Soviet leadership, protesting the rollback of Ukrainization that began with the Shums'kyi affair and ended with the Holodomor and the repression of the Cultural Renaissance. The pro-Shums'kyi protests led the Comintern to depose the leadership of the KPZU, whom Kaganovich accused of treachery, in February 1928. The “national deviation” had spilled over the border. Now, in order to remain relevant in Western Ukrainian politics, which became stridently anti-Communist, Russophobic, and nationalistic in reaction to events in the Soviet Union, the KPZU rebranded itself as a nationalistic party, taking up causes such as opposing the forced conversion of Ukrainians to Roman Catholicism, but was unable to halt its decline over the course of the next decade.²³⁴ Absurdities and paranoia spread through the Communist camp as the anti-Ukrainian nationalist inquisition forged ahead. According to one anecdote, at a meeting of the Central Committee of the KP(B)U during the summer of 1933, in which accusations that the KPZU was under Dontsov's influence were presented alongside

²³³ Ibid., 93-94.

²³⁴ Timothy Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War: A Polish Artist's Mission to Liberate Soviet Ukraine* (New Haven: Yale University press, 2005), 167.

incriminating citations from *LNV*, one of those present, evidently under the impression that the journal's editor himself was a member of the KPZU, slammed his fist on the table, and cried out: “*Purge the rascal from the party!*”²³⁵ Even Communists, it seems, had trouble taking Dontsov's avowed anti-Communism at face value. They had lost their credibility among the Ukrainian emigration, and radical nationalists rushed to fill the void. Suddenly, Western Ukraine became the “Piedmont” and the UkrSSR replaced Poland as the symbol of national oppression, while figures like Dontsov basked in the vindication and redoubled their efforts.

Conclusion: Dontsov the Moskal'?

Lypyns'kyi's two charges were, in the main, accurate: on the one hand, Dontsov really did think like a Bolshevik—a “revolutionary Moskal'”—who was not ashamed to express veneration for Bolshevik practices and Bolshevik writers, when he thought it appropriate; on the other hand, he was of little use when it came to organized political action, abandoning the integral nationalist OUN, his “spiritual children,” and the conservative Agrarian-Statists, Lypyns'kyi's group, despite repeated overtures from both camps. Dontsov devoted little ink to condemning the bloody suppression of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the Holodomor. On what grounds could he have done so? He had utterly rejected appeals to morality and humanity as ineffectual, irrelevant, chimerical, and counterproductive in *Natsionalizm* and other works. If Russian Communists killed Ukrainians, then Ukrainians had only themselves to blame for it because they had failed to kill Russian Communists. The tears and lamentations of Ukrainophile provincialism; the submissive, pacifistic worldview of “Buddhists”; the lack of abstract ideals worth committing awful crimes and suffering terrible deaths for—these defects were to blame for the oppression of Ukrainians at the hands of a race that *is* willing to conquer and destroy.

²³⁵ “Holos sumlinnia” *Dilo* (July 26, 1933), 3. Quoted in Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 400.

Dontsov's radicalism distinguished him from the more conservative, gradualist traditions of Galician Ukrainian politics, socialist, liberal, and conservative. It resonated with Western Ukrainian students, activists, and writers of a revolutionary mentality, including KPZU members, and earned admirers in Soviet Ukraine, who took up Dontsov's call to Occidentalize Ukrainian culture and elide Muscovite interference. And yet, for all his pro-European statements, one of the most common charges leveled against him was that he was a Russian, "by birth and origin," and thus exhibited the contempt of a typical Moskal' chauvinist for Ukrainian cultural and political traditions, urging them to be more like the Muscovites in order, paradoxically, to become more Ukrainian and European.

Previously rejecting anti-Semitism as a manifestation of Russian barbarity, Dontsov began to regard Jew-hatred as a quintessentially European tradition and a sign of a national vitality, conflating Jewishness, Russianness, and Bolshevism into an imagined anti-Ukrainian, anti-Western conspiracy. His anti-Semitism spiked after the assassination of Petliura, leaving a mark on Ukrainian integral nationalist ideas and practices thereafter. The rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis in March 1933—which, as we shall see in the next chapter, Dontsov welcomed enthusiastically—strengthened the anti-Semitic current already manifest in his thinking, but also added new scientific racist elements to it. The birth of the Third Reich drew Dontsov's gaze back to Germany, away from Poland, and came to represent for him the best hope of annihilating the Soviet empire and achieving Ukraine's influence. Even before 1933, however, Dontsov had left little room for doubt about what he was proposing: the Muscovites and their Jewish allies in Ukraine should be given the same brutal treatment that they had forced Ukrainians to endure for centuries. Much to Dontsov's delight, events seemed to be pointing in the direction of a second Great War and a chance to revise the outcome of the first one. The prospects of a Ukrainian-Polish peace, let alone alliance, were buried in the escalation of

violence between the OUN and the Polish state, which opened the Bereza Katuska detention camp to imprison thousands Ukrainian and Belarusian nationalists and other suspected political enemies without trial in June 1934. Sovietophilia and Communism lost their appeal in Western Ukraine following the assassination of Petliura by a presumed NKVD agent, the Shums'kyi affair, the SVU show trial, the repression of the Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia, and the Holodomor; hereafter, Western Ukrainian and émigré attitudes toward the USSR tended to be extremely negative. "Active nationalism," which to many seemed the ideology best equipped to guide Ukrainians through such perilous, inhumane times, reaped new adherents and notoriety.

But Dontsov's growing visibility did not save *Literaturno-Naukovyi Vistnyk*, which finally succumbed to an attrition of subscribers and contributing authors, who clashed with the editor's authoritarian style, conflicts between Dontsov and the Ukrainian Publishers' Union, which was responsible for the journal, over its increasingly nationalistic slant, and a financial crisis that closed both the union and *LNV* in 1932. Dontsov restarted the publication under the name *Vistnyk* (Herald) with the support of the writers who remained loyal to him, the *Vistnykivtsi*, the financial backing of the UVO, and his own publishing house, *Vydavnytstvo Dontsovykh*, which operated with funds provided by the Banchyns'kyi family wealth of Dontsov's wife, Mariia Banchyns'ka-Dontsova. The first edition of *Vistnyk* appeared in December 1932 (dated January 1933), and existed until the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, operating entirely through Dontsov's ideological prism as editor. The next chapter will return to 1926 to cover the last years of *LNV*, then resume our survey of the collaborations, rivalries, romances, literary productions, and intellectual trajectories of the Dontsovs and the *Vistnykivsti* through the 1930s to the end of World War II, in which many of them perished and the rest were scattered, bringing the circle and their era, but not their influence, to a close.

CHAPTER 5: THE PERSONAL AND THE POLITICAL: FEMINISM, NAZISM, AND THE *VISTNYKIVTSI*, 1926-1939

Under Dontsov's leadership, *Literaturno-Naukovyi Vistnyk* (LNV) became an outlet chiefly for integral nationalist literature that matched his own political convictions and aesthetic tastes. One of the journal's disgruntled authors observed that the editor "led the journal according to his own will and pleasure," collaborating with the likeminded and rejecting the rest.¹ The directives that Dontsov proclaimed for the publication in 1922, when he became editor in chief of the revived *LNV* persisted; "the formation of the national idea" and the spiritual transfiguration of Ukraine from an "object of history" into a "subject of history" found expression on the pages of *LNV* in the forms of reactionary modernist prose, poetry, and political philosophy explored in chapter 3. The once large number of eminent writers actively contributing to *LNV* gradually dwindled to a hardcore of younger writers who were impressed with Dontsov and more or less committed to his brand of Ukrainian integral nationalism. Still, the editor did offer *LNV* as a platform to assorted Hetmanites, such as Dmytro Doroshenko and Iaroslav Okunevs'kyi (1860-1929), to polemicize with his enemy, Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi (this had the added advantage of sowing dissension in the monarchist camp). The journal also showcased relatively apolitical articles by esteemed academics, including the historian of medieval Ukraine Myron Korduba (1876-1947), the philologist Stepan Smal'-Stots'kyi (1859-1938), and the literary scholar Iaroslav Hordyns'kyi (1882-1939). The group of émigré writers

¹ Namely, the bibliographer and translator Volodymyr Doroshenko (1879-1963). Doroshenko, "Literaturno-Naukovyi Vistnyk," 53-54.

most loyal to Dontsov—the *Vistnykivtsi*, consisting of Iuryi Lypa, Ievhen Malaniuk, Leonid Mosendz, Olena Teliha, Oswald Burghardt (pseudonym: Iuryi Klen) (1891-1947), Oleh Ol’zhych, and, to a lesser extent, Ulas Samchuk—got their start publishing in *LNV*.² In the years leading up to and during World War II, the *Vistnykivtsi* each followed his or her own path; some remained loyal to Dontsov while others became disillusioned with him, and sought to escape his influence or challenge his authority. This led to various schisms, rivalries, and conflicts within the circle, which began to pull apart during the 1930s. Prior to this, however, the group remained close intellectually, aesthetically, professionally, and intimately. Its members’ personal relations, which ranged from extreme antipathy to adoration, were entangled with their political and aesthetic commitments, including their reactions to two ascendant phenomena in East Central Europe: Nazism and feminism.

The adoption of pronatalist and eugenics policies throughout 1930s Europe provided the backdrop for Ukrainian nationalists’ debates about the ideal woman, the ideal man, and the proper relation between them and with society as a whole. Scientifically racist, social Darwinian, and reliant upon deeper intrusions of the state and the medical profession into the private lives (and bodies) of citizens, the proponents of these policies sought to improve the biological qualities and reproductivity of nations by sterilizing or “euthanizing” those deemed mentally or physically unfit, and by encouraging or compelling supposedly stronger, healthier individuals to have as many children for the fatherland as possible. To this end, interwar European governments implemented new restrictions and prohibitions of abortion and divorce, criminalized homosexuality, and promoted culturally “conservative” gender roles as necessary for the improvement of the nation’s welfare and military preparedness. The regimes and

² Other regular contributors to Dontsov’s journal who are sometimes counted as *Vistnyivtsi* include the literary critic Mykhailo Mukhyn (1894-1974) and the poet, sculptor, and civic activist Oksana Liaturyns’ka (1902-1970).

ideologues behind these programs clashed with movements fighting for the social, political, and personal liberation of women. Nazi Germany was but one, albeit the most radical, instance of this trend. As historian Claudia Koonz argues, despite Nazism's generally misogynistic subordination of women to men, German women were sometimes supporters and activists, as well as opponents and victims, of Nazi policies on family, sexuality, and gender.³ Hoping to carve out a sphere of female autonomy, some pro-Nazi women accepted second-sex status in the party and in society. Soviet politics also followed the continent-wide drift toward authoritarian pronatalism. The Soviet Family Code of 1918 had radically liberalized marriage, divorce, and abortion laws. Bolshevik activists originally urged women to leave the domestic sphere, join the work force, and become more politically active. They sought to replace the "bourgeois family" with state-public child rearing, to end prostitution, and to usher in the proletarian sexual revolution envisioned by the Bolshevik feminist leader Alexandra Kollontai. But cultural and economic realities did not keep pace with these efforts. The birthrate declined while the number of unwanted pregnancies and orphans rose owing to lack of access to birth control. Fathers and husbands took advantage of simplified divorce procedures to abandon mothers and wives, leaving the latter to search for jobs in short supply and preferentially given to male workers. Even women who worked outside the home were expected to continue shouldering the burden of domestic labor. Meanwhile, traditional patriarchal structures and practices went largely unchallenged in rural areas. The Soviet Family Code of 1936 reversed the social and legal reforms propounded in 1918 to match the "traditionalist," pronatalist zeitgeist.⁴ Responding to

³ See Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family, and Nazi Politics* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1987).

⁴ See Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State, and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

Soviet and Nazi approaches to the “women’s question,” Dontsov and the *Vistnykivtsi* were less interested in specific questions of family law and policy, such as divorce or abortion, than they were in ideal notions of nationalist masculinity and femininity as represented in and promoted through literature. They sought to reconcile those forms of modern female empowerment deemed beneficial to the national cause with patriarchal values and traditionally “Ukrainian” gender roles. As we shall see, the result was paradoxical and contested, drawing them into conflict with one another and with the Ukrainian women’s movement.

***Vistnyk* between Hitler and Stalin**

Almost from its inception, the revived *LNŮ* was marred by economic trouble and conflicts between the editor, the Ukrainian Publishers’ Union, headed by the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO) leaders Osyp Navrots’kyi and Iurii Polians’kyi, and the Union of Journalists and Writers, based in L’viv. Members of the latter had opposed the appointment of Dontsov from the beginning, but gave into pressure from Konovalets’ and the UVO, which put up badly needed funds for the periodical. The Ukrainian Publishers’ Union constituted a check on Dontsov’s editorial freedom that he resented greatly. “These people are barbarians,” he complained to Mariia.⁵ On the third anniversary of the founding of *LNŮ*, 1925, Dontsov drew attention to the publication’s difficult situation:

Material conditions allow only for the exceptional payment of labor at 25 zloty per printed page, and for the editor's pension—barely a quarter of the cost for a decent printer; the publisher does not have any funds for the subscription to even one foreign journal. . . . If one adds to this that under the given circumstances the publisher is unable to afford a length per issue of more than six pages (instead of the prewar twenty), then you will begin to get a full picture of the conditions under which the editorship must work.⁶

⁵ August 24, 1927. TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 16, ark. 150.

⁶ Dontsov, “Try roky vidnovlenoho,” 333-34.

Dontsov struggled to make the journal profitable. Initially, *LVN*'s circulation was not large at 800-1,200 copies, which generally went directly to individual readers, but under his editorship the number of subscribers rose to 1,500 and the circulation grew to 1,800 copies, reaching Eastern Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, the US, and Canada.⁷ These gains, however, were not enough to pull the publication out of the red. Concerned that the quality of the journal was declining, hemorrhaging respectable readers and contributors despite the growth in subscribers overall, the governing board of *LVN* called Dontsov in for review in 1928.⁸ Lashing out against the board's critiques, the editor in chief accused personal enemies, the Soviet state, the center-right Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UNDO), and the Union of Journalists and Writers of conspiring to undermine him.⁹ The board reappointed him editor anyway, but the L'viv-based Ukrainian Publishers' Union, which was financially responsible for *LVN*, closed soon thereafter in 1932, threatening to take the journal down with it. Dontsov's supporters launched a campaign to save the journal, with readers and contributing authors writing letters in support. The *Vistnykivtsi* believed in their mission, and hoped for the journal's survival. Malaniuk, Samchuk, Ol'zhych, and Mukhin wrote to Dontsov on March 18, 1932: "Preparing a literary evening on the occasion of the ten-year anniversary of the neo-*LVN* in the common feeling of unity—we send you a warm hello from Prague. We hope that *LVN* will powerfully repel the strike of the united Little Russian front." Ultimately, however, Dontsov chose the path of financial independence,

⁷ Halyna Svarnyk, "Dmytro Dontsov iak redaktor 'literaturno-naukovoho vistnyka' (1922-1932) i 'Vistnyka' (1932-1938) u L'vovi," *Ukrains'ka periodyka: istoriia i suchasnist'*. *Dopovidi ta povidomlennia Druhoi Vseukrains'koi naukovo-teoretychnoi konferentsii*, L'viv-Zhytomyr December 21-22, 1994, 153-56.

⁸ Among the board's members were: Volodymyr Doroshenko; the political and cultural leader in the UNDO Mykhailo Halushchyns'kyi (1878-1931); Ievhen Konovalets'; and the anthropologist and zoologist Ivan Rakovs'kyi (1874-1949).

⁹ BN, DD, Mf. 82671, 69, 71.

restarting the publication near the end of 1932 as a fully independent operation under the name *Vistnyk: Misiachnyk literatury, mystetstva, nauky, i hromads'koho zhyttia* (Herald: A Monthly of Literature, Art, Science, and Civic Life).

More ideologically homogenous and radical than its predecessor, *Vistnyk* existed under Dontsov's sole editorial discretion from the beginning of 1933 to the outbreak of World War II. His longtime assistant Mykhailo Hikavyi managed the business side of things, while students helped with deliveries in exchange for free subscriptions.¹⁰ To support the venture, Dmytro and Mariia Dontsov started their own publishing house, *Vydavnytstvo Dontsovykh*. The couple relied on Mariia's mother, Ol'ha Bachyns'ka, to get permission from the L'viv city authorities (the *starostwo*) to create and operate the journal itself. Ol'ha Bachyns'ka's name thus appeared on this official documentation as the owner and publisher of *Vistnyk*. Despite being the actual editor and ideological mastermind behind the project, Dontsov's name was not listed.¹¹ Years later, after Dontsov's death, Hikavyi recounted the editor's typical workday in the 1930s: he would rise at seven in the morning and go straight to work, taking coffee at the café "Videnka," where he caught up on the latest events; he prepared all the materials for *Vistnyk* himself, typing out submitted manuscripts, making corrections, and arranging everything for the printers, his next stop. From there he would go to the journal's administrative office in the afternoon, pick up any mail that had arrived for him, then return to the "Videnka" for debates with friends and acquaintances. Hikavyi described Dontsov as "friendly with everyone, but taciturn." In the

¹⁰ Svarnyk "Dontsov iak redaktor," 154.

¹¹ Instead, the managing editor of the journal was initially indicated as "Ivan Ustianovych," then, from January 1933, as "Bohdan Obkysh." I have been unable to locate information about either person. Dzvinika Vorobkalo, "'Mystetstvo dlia natsii' vs 'Mystetstvo dlia mystetstva,'" zbruc.eu. <http://zbruc.eu/node/60625> [accessed March 10, 2017].

evenings Dontsov would go home, write another article, and read late into the night. He left L'viv for vacation each summer, in July and August, leaving the journal in his wife's care.¹²

In 1934, the Dontsovs' publishing house began initiated a separate, quarterly series of books, *Knyhozbirna Vistnyka* (Library of the Herald). In circulations of up to 5,000 copies, *Knyhozbirna Vistnyka* issued Ukrainian translations of selected works, such as Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince*, previously little known in Ukraine, as well as hagiographic biographies of leaders of the modern European Right (e.g. Hitler, Mussolini, the Spanish general and dictator Francisco Franco, Portuguese fascist theorist Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, the Belgian Nazi collaborator and Catholic nationalist Leon Degrelle, and others).¹³ Dontsov's contribution to the series, under the pseudonym "D. Varnak," was a biography of the considerably less controversial Irish political leader Daniel O'Connell (1774-1847). Dontsov also prepared prefaces for every book. The other authors included the racist, anti-Semitic anthropologist Rostyslav Iendyk (1906-1974)—a lifelong devotee of Dontsov who wrote an admiring biography of Hitler and, after the war, a pro-Dontsov brochure.¹⁴ Renamed *Kvartal'nyk Vistnyka* (Quarterly of the Herald) in 1936, the series also ran original book-length works by Dontsov. One gets a sense of their contents and the problems that motivated them from the titles: *Taiemnytsia orhanizatsii* (The Mystery of Organization, 1936), *Durman sotsializmu* (The Idiocy of Socialism, 1936), *Zavdannia novoho pokolinnia* (The Task of the New Generation, 1937), *Partiia chy orden: Ob'iednannia chy roz'iednannia?* (Party or Order: Unification or Dissolution? 1933), *Patriotyzm* (Patriotism, 1936), *De shukaty nashykh istorychnykh tradytsii?*

¹² Mykhailo Hikavyi, "Den' doktora Dmytra Dontsova," *Visnyk OOOChSU*, no. 3 (March 1974), 299.

¹³ Rostyslav Iendyk, *Dmytro Dontsov. Ideoloh ukrains'koho nationalizmu* (Munich: Ukrains'ke vydavnytstvo, 1955), 88.

¹⁴ Iendyk, *Dmytro Dontsov*; Rostyslav Iendyk, *Hitler* (L'viv: *Knyhozbirna Vistnyka*, 1934).

(Where to Find Our Historical Traditions? 1938), and *Masa i provid; Kil'kist' chy iakist'?* (The Masses and Leadership; Quantity or Quality? 1939). Dontsov's column, "Z presovoho fil'ma" (From the Press Reel), published under the cryptonym "M.L.," provided a concise overview of the international press, including the Soviet, on Ukrainian matters. The column, cosmopolitan in spirit, intended to set Ukraine into a global, or at least continental, context. Working in the shadow cast by the Third Reich, *Vistnyk* and its quarterly espoused the anti-Communist, antiliberal, and, increasingly, pro-Nazi, racist, anti-Semitic, and conspiracy-theoretical worldview of its owner and editor.

Dontsov's enthusiasm for Nazism began in 1933. Given his longstanding Germanophilia and Austrophilia, which we explored in chapters 1 and 2, and his approval of and fascination with Italian Fascism, the decision to start hailing Hitler as soon as the latter became chancellor was natural for the *Vistnyk* editor. The rise of the Third Reich represented a triumph for the ideas that Dontsov had been espousing for years: nationalism, voluntarism, militarism, authoritarianism, statism, anti-Marxism, anti-Semitism, palingenetic mysticism and reactionary modernism, xenophobia and the rhetoric of a racial-civilizational conflict between "the East" and "the West," between the "Aryans" and the rest—all of this achieved its apotheosis and most radical expression in Nazism. Developments in Germany radicalized Dontsov, deepening his obsession with international Jewry, Masonic conspiracies, "scientific" racism (*Rassentheorie*), and an apocalyptic war to crush Muscovy once and for all. Hitler's vision of a Europe cleansed of the "Judeo-Bolshevik" menace to Western civilization strongly appealed to Dontsov.

Dontsov broadcasted his increasingly Nazi-inflected ruminations in print as well as private correspondence. His deepening anti-Semitism was on display in a 1933 article, "The Twilight of Marxism," which touched on the Nazi Party's program to remove the Jewish

population from Germany: “Outrageous? Perhaps. But do the Jews have a moral right to fly into a rage about this: when they deported, for example, not foreigners, but autochthonous Ukrainian people (to Solovki¹⁵ and Siberia) in order to facilitate foreign, Jewish colonization? Some [participated in this] directly (Radek,¹⁶ Trotsky), others indirectly, such as the German and American Jews, supporting the Jewish colonization of Ukraine morally and materially.”¹⁷ Like the Nazis, Dontsov laid the crimes of the Soviet state at the feet of Jews worldwide, whether Communist or capitalist, whom he accused of seeking the degradation or destruction of Europe’s “autochthonous” nations. In his preface to Rostyslav Iendyk’s biography of Hitler, Dontsov wrote about the double benefit of Nazism for the Ukrainian national movement: firstly, it was the archenemy of Marxism and the Soviet Union; secondly, it promised “to put in order the everyday Jewish problem [which is] irritating for us.”¹⁸

Dontsov’s correspondence with the newest member of the *Vistnykivtsi*, Oswald Burghardt, who began publishing poetry in *Vistnyk* under the pen name Iuryi Klen in 1933, is evidence of this early admiration for Hitler and Hitlerism. Klen was a *Volksdeutscher* (a descendant of German colonists in Eastern Europe) from the small village of Serbynivtsi in western central Ukraine, near the city of Vynnytsia. He studied poetry at Kyiv University, graduating in 1915. During World War I, the tsarist state deemed Klen sympathetic to the German enemy on account of his ethnicity, exiling him to the far northern Arkhangelsk region of

¹⁵ An infamous prison camp on the Solovets Islands in northern Russia.

¹⁶ Karl Radek (1885-1939), a leading Marxist, originally from L’viv, who was active in the Social Democratic parties of Germany and Poland before moving to the Soviet Union, becoming an important official in the Communist Party. He was killed in the Great Purge.

¹⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, “Sumerk marksyzmu (Tardie — Hitler — Stalins’ka opozytsiia — i my),” *Vistnyk*, no. 4 (1933), 305.

¹⁸ [Dmytro Dontsov], “Peredmovna,” Iendyk, *Hitler*, 3.

Russia. Freed by the Revolution in 1917, Klen returned to Ukraine, only to be arrested again, this time by the Bolsheviks, in 1921. While in prison, he witnessed the executions of non-Communists. The esteemed writer Volodymyr Korolenko (1853-1921) secured Klen's release, but the experience permanently altered the latter's worldview, contributing to his development into a convinced anti-Bolshevik, anti-Semite, and Russophobe. Eventually, Klen became one of the core five members of the Neoclassicists—a Soviet Ukrainian literary movement that emphasized high art, rejected the politicized “mass art” favored by the Bolshevik mainstream, and thus sided with Khvyl'ovyi in the Literary Discussion discussed in chapter 4.¹⁹ In 1931, Klen escaped the UkrSSR before the Soviet police could arrest him again, as the rest of the Neoclassicists were during the Stalinist terror. Immigrating to Germany, Klen later taught Slavic literature in Innsbruck, Austria, Münster, and Prague, and wrote epic and lyric poetry in Ukrainian and German that displayed a high degree of technical mastery and erudition.²⁰

¹⁹ The other four were Maksym Ryl'skyi (1895-1964), Pavlo Fylypovych (1891-1937), Maykhailo Drai-Khmara (1889–1939), and Mykola Zerov (1890-1937), the group's leader. Only Ryl'skyi survived the 1930s, though he too was arrested and forced to recant his apolitical poetical aesthetic. Klen's emigration likely saved his life.

²⁰ “What an unexpected appearance! Is this really a new and young author, or a developed, highly experienced master?” Ol'zhych wrote to Dontsov about Klen after the latter's poetry began appearing in *Vistnyk*: BN, DD, Mf. 83985. Letter of Oleh Ol'zhych to Dmytro Dontsov, February 2, 1934.



Figure 5.1: The Neoclassicists: sitting (l-r), Iuryi Klen, Pavlo Fylpovych, B. Yakubs'kyi, Maksym Ryls'kyi; standing V. Petrov, Mykola Zerov. *Source*: Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine

Dontsov invited Klen to publish in *Vistnyk* in the summer of 1933 on Malaniuk's recommendation, explaining that the journal's orientation—anticonservative, anti-Bolshevik, anticlerical, and antiliberal—was countercultural and politically nonconformist in relation to the Galician Ukrainian world. *Vistnyk* welcomed Klen's contributions, preferably under his real name, Burghardt, since this would entail a complete break with his Soviet past (even though it would probably mean endangering his relatives there).²¹ Burghardt insisted on being known only by his pseudonym to *Vistnyk*'s readers. He reported to Dontsov from Munich on his favorable impressions of Nazi meetings, encouraging him to publish an essay comparing Hitler's dictatorship with Stalin's.²² Klen would have done it himself, but expressed fear that doing so

²¹ Dmytro Dontsov to Iuryi Klen, July 28, 1933. In Halyna Svarnyk, "'Naimolodshyi z 'piatirnoho hrona'—Osval'd Burghardt (Iuryi Klen). Lysty do Dmytra Dontsova," *Ukrains'ki problem*, no. 1-2 (1999): 177-219.

²² *Ibid.* Klen to Dontsov, September 19, 1933.

would bring harm to his sister still living in Soviet Ukraine. Instead, he suggested that he write a series of essays on the German nationalist philosopher and historian Oswald Spengler—one of the key intellectuals behind the Conservative Revolutionary movement and National Socialism.²³

Contrary to the Dontsov's view in 1926—that the Jews were not “guilty of everything,” but only of serving Russian imperialism and Bolshevism²⁴—the language he and Klen used in their correspondence suggested that, they were now imagining Jews as the real masterminds behind the evil in the world, while the Russians, knowingly or unknowingly, were doing their bidding. Klen, for example, lamented the harm done to the Ukrainian press and literature by “Muscovite *shabbas goys*, who work for the Jew on Saturday.”²⁵ He blamed them for the attacks on his writer colleagues in Kyiv: “It is understood that this is a drive to wipe out the last cultured Ukrainians or force them to emigrate to Moscow beforehand. . . . If there is an action against them, then obviously I must step out from behind the visor in [their] defense. In the time of the worldwide shabbas goy. . . . There is a need to give a more thorough rebuff to every bastard who failed to put an end to this mockery.”²⁶ Klen complained about the dearth of information from Soviet Ukraine available to him for mounting such a defense, blaming the Jewish-controlled media for the cover-up of Communist atrocities. When Dontsov sent a copy of the pro-Mussolini brochure produced by his publishing house to Klen, the latter expressed hopes that a biography

²³ Despite his public reservations about and critiques of the Third Reich after 1933, Spengler contributed to the intellectual foundations of Nazism as a member of the Conservative Revolutionary movement (discussed in chapter 3). His pessimism about Europe and skepticism about Nazi racial ideas led to his ostracization in Hitler's Germany, but the Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels acknowledged his debt to Spengler. In addition to his most famous work, *The Decline of the West* (1918), Spengler advocated a non-Marxist, nationalist socialist authoritarianism in *Prussandom and Socialism* (1920).

²⁴ See the discussion of Petliura's assassination and the Schwartzbard trial in chapter 4.

²⁵ A “shabbas goy” is a gentile who does work forbidden for Jews on the Sabbath. It is a term of opprobrium in Klen and Dontsov's lexicon. Klen to Dontsov December 3, 1933. Svarnyk, “Naimolodshyi.”

²⁶ Klen to Dontsov, January 29, 1934. Svarnyk, “Naimolodshyi.”

of Hitler would soon follow. (It did: Klen received a few copies for Christmas that year).²⁷ On March 22, 1934, Dontsov assured Klen that the *Vistnykivtsi* backed “Mussolini and Hitler, the world of creative (and brutal) individuality, the world of work and dedication, [that is] hostile to those who made politics and literature into a business, to the scoundrels, careerists, and cowards who searched everywhere for compromises.”²⁸

Above all, Dontsov and Klen embraced Nazism because it was the archenemy of Bolshevism. Klen welcomed Nazi Germany’s threat to the Soviet Union:

With regard to politics, we have the impression here that Germany will again become the invincible force that it once was. Were it not for the Parisian shabbas goys with their ruckus [*gvalt*], then ultimately, perhaps, it would skin the carcass of the brontosaurus in the east [the Soviet Union –TE]. This would be the best outcome for humanity and for civilization. In any case, it is a great consolation that Germany refused to engage in bargaining with that gang. This was spoken of widely and with pride in Berlin, and it is no wonder that they became agitated in Moscow.²⁹

Horried by news of the suppression of the Neoclassicists and other Ukrainian writers and artists, Klen produced one of his best poems, *Prokliati roky* (Cursed Years, 1937), which drew upon his own experience of arrest during the Russian Civil War. In a letter to Dontsov on January 24, 1937, he described the poem as a requiem for the past and present victims of Bolshevik tyranny, more a chronicle than a call to action—to which the reader will in any case be moved emotionally. The combination of Russophobia, anti-Communism, anti-Semitism, and Aryanism that Nazism represented came naturally to Klen, who contributed a poem inspired by Vikings and *Rassentheorie*—his reply to Alexander Blok’s poem “*Skify* [Scythians], or, if you like, *Skity* [cattle]” (Klen made this dehumanizing pun central to his critique) “from the

²⁷ Ibid. Klen to Dontsov, March 5, 1934, and December 31, 1934. Iendyk, *Hitler*.

²⁸ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 95-96.

²⁹ Klen to Dontsov, April 12, 1935. Svarnyk, “Naimolodshi,” 194-95.

Ukrainian perspective.”³⁰ In October 1937, he reported to *Vistnyk* about his positive impressions of the “Degenerate Art” (*Entarte Kunst*) exhibition, which pilloried “Jewish” modernism in the fine arts, presented alongside of quotes from Goebbels and Hitler, and damning excerpts from the works of Jewish art theorists.³¹

Speaking of Goebbels, Klen once flattered Dontsov with the suggestion that he had what it took to become Ukraine’s version of the Nazi propaganda master. Dontsov replied on September 14, 1936: “What you say is true; I could be a Goebbels. But there is no Hitler. No, the problem is not that there is no Hitler, but that there are no Hitlerites, and it is unclear whether they will appear, because without them [there can be no] Hitler.”³² At roughly the same time, the Soviet authorities arrested Klen’s sister along with 240 other Volksdeutsche seeking to immigrate to Germany. The Kyiv GPU released her only after three and a half months in a cramped wooden cell, deprived of sleep and air. In 1938, Klen related his sister’s ordeal for *Vistnyk* readers, publishing the exposé of Chekist tortures under his birth name. He also described the large transports of impoverished Germans arriving in Berlin from the “Soviet paradise,” where half of them had reportedly been in work camps, all eager to avenge their mistreatment and “take [such] medieval methods to the Bolsheviks!”³³ Dontsov and Klen hailed Nazi Germany as Europe’s champion against Bolshevik despotism, racial degeneration, and cultural decay.

Dontsov came to view anti-Semitism as a Ukrainian tradition in the 1930s. As we saw in chapter 4, Dontsov criticized Petliura, after his assassination, for being too soft on the Jews in

³⁰ Ibid., 203. March 2, 1937.

³¹ Ibid., 206.

³² Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 96.

³³ Ibid., 207-8. December 28, 1937.

Ukraine. In 1937, Dontsov published an article, “Nerozryta mohyla” (The Unopened Grave), extending this critique. He faulted the Ukrainian leadership of the years 1917-1921 for failing to take advantage of the Judeophobic sentiments of the Ukrainian masses: “Popular wisdom intuitively anticipated that, to this people [the Jews —TE] *among us*, equality of rights means the whip and the revolver in the hands of Trotskys and Kuns³⁴ *for us*. That they understand freedom for themselves in Ukraine as the forced expulsion of our peasants from it, as the creation on our black-earth of another Palestine—with a disenfranchised majority and a usurping minority.”³⁵ Noting the peasantry’s supposedly innate and reasonable fear and distrust of Jews, Dontsov declared that the Ukrainian “revolution should have captured the complex of feelings of superiority slumbering inside the national soul in a bright program in order to make a movement similar to Hitlerism. But the leadership of our revolution did not create this program.”³⁶ As Zaitsev observes, by the spring of 1939 Dontsov was repeating all of Hitler’s anti-Semitic slanders:³⁷ “international Jewry,” evil and monolithic, allegedly brought ruin and decay to the once “heroic” art, literature, politics, states, and economies of European nations, undermining the pride and patriotism of entire nations with a poisonous “cosmopolitan spirit.” Fortunately, Dontsov affirmed, Hitler and the Third Reich were destined to exterminate this “bacilli” along with their leftist accomplices.³⁸

³⁴ Béla Kun (1886-1938 or 1939), the Hungarian Communist revolutionary, immigrated to the Soviet Union after the fall of his Soviet Republic in Hungary. He took an active role in the Red Terror in Crimea in 1920-21. Kun was accused of Trostkyism and executed in the Great Terror.

³⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, “Nerozryta Mohyla,” *Vistnyk*, no. 4 (1937): 283-302.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 196.

³⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, “Zahadka III-oi imperii,” *Vistnyk*, no. 5 (1939): 328-35.

Such biological metaphors were no longer just metaphors for Dontsov, who increasingly turned to racial explanations of reality, decrying the Jews as a “parasitic” race that endangered the health and existence of the “national organisms” unfortunate enough to serve as its hosts. He attributed Bolshevism and the nature of the Russian state and society to a combination of Jewish-Masonic plots and the miscegenation of ostensibly inferior “Asiatic races” that gave rise to Muscovy.³⁹ Dontsov considered the fascist movements inspired by Hitler and Mussolini a wholesome, cleansing force, which was bringing about the restoration of the spiritual and racial health of Europe’s nations,⁴⁰ including Ukraine, in a direct and opposite reaction to Bolshevism: “For us the most important thing in Hitlerism is the will to a decisive struggle with Marxism. It is important that a regime has finally appeared in Europe that has decided to deal *with the Bolsheviks in a Bolshevik manner* [*po bol’shevyts’ky*]. This is a most reassuring phenomenon, which will not go unanswered anywhere in the world that the Soviet gangrene has penetrated.”⁴¹

While denying that there was “any such thing as a law of international solidarity of fascist movements,” Dontsov considered Ukrainian nationalism to be a manifestation of the same “all-European movement,” and, so long as Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy were enemies of the Soviet Union and of Russia, then they were friends of Ukrainian nationalism.⁴² He regarded fascism as an elemental pan-European force that had declared war against Ukraine’s enemies (“socialists, radicals, Bolsheviks, Masons, Jews, and shabbas goys”),⁴³ and thus stood

³⁹ He gave this idea fullest treatment at the beginning of World War II in *Dukh nashoi davnyiny* (The Spirit of Our Antiquity) (1941), discussed below.

⁴⁰ Dontsov, “Zahadka III-oi imperii,” 299-308.

⁴¹ Dontsov, “Sumerk marksyzmu,” 304.

⁴² Dmytro Dontsov, “1937,” *Vistnyk* no. 1 (1937): 54-66, 63.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 60.

inadvertently to bring about Ukraine's "liberation" as a part of Hitler's new order in Eastern Europe.⁴⁴ Instead of the internationalist, proletarian revolution, Dontsov claimed that Mussolini's and Hitler's "rightwing revolutionism" had "affirmed the great value of the village [i.e. the peasantry —TE] and of the third estate in general, which wanted to make socialism into manure for itself." "Instead of the anarchistic ideals of 'humanity' and 'the sovereign individual,' Hitler presented the ideal of the organic community, whose name is the nation."⁴⁵

Dontsov also admired the internal hierarchical and authoritarian organization of Nazism and Fascism, the principle of "Order [*orden*] with its symbol of faith, tactics, and virtues," instead of "compromising partisanship" (*zmyrshaviloho partiinytsva*).⁴⁶ In *Partiia chy orden* (1933), Dontsov asserted that the Ukrainian nationalist leadership should organize itself on the same antidemocratic, disciplinarian principles, often turning to Hitler's *Mien Kampf* for wisdom and quotations.⁴⁷ The spiritual and organizational essence of Mussolini and Fascist Italy were just as exemplary for the *Vistnyk* editor: "In the name of this discipline the Italian 'avant-gardists' take an oath 'to go without a word behind the commandments of *il Duce* [Mussolini] and serve the fascist revolution with all of their powers and, where needed, their blood as

⁴⁴ Stryjek, *Ukraińska idea narodowa*, 143-46. For this reason, as I show below, Dontsov welcomed the Reich's eastward expansion in a series of articles published between Nazi Germany's March 1938 *Anschluss* [joining] with Austria, the conquest of the Sudetenland and Czechoslovakia, and the German invasion of Poland in September 1939.

⁴⁵ [Dmytro Dontsov], "Peredmova," Iendyk, *Hitler*, 3-4. "One asks: What can fascism do for us? In order to dissolve the idiocy of Drahomanovism, 'love to all Slavs,' the idiocy of socialism, the ideology of brotherhood with all languages in the Second and Third Internationals, in order to wipe out Masonism, in order to corrode the servile Judeoophilia of the good-hearted ones who condemn Hitler when does not allow some Lievenbergs to practice law or medicine, yet are shamefully silent when Trotskys physically destroy millions of our peasantry." Dmytro Dontsov, "Vony i my," *Vistnyk*, no. 5 (1936), 382.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, "Partiia chy orden," *Vistnyk*, no. 2 (1933): 116-34, 121.

well.”⁴⁸ If only Ukrainians had a leader behind whom they were willing to rally and grow zealous in the same way, they might stand a chance of surviving the return of war between “Russia” and “Europe,” emerging at the end of it with their own state.

The sole positive and affirmative (as opposed to negative and critical) aspect of Dontsov’s post-1933 ideology, openly modeled after his understanding of fascism, was the discovery or cultivation of new elite capable of leading: “Why fascism? In order to defend society before the trickery of alien ideas from abroad and within, in order to conduct a selection, because only a chosen minority can lead society.”⁴⁹ Dontsov hoped to bring all of this about through *Vistnyk*, despite his own lack of the requisite organizational and leadership abilities. Nevertheless, he managed to popularize Fascism and Nazism among Western and émigré Ukrainians,⁵⁰ as evidenced by the appearance of groups such as the “Path of the Future” Society of Fascist Studies (*Tovarystvo Fashyzmoznavstva “Shliakh maibutn’oho”*), founded in 1935 in Paris by Prince Jan Tokarzhevs’kyi-Karashevych (1885-1954).⁵¹ Initiates into the group had to swear an oath, stating that “Fascism, as a worldview, fully corresponds with certain historical traditions, as well as modern Ukrainian intellectual currents, whose initiator and propagator is Dr. Dmytro Dontsov.”⁵² Members had to accept the “principles of the Roman doctrine, which appeared in the corporative system of Mussolini, the universal coordinating force”—a reference

⁴⁸ Ibid., 122.

⁴⁹ Dontsov, “Vony i my,” 382.

⁵⁰ Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi integral’nyi natsionalizm*, 232-33.

⁵¹ Kentyi, *Zbroinyi chyn*, vol. 1, 95. Tokarzhevs’kyi-Karashevych, like Dontsov, had served as a diplomat of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR), and there were rumors that the two had joined the Ukrainophile Archduke Wilhelm von Habsburg (*nom de guerre*, Vasyl’ Vyshyvanyi) to form a nationalist “Imperial Order of St. George.” The rumor had been started by the OUN leader in Rome, Ievhen Onats’kyi, in an article in the paper *Ukrains’ke slovo* (The Ukrainian Word). Dontsov sharply denied the existence of such an order. I know of no evidence that it ever existed. Dmytro Dontsov, “Z presovoho fil’mu,” *Vistnyk*, no. 11 (1937): 837-40.

⁵² Quoted in Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi integral’nyi natsionalizm*, 233.

to the social and economic policies of Fascist Italy that sought to harmonize industry and labor, subordinating both to the state—and to “study in detail the doctrine and real achievements of Fascism, of this unbreakable antithesis of Bolshevism and the political front aligned with it.”⁵³ Self-declared Ukrainian “fascists” considered Dontsov the creator of a native Ukrainian fascism, which had developed independently from its Italian and German counterparts, in accordance with its own national traditions and character, but shared the same essence and spirit as the other fascist movement and was united with them in a pan-European crusade against Russian Communism and Soviet power.

Romance and Rivalry at the Salon Dontsova

Dontsov successfully proselytized Mussolini and Hitler’s “ersatz-religions”⁵⁴ through his publications, but *Vistnyk* and its quarterly would not have been possible without the funds provided by the family of Dontsov’s wife, the poet and activist Mariia Dontsova. “Mariika,” as she was more affectionately known, proved indispensable to the day-to-day operations of *LNŮ* and *Vistnyk*. Although her mother was the official owner and publisher of *Vistnyk*, providing capital to get the venture started, the journal had to be a self-sustaining enterprise. Mariia recounted how the journal and the publishing house struggled to stay in business in the early years: they could not afford subscriptions, so she and Dontsov had to read the foreign press in cafes that put out copies of papers and magazines for customers; on several occasions she had to pledge her personal belongings to afford the print run and keep the journal alive.⁵⁵ Eventually,

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Dontsov, “1937,” 63.

⁵⁵ Sosnovs’kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 180.

Vistnyk started to make a small profit and the publishing house began funding itself. Dontsova specialized in translations from the German press, corrections, dealing with letters from the public and submissions, and taking over as editor when Dontsov was away for business or pleasure. Just as important was her contribution to the morale at *Vistnyk*: she and her mother, sister, and niece (Ol'ha, Lesia, and Nana Bachyns'ka) “created a family atmosphere for the journal’s staff and contributors that somewhat softened Dontsov’s authoritarian work methods as editor.”⁵⁶

An influential writer and publicist in her own right, Mariia Bachyns'ka-Dontsova headed *Soiuz Ukrainok* (the Union of Ukrainian Women)—the largest women’s organization in Galicia, boasting as many as 60,000 members at its height in the 1930s—and led its expansion into neighboring Volhynia in 1926-28. Despite this achievement, she was voted out of the position after just one year of service;⁵⁷ apparently, her marriage to a radical rightwing ideologue was the decisive factor in the feminist union’s election. *Soiuz Ukrainok* faced the same choice as the rest of Western Ukrainian politics: the Dontsovian revolutionary ultranationalism of the OUN, or the traditional democratic parliamentarianism of the UNDO? *Soiuz Ukrainok* chose the latter course, rejecting Dontsova as a woman tainted by association with the former. Yet Dontsova’s own views on the women’s movement and its potentially utopian implications for humanity were entirely at odds with her husband’s grim, social-Darwinian nationalism. “[We] must realize,” Dontsova wrote in 1928, “that we do not have to adapt to the old social order, but must become the generator of new life, bringing into it new values where the slogan will not be *homo homini*

⁵⁶ Shlikhta, “Shtrykhy do portreta Marii Dontsovoi,” 684.

⁵⁷ Bachyns'ka-Dontsova was replaced by Milena Rudnyts'ka (1892-1976), who led the *Soiuz Ukrainok* until its demise in World War II. Martha Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Feminists Despite Themselves: Women in Ukrainian Community Life, 1884-1939* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988), 164. Mariia Banchyns'ka-Dontsova, “Na bizhuchi temy zhinochoho rukhu,” *Almanakh Zhonochoi doli* (Kolomiya, 1928): 87-90.

lupus est,⁵⁸ but ‘humans come to the support of each human.’”⁵⁹ Instead of Dontsov’s doctrine of hypermasculine national egoism and conditioning through ruthless competition, Dontsova preached feminine, nurturing altruism and peaceful, international cooperation.

With regard to moral and political philosophy, the couple could scarcely have been more at odds. One can adduce from historian Martha Bohachevsky-Chomiak’s account that Dontsova explained this stark difference of opinion in terms of gender essentialism: “Dontsova, avoiding the taboo word ‘feminism,’ argued that by their very make-up and innate interests women were social creatures to a far greater degree than men. They ‘were innately driven to civic work for the common good.’” Bohachevsky-Chomiak writes that Dontsova “saw women of the world, united in their goal of equal rights, searching for means to break out of the stifling ‘mold of social drones that had been fashioned for them by men, and recreating themselves as citizens.’”⁶⁰ This was a mainstream, classical feminist position that emphasized differences between men and women, highlighting the relative virtues (e.g. altruism, compassion, kindness, temperance) of the latter as just cause for expanded civic rights and responsibilities. Dontsova and Dontsov both adhered to some form of voluntarism, calling for a transvaluation of values and a transcendence of conventional politics, but her egalitarianism and humanitarianism clashed with his authoritarian elitism, contempt for “the weak,” and hatred for the enemy.⁶¹ “Dontsova,” Bohachevsky-Chomiak argues, “considered conventional politics corrupt, dirty, and demeaning. She had a loftier vision: philanthropic work, which she felt to be traditionally women’s work,

⁵⁸ “Man is wolf to man.”

⁵⁹ Banchyns’ka-Dontsova, “Na bizhuchi temy,” 90. Quoted in Bohachevsky-Chomiak, *Feminists Despite Themselves*, 188.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ As we shall see, the couple’s views also diverged on the question of gender roles, which Dontsov addressed in relation to the national struggle after World War II in his eulogy to Olena Teliha.

would be elevated into a higher form of civic work and would replace politics.”⁶² Dontsova had access to the considerable Bachyns’kyi family fortune with which to fund her philanthropic activities. Ironically, were it not for this same wealth, Dontsov’s efforts to make Ukrainians *misanthropic* may well have foundered.

The Dontsovs’ home in L’viv at 11 Kurkovyi street (today named Lysenko), apartment 9, served as a literary salon for the Ukrainian nationalist writers of the day.⁶³ Charismatic and gregarious, Mariika made certain that they were well taken care of during their stays there. The young poet and physician Iuryi Lypa, for instance, found a haven at what he warmly referred to as the “*palais de ‘Donzow’*.”⁶⁴ A follower of Dontsov’s ideas, Lypa, who had been publishing nationalist poetry in *LVN* since 1922, became infatuated with Dontsova. She offered him loving support in the form of sweets and baked goods from L’viv while he studied medicine, French, and English in Poznan. The two met in person in 1924 and soon grew close. “Your greeting could have made me rejoice greatly,” Lypa wrote to her: “Creative cookies, fragrant paska-breads—this is too much. But the package contained only a slip of paper with ‘Dontsova’ written on it—this is too little. In any case I will never forget this. At least as long as I continue eating it. . . . P.S. Madame Mariika, I am grateful to you for your attention, for your support, for the expedited present, but—could you not do this in some other way?” He updated her regularly—about literature, tennis, dancing with “healthy girls,” the stresses of medical school, and so on.⁶⁵

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Halyna Svarnyk, “Iuryi Lypa i Dmytro Dontsov kris’ pryzmu osobystykh i tvorchykh vasiemyn,” in *Iuryi Lypa: Holos doby i pryklad chynu. Zbirnyk naukovykh prats’, prysviachenyi 100-littiu vid dnia narodzhennia ukrains’koho pys’mennyka, literaturoznavtsia, politoloha, likaria, vydatnoho hromads’koho diiacha Iurii Lypy* (L’viv, 2001): 213-28.

⁶⁴ TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 18, ark. 76-77. Iuryi Lypa to Mariia Dontsova, January 30, 1925.

⁶⁵ Ibid., ark. 56.

Soon, their correspondence turned flirtatious. “I think you could be close to me, but I have left many and will leave many more,” he once wrote to her.⁶⁶ She responded with an invitation to a vacation with her in the Carpathian Mountains, “without any consequences!” to which Lypa eagerly agreed.⁶⁷ As literary scholar Myroslav Shkandrij concludes: “In Mariia Dontsova [Lypa] appears to have found a sophisticated and graceful modern woman who acted both as friend and courtly lover.”⁶⁸

Though married, Dontsova was free-spirited and coquettish when it suited her; though childless, she cut a matriarchal figure among the *Vistnykivtsi*. Independent, empowered, and sexually liberated, she was precisely the kind of woman whom Lypa celebrated in his late 1930s writings.⁶⁹ Wedding nationalism and feminism, Lypa praised Ukrainian marriage traditions as a “union of equals.” He extolled heroic women from Ukraine’s past, allowing the female characters of his fiction to be Amazons, seductresses, wives, mothers, patriots, and muses all at once. Lypa honored Ukrainian women as creators, builders, and protectors—forthright, close to nature, and driven by elemental passions. He promoted machismo as well, depicting sex and sexuality with minimal sentimentality, especially in times of war, as a powerful expression of biological vitality, but without women’s strength, endurance, and wisdom, victory would forever elude Ukrainian men. Like Dontsova, Lypa nevertheless insisted on the distinctiveness and complementarity of men and women, equal yet opposite in the joint task of building the national

⁶⁶ TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 17, ark., 63. May 1924.

⁶⁷ Ibid., ark. 66.

⁶⁸ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 233.

⁶⁹ Iuryi Lypa, “Ukrains’ka zhinka,” *Zhinka*, no. 7-8 (April 1938): 2-4. Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 220-23.

state, culture, and economy.⁷⁰ He expressed these views in the official journal of *Soiuz Ukrainok—Zhinka* (Woman).

Lypa and Mariia's relationship offers a window onto a community of writers whose private lives were neither prudish nor conventional. Evidently, the affair in no way distressed Dontsov, who was known for his own extramarital infatuations, and soon became romantically involved with another one of the young *Vistnyk* poets: Olena Teliha. Born Olena Shovheniv on July 21, 1907—goddaughter of the transgressive Silver Age poet Zinaida Gippius—Teliha spent her childhood among the Russian intelligentsia of early twentieth-century St. Petersburg. After 1917 she and her family left, following her father, Ivan Shovheniv, a high-ranking official in the former Russian Empire, to Kyiv where he served in the UNR. Fleeing the Bolshevik invasion shortly thereafter, they made their way to Poděbrady, Czechoslovakia, one of the main hubs of the interwar Ukrainian emigration. While her older brother Serhii continued writing Russian verse, Teliha had her conversion experience from “imperial chauvinist” to Ukrainian patriot.⁷¹ After this, she spoke and wrote Ukrainian exclusively. In 1922 she became friends with the literary critic Leonid Mosendz, who facilitated her Ukrainization and development as a

⁷⁰ Lypa drew his examples of this from Ukrainian history: “Even the Amazons, this proto-Ukrainia tribe that lived alone and devoted itself to hunting, did not, according to Hellenic descriptions, retreat permanently from the world and did not remain military professionals. Even they eventually found fine, remarkable boys, with whom they fell in love and whom they married.” “It is not possible to describe the Zaporozhians as exclusively a military organization (the masculine element), because they were also simultaneously one of the best organized economic-trade enterprises (the female element).” Ibid. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 222-23.

⁷¹ Ulas Samchuk recalls her description of the event. First, she was “thunderstruck to learn that my own father, the well-known and distinguished Russian professor Ivan Shovgenov, who for some reason had been renamed Shovheniv, was no less than the president of a school called the Academy of Economics [where Olena was student —TE], where teaching took place ‘in the language’ [i.e. Ukrainian] and where portraits of Petliura hung on the walls.” Increasingly aware of her heritage, she found herself sitting in the company of Russian monarchists who were mocking Ukrainian. “My indignation flared. I don’t know why. Unable to restrain myself, I rose, struck the table with my fist and cried indignantly: ‘You boors! That ‘dog’s language’ is my language! The language of my father and mother! From now on I want nothing to do with you!’” Ulas Samchuk, “Z Olenoiu Telihoiu na shliakhu do Kyieva,” *Suchasnik*, no. 1 (1948), in Olena Teliha, *Vybrani tvory* (Kyiv: Smoloskyp, 2008), 304.

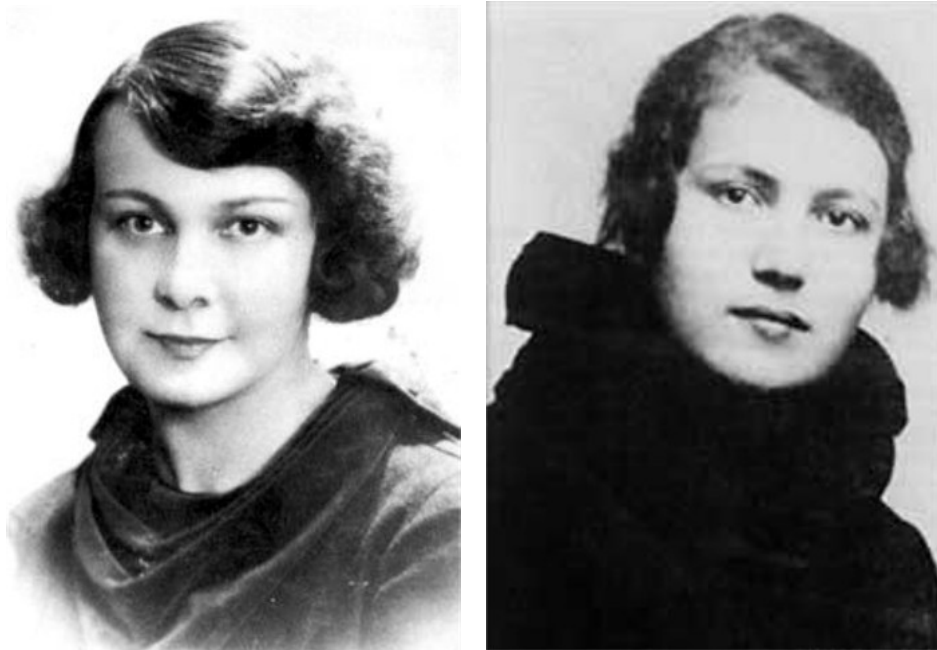
nationalist poet and intellectual.⁷² She married Mykhailo Teliha (1900-1942), a Ukrainian civic activist and folk musician (he played the *bandura*—a traditional stringed instrument), and moved with him to Warsaw in 1929. Around the same time, Olena began sending her poetry to Dontsov for publication in *LNV*. Initially, the editor responded with constructive (albeit condescending) criticisms, offering reading suggestions and words of encouragement, and imploring her to hone her craft and submit more poems to the journal.

Like the other *Vistnykivtsi*, Teliha drew her themes from the legends of yore and sought to convey fiery emotions rather than picturesque realism, let alone intellectual acuity. Whereas other émigré writers tried to impress readers with their knowledge of foreign words and obscure historical references, she wanted to write poetry with “spirit.”⁷³ Mosendz, who held women’s poetry to an extremely high standard, lavished her verses with praise in his letters to Dontsov. He asserted that her writing was not “womanish” (*po-babs’kyi*), but “androgynous in the Platonic sense.”⁷⁴ The editor agreed with Mosendz’s sexist, yet positive, assessment of Teliha’s work, publishing her first poems in *LNV* in the years 1928-1932. Hereafter, Teliha’s fame grew quickly on the Ukrainian literary scene in Warsaw. She cultivated an intense, magnetic persona, dressed impeccably, and earned many admirers.

⁷² Natalia Livyts’ka-Kholodna, “Spomyn pro korotkyi zhyttia Oleny Telihy,” *Suchasnist’*, no. 10 (October 1990): 81-95.

⁷³ Olena Teliha to Dmytro Dontsov, October 17, 1928. Olena Teliha. *Lysty. Spohady* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, 2004), 41-43.

⁷⁴ Quoted in Halyna Svarnyk, “Olena Teliha i Leonid Mosendz,” Materials for Research Conference on the 100th Anniversary of the birth of Olena Teliha, Kyiv, March 22-23, 2006): 112-16.



Figures 5.2-3. Olena Teliha and Natalia Livyts'ka-Kholodna. *Source*: Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine

The well-known poet and socialite Natalia Livyts'ka-Kholodna (1902-2005)—daughter of the former head of the UNR's government-in-exile, Andrii Livyts'kyi (1879-1954), and a regular contributor to *LNV*—befriended “Lena” Teliha, took an interest in her career, and arranged for her to meet Dontsov in person. Livyts'ka-Kholodna related the encounter in her postwar memoir dedicated to Teliha. On the morning of January 20, 1933, Dontsov arrived in Warsaw, whereupon Livyts'ka-Kholodna introduced him to Teliha and the three went to see a film. Afterward, Natalia went home, leaving Dmytro and Lena to dine alone together at a restaurant. The next day, Dontsov gave his lecture on “Sancho Panza and Don Quixote”—the ideologue's signature metaphors for the cowardly, plebeian vices of the materialist and the fanatical, knightly virtues of the idealist, respectively. Livyts'ka-Kholodna invited Dontsov to dinner at her father's home in Warsaw, as she always did when he visited the city to give his “always very interesting” talks.⁷⁵ (As one observer recalled after attending such a lecture for the

⁷⁵ Livyts'ka-Kholodna, “Spomyn pro korotkyi,” 91-92.

first time in 1930s Warsaw: “Then I understood the electrifying influence Dontsov had on people. . . . He finished, bowed slightly, and left. No questions, no discussions. Everyone sat in silence.”)⁷⁶ At dinner, Livyts’ka-Kholodna sat Dontsov and Teliha next to one another, and herself opposite of them. The attraction between the latter pair was already apparent:

From this visit to Warsaw began his infatuation [*zakhoplennia*] with Lena. This captivation was for us entirely understood. For one, Lena was truly charming and this not from some kind of physical beauty, but from a kind of special, individual, spiritual charm. Secondly, because Dontsov was known for his frequent infatuations. But, perhaps, because he was somewhere close to sixty, and Lena was twenty-six, this captivation of his lasted the longest, and possibly, was his last.⁷⁷



Figure 5.4. A 1936 caricature of Dontsov depicting him as Don Quixote—a character he often invoked as a symbol of the chivalrous idealism and resolve that he implored Ukrainians to develop. I am not sure whom the vaguely Hitlerian “Sancho Panza” figure in the background is supposed to represent. *Source*: Sofiia, “Humor po-l’vivs’ky.”

⁷⁶ Iaroslav Dashkevych, “Dmytro Dontsov, Ievhen Malaniuk. Storinky iz spohadiv,” *Ukraina. Nauka i kul’tura* 30 (1999), 286.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Livyts'ka-Kholodna suggested that Teliha's attraction to Dontsov might have been attributable to the estrangement from her father that followed his marriage to a woman with whom she did not get along, but conceded that Teliha would have denied this. Rumors quickly spread that, more than platonic sympathies, erotic feelings might also connect the editor and the young poet.⁷⁸ For many, Teliha's publications in 1933 confirmed these suspicions. Her poem "Kozachok" (Cossacks), for example, was deemed "too erotic" by the Greek-Catholic monthly *Dzvony* (Bells),⁷⁹ referring to lines such as: "But the soul, drunk with dissolution / Drinks up the golden poison of grief / O, take me, take me, my beloved / I so want to be near you!" Someone behind the cryptonym P.B. accused her and the journal *Vistnyk* of promoting "free love and marital infidelity." The critic asserted that Dontsov taught his followers to disregard conventional morality in the pursuit of their "sexual passion." Another one of Teliha's poems, "Podorozhnyi" (The Traveler), which she dedicated to Dontsov, fueled the gossip. She shared the poem with him during another one of his visits to Warsaw in May 1933. He quite liked it and offered to publish it in *Vistnyk*, but Teliha had already promised Livyts'ka-Kholodna that she would publish it in a competing journal: *My* (We, 1933-39). Before treating Teliha's love poems to Dontsov and his public and private responses to them, an account of *My*'s origins and the conflicts that it manifested in the *Vistnyk* circle is needed.

Fissures between the Dontsovs and the members of the *Vistnykivtsi* began to appear in 1929, when the nationalist writer Andrii Kryzhanivskyi (1907-1950, pseudonym: Sviatoslav Dolenga) created the literary-artistic union *Tank* (Tank) in Warsaw, setting himself up as Dontsov's competitor on the nationalist cultural scene and attempting to draw *Vistnyk* writers

⁷⁸ Bohdan Boichuk, "Rozмова z Nataleiю Livyts'koiu-Kholodnoiю," *Suchasnist*, no. 3 (1985): 8-17.

⁷⁹ Olena Teliha, "Kozachok," *Vistnyk*, no. 5 (1933): 323. P.B., "'Vistnyk' i ideolohiia D. Dontsova" *Dzvony*, no. 6-7 (1933): 321.

over to his side.⁸⁰ *Tank* was to serve as the core of a new periodical that would advance the cause of Ukrainian independence and cultivate a modernist nationalist idiom of its own, freed from Dontsov's oversight. Like a growing number of the other contributors to *LNV*, Kryzhaniv's'kyi resented Dontsov's imperious editorship and restrictive ideological and aesthetic prerogatives. At roughly the same time as *Tank*'s creation, Kryzhaniv's'kyi submitted a short story to *LNV* that Dontsov rejected, condescendingly explaining to the author that "heroes have to want something and aim for something, and not accept the world's blows passively. When heroes do not exert themselves, there is no action. When there is no action, there is no novel, no story."⁸¹

Iuryi Kosach (1908-1990)—Lesia Ukrainka's nephew, Olena Pchilka's grandson, and a talented writer in his own right—also broke with Dontsov in 1929 after years of contributing to *LNV*. Kosach quickly became disillusioned with *Tank* for its "Petliurist slant," reportedly despite Lypa's assurances of its "independence from all political conceptions," but he informed Dontsov of the rebellion forming against him there:⁸² "When I asked Malaniuk and Lypa, why not take the most natural path, which is to say, put *Tank* to the good use of *LNV*? Lypa said that this is not advantageous because the materials would go through the prism of the *pan* doctor [i.e. Dontsov —T.E.]."⁸³ *Tank* recruited Lypa and Malaniuk, both of whom expressed dissatisfaction with Dontsov's stifling authority. The two poets produced an artistic manifesto for *Tank*, which

⁸⁰ Sherekh, "Skarby, iakymy volodiemo," 147-64.

⁸¹ Dmytro Dontsov to Andrii Kryzhaniv's'kyi, January 30, 1930. BN, DD, Mf. 82672, 108.

⁸² Instead, Kosach joined another new competing publication, *Novi shliakhy* (New Paths, 1928-32), founded and edited by yet another defector from *LNV*, Antin Krushel'nyts'kyi (1878-1937), who, being a prominent Sovietophile, decided to emigrate with his family to Soviet Ukraine in May 1934. Just months after their arrival his two sons were arrested and shot. Arrested along with what remained of his family and sent to the Gulag, Krushel'nyts'kyi died in a prison camp on the Solovets Islands in 1941.

⁸³ Iuryi Kosach to Dmytro Dontsov, March 31, 1929. BN, DD, Mf. 83983, 287-88.

Dontsov categorically refused to publish.⁸⁴ In private conversation, Malaniuk called Dontsov an “exploiter of literature,” but backed off the criticism to avoid provoking the editor’s wrath.⁸⁵

Ol’zhych got into conflicts with Dontsov over the proofing and altering without approval of his poems in *Vistnyk*.⁸⁶ Angered at the latter’s suggestion that he stick to writing poetry, Lypa dismissed the editor’s critiques: “Unfortunately, I have to state that I look to you for advice concerning my literary work as little as you, for example, look to me concerning your political work.”⁸⁷ Following this episode, Lypa did not resume corresponding with the Dontsovs until three years later, at the founding of *Vistnyk*.⁸⁸

Dontsov and Dontsova took personal offense at Lypa’s choice to join the Warsaw circle, regarding it as a betrayal and a sign of ingratitude, but Lypa insisted that *Tank* was in no way intended to harm *LNV*; on the contrary, *Tank* was created to continue *LNV*’s work in the event of its demise, which appeared likely in 1929.⁸⁹ Lypa shared his discontent with Dontsov in his

⁸⁴ Omelchuk, *Literaturni idealy*, 7.

⁸⁵ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 138.

⁸⁶ “The last *LNV* brought me a lot of grief,” Olzhych wrote to Dontsov: “It is the right of every editor to print that which he considers to be for the good, but it is an inalienable right of the author to publish only that which he himself wrote. The author of a poem that took six months to hatch selects all the associations that every word invokes, observes every pause, but the editor after a moment’s reflection takes a pencil and... corrects [it]. In poetry the author alone is responsible for everything. For some reason you are frightened by the word revolution (even though it too may be national...) and changed it to read ‘storm’ [*buria*]; in the “Prayer” [*Molytvi*] you threw out the period after ‘orchid,’ and added a comma with a dash, thereby changing the meaning, which [went] nowhere further. In “Severance” [*Rozryva*] you printed ‘*neznane*’ instead of ‘*ne stane*’. . . . If you do like something then return it to my attention or simply throw the poem in the basket, but in any case do not print it in a changed form. Otherwise my collaboration with *LNV* will become impossible.” In the postscript he requests that Dontsov acknowledge ‘*tinno - pinno*’ and ‘*ne stane - neznane*’ as printing errors in the next edition of *LNV*. Dontsov made the corrections. BN, DD, Mf. 83985, Oleh Ol’zhych to Dmytro Dontsov, April 2, 1932. Ol’zhych left *Vistnyk* over similar, nonideological disagreements before the journal’s demise in 1939, taking Mukhin with him. Svamyk, “Chy isnuvala,” 93.

⁸⁷ Iuryi Lypa to Dmytro Dontsov, March 20, 1929. BN, DD, Mf. 83984, 118. Shkandrij’s translation.

⁸⁸ They began working together again only to fall into a hostile polemic in the mid to late 1930s, on which more below.

⁸⁹ Iuryi Lypa to Nataliia Livyts’ka-Kholodna, 23 March 1929, in *Dzherela do novitnoi istorii Ukrainy* (New York: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1992), 335.

letters to fellow *Tank* poet, Livyts'ka-Kholodna, who was one of the leading members and organizers of the group, not to mention Malaniuk's lover. She invited her friend Teliha and the *belle-lettrist* Leonid Mosendz to join *Tank*. This led to only minor disagreements with Dontsov until 1933, when the Warsaw group started its own publishing house *Variah* (Viking) and a flagship literary journal, the quarterly *My. My* tended to support the UNR's government-in-exile, and advocated freedom of expression and a modernist, "European" aesthetic. It challenged the integral nationalism of *Visntyk*, and directly competed with it for authors and subscribers. At roughly the same time, the bimonthly *Nazustrich* (Rendezvous, 1934-1939), a relatively apolitical competitor of *Vistnyk* offering literary and art criticism, and a monthly journal featuring young nationalist writers named *Dazhboh* (1932-1935) after the benevolent sun deity of Slavic paganism, also appeared in L'viv and published contributions from members of the *Vistnykivtsi*.⁹⁰ Acknowledging the heightened competition, Ol'zhych told Dontsov to take heart: "When the monsters of the intellect and of national morality so activate and unify for the storming of the journal and of your person, then this cannot cause anything but satisfaction."⁹¹

Once Kryzhaniv's'kyi became *My*'s editor in 1934, the journal took a more aggressive stance, launching public attacks against Dontsov and his followers, and materially competing with *Vistnyk* for subscribers and the right to shape interwar Ukrainian émigré opinion. He accused Dontsov of failing to understand that literature, in order to have real value, must preserve its autonomy from politics. The ideologue of *Vistnyk* exploited literature for the vulgar purposes of his ultranationalist rhetoric, refusing to argue in good faith with his opponents,

⁹⁰ The editors of *Dazhboh* were the literary scholar Ievhen Pelens'kyi (1908-1956), the poet Bohdan Ihor Antonych (1909-1937), and the poet Bohdan Kravtsiv (1904-1975), who also contributed to *Vistnyk*.

⁹¹ BN, DD, Mf. 83985. Oleh Ol'zhych to Dmytro Dontsov, March 31, 1938.

misrepresenting their opinions, and engaging in personal attacks. Writing to Kosach on April 10, 1934, Kryzhanivs'kyi compared Dontsov to the Russian Communists and bemoaned his influence on the Ukrainian emigration: "Dontsov's methods and his style are beginning to gangrene on our body. One is really inclined to think that he has been 'spiritually numbed' by the tactics and methods of Bolshevism. His frequent attacks on them and continual interest in their (Soviet) life have been fatal. Such things happen. That's why doctors in mental asylums go insane themselves." Kryzhanivs'kyi considered Dontsov a symptom of the times: "Really honorable elements are dying off completely in our life. The stage is being taken over by modernized Ivan Karamazovs⁹² dressed up as Hitler."⁹³ He returned to this subject in another letter to Kosach, dated January 28, 1935: "You write that you are infuriated by Dontsov, Don't be. Dontsov's actions are becoming baser and baser. He walks through the Galician world like a simple, snub-nosed Mephistopheles. The poor man has forgotten the ancient truth that even 'great people' must recognize their time to die. And here is galvanizing himself in a Hitlerian manner entirely foreign to him."⁹⁴

Kryzhanivs'kyi published a sharp critique of *Vistnyk* and its authors, including Teliha, in the second edition of *My* in 1934, and four years later he produced an anti-Dontsov brochure that deployed anti-Semitic stereotypes against the anti-Semitic ideologue and his circle, comparing the loyal *Vistnykivsti* to a "nationalist ghetto" of isolated, sectarian, and closed-minded "*Wunderkinder*" (i.e. Teliha, Malaniuk, Ol'zhych, Mosendz, Klen, etc.), blindly devoted to their

⁹² One of the main characters in Dostoevsky's famous novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*. Ivan represents the typical, politically radical, atheistic Russian intellectual, who is corrupted and driven mad by Satanic arrogance.

⁹³ TsDAVO, f. 4462, op. 1, spr. 4, ark. 44-44b. Letter to Kosach January 28, 1935. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 138-39.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 45-45b.

faultless “rabbi” who brooks no dissent, and to his incorruptible “Talmudic wisdom.”⁹⁵ While happy to ridicule Dontsov as a man with a much-too-high opinion of himself (writing sarcastically about the ideologue’s agelessness, unsurpassed command of the Ukrainian language, and so on), Kryzhanivs’kyi had a personal, not an ideological, problem with Dontsov:

We rise, not against the ideas that Dontsov peddles on our ground, but against Dontsov himself, against his harmful temperament, against the Dontsov who endeavors to put himself on the pedestal of a leader through his own self-advertising and the simultaneous humiliation of all so-called ‘competitors,’ against the Dontsov ‘hyena’ (to use his vocabulary), who beats up on political corpses (Drahomanov) and the dead (Hrushevs’kyi), against Dontsov the blind, who can see nothing positive in Ukraine and who wants to lead the great and deep Ukrainian question into the shameless formula: ‘Ukraine *c’est moi*.’ And, lastly, we rise against Dontsov the speculator who, like a Persian shah and his orders, issues patents for nationalists and patriots, blackens or exalts people, solely by virtue of the fact that he happened to become the owner of a journal.⁹⁶

Kryzhanivs’kyi emphasized the many “errors”—which is to say, changes of opinion, allegiance, and identity—that Dontsov had made in the course of his life.⁹⁷ How dare he claim to be perfect and accuse others of heresy and impurity?

The line had been drawn: *My* or *Vistnyk*, Kryzhanivs’kyi or Dontsov? The latter successfully pressured Malaniuk into ending his collaboration with *My*, which Dontsov denounced as “an organ of kleptomaniacs.”⁹⁸ Lypa chose a more independent path, rejecting both *My* and, as we shall see, *Vistnyk*. Teliha and Mosendz, however, chose Dontsov, and remained fiercely loyal to him throughout the 1930s. The attempts by Livyts’ka-Kholodna and *My* to pull Teliha away from *Vistnyk* angered Dontsov, who clearly held the latter in the highest esteem. He expressed his frustration in a letter to Livyts’ka-Kholodna on March 27, 1933: “I

⁹⁵ Sviatoslav Dolenga, *Dontsovshchyna* (Warsaw: Variiah, 1938), 4-5.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁹⁷ Specifically, being a Marxist, serving Skoropads’kyi and the Germans, and promoting Polish-Ukrainian rapprochement; covered in chapters 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

⁹⁸ Svarnyk, “Naimolodshi,” 190.

only regret that the editors of the collection terrorized the Dear Creative [*Mye sotvorinnia*, one of his terms of endearment for Teliha] and took her verses, [which were] promised to *Vistnyk* ('O, women, women,' Socrates said, and had reason)."⁹⁹ Under pressure from Dontsov, Teliha ultimately decided to publish "Podorozhnii" in *Vistnyk* instead of *My*.

There were several reasons behind her decision. Whereas Dontsov valued her poetry, the acting editor of *My*, Malaniuk, considered Teliha a neophyte and did not care for her work. Her personal feelings for Dontsov also appear to have influenced her decision, which led to the cooling of her relationship with Livyts'ka-Kholodna, especially after Kryzhanivs'kyi's attacks on Dontsov and *Vistnyk*, which ended her association with *Tank* altogether.¹⁰⁰ On June 8, 1933, Teliha wrote to Livyts'ka-Kholodna:

Perhaps, the greatest number of arguments and misunderstandings between us have been over Dontsov. But, Natusenka, you cannot imagine how dear he is to me. I can see you laughing ('a pathological phenomenon'). Maybe it is 'pathological,' but it is undeniably strong and very sincere. I cannot define what it is: love, adoration, friendship, or infatuation, or none of these, but this feeling is so deep, that you, if you love me, must once and for all reconcile yourself and not treat it lightly, because otherwise I could not be completely open with you.¹⁰¹

Despite assurances that their friendship was unbreakable, Teliha withdrew from Livyts'ka-Kholodna and the rest of the Warsaw circle, aligning herself with Dontsov. Teliha's "Podorozhnii" appeared in *Vistnyk* alongside an anonymous poem entitled "Bez prysviaty" (Without a Dedication), which contemporaries recognized as Dontsov's work:¹⁰² "You were

⁹⁹ Bohdan A. Strumins'kyi, Natalia Livyts'ka-Kholodna, Marta Skorups'kyi, E. Skorups'kyi, and Marc Raeff, eds., *Materiialy do istorii literatury i hromads'koi dumky: Lystuvannia z amreykans'kykh arkhiviv, 1857-1933* (New York: Ukrain's'ka vilna academia auk u SSHA, 1992), 462.

¹⁰⁰ Olena Teliha, *Lysty. Spohady*, 167-72, 180-81.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 400. Shkandrij's translation, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 186-87.

¹⁰² Olena Teliha, *Zbirnyk*, ed. O. Zhdanovych (New York: Vydannia Ukrain's'koho Zolotoho Khresta v ZSA, 1977), 584-85. Teliha, *Lysty. Spohady*, 164.

frightened by no sensation / And on our very first night of solitude / You tipped the chalice without hesitation / With sweet poison at the bottom.” Commentators have agreed that the poem was Dontsov’s reply to “Podorozhnii.”¹⁰³

In response, Olena published another poem, “Bez nazvy” (Untitled), in *Vistnyk* that year, this time expressly dedicated to the journal’s editor, “D. D.”: “Not love, not tenderness, and not passion... / But a heart—an awakened eagle! / Drink the splashes, fresh and sparkling / Of unnamed joyful sources!”¹⁰⁴ In Dontsov’s Warsaw archive one can find an unpublished “strictly private” poem from May 5, 1933, which was, as Shkandrij asserts, “almost certainly an answer to Teliha’s ‘Bez nazvy.’”¹⁰⁵ The final stanzas read: “And here it is. / The platform and that straight figure / A hand raised in parting . . . Only a moment. / But the chaos is already disappearing. / And I can see the shore again. / And someone’s narrow hand / Smooths my tired brow again . . . / Once more something pulls and draws me / To dive headlong into / Another whirlwind. / *Soit benie, ma petite, / Merci*, I will come again.”¹⁰⁶ Contradicting Livyts’ka-Kholodna’s assertions that Teliha was simply flirting, Shkandrij argues that these poems, which link “romance, biology, and the warrior’s need for revived energy and replenished force,” strongly suggest that Teliha and Dontsov’s relationship was more than Platonic,¹⁰⁷ adding:

A second poem in Dontsov’s archive, which is dated 25 March 1933, mentions various meeting places: Luxembourg, Lac Leman, Lago di Garda, and the committing of a ‘dark, spring-time sin!’ It contains the lines: ‘Wherever life’s predictable fate took me, She appeared with the spring wind! Whatever name they gave Her, She and the spring were

¹⁰³ Olena Teliha, *O Kraiu my... Tvory, dokumenty, biohrafichynyi narys* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihi, 2006), 63.

¹⁰⁴ Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 188. Olena Teliha, “Bez nazvy” *Vistnyk*, no. 12 (1933): 866.

¹⁰⁵ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 188.

¹⁰⁶ BN, DD, Mf. 80370, 786-87. Shkandrij’s translation.

¹⁰⁷ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 188.

always together!’¹⁰⁸ Both of Dontsov’s poems construct woman as the inspirer of male desire and the accomplice of nature. The tone of both is brutal and taut; they suggest that lurking beneath the surface lies the attraction to physical passion. Both poems leave little space for female agency but do indicate the power of women to inspire. In the first poem Dontsov shows his disdain for the common herd that is incapable of understanding his thoughts and feelings or, perhaps, his sexual morality. He was apparently supremely indifferent toward anyone who censured his extramarital affairs.¹⁰⁹

Shkandrij connects this libidinal nonconformism to Teliha and Dontsov’s common background in the countercultural milieu of the early twentieth-century symbolists and decadents in St. Petersburg.



Figures 5.5-6. Olena Teliha and Dmytro Dontsov in Warsaw in the 1930s (left) and on vacation in Vorokhta in the summer of 1935 (right). *Source: Teliha, O kraiū my, 263.*

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 189.

¹⁰⁹ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 188.



Figures 5.7-8. Dontsov and Teliha in L'viv, 1930s. *Source:* Denys Koval'ov, "Muza ta natkhnennytsis ideoloha ukrains'koho natsionalizmu." [initiativenational.blogspot.com. http://initiativenational.blogspot.com/2012/02/blog-post_21.html](http://initiativenational.blogspot.com/2012/02/blog-post_21.html) [accessed March 9, 2017]. Olena and Mykhailo Teliha (her husband). *Source:* Teliha, *O kraiu my*, 229.

Shkandrij does not, however, consider Mariia Dontsova's take on the situation, or why Teliha would "cheat" on her young husband, Mykhailo, whom she had married just a few years prior. Olena Teliha suffered from the realization that, despite all the love (*liubov'*) and respect that she had for him,¹¹⁰ she did not feel romantic love (*kokhannia*) for Mykhailo. For her part, Dontsova dismissed the rumors of an affair between her husband and Lena, whom she admired greatly. She wrote to Dontsov on July 7, 1934:

Talia said that Natusia [i.e. Natalia Pyrohova-Zybenko¹¹¹ and Natalia Livyts'ka-Kholodna –TE] asserted that the reason why Kryzhanivs'kyi attacked you . . . was Lena! 'Because she is always running around all of Warsaw telling gossip!' I ask Talia 'what kind?' 'Let's see [her] letters [to] Dontsov,' I say: 'Unless in these letters there is something unpleasant and impermissible.' 'No!' she answers, but through them Lena (again Lena, and Lena is now to blame for everything!) created a correspondingly hostile

¹¹⁰ Teliha, *Lysty. Spohady*, 146-47.

¹¹¹ A friend of Teliha, Dontsova, and Livyts'ka-Kholodna, Pyrohova-Zybenko (1903-1995) wrote under the pseudonym Natalia Iakhnenko, and contributed to *Vistnyk*.

atmosphere, alleged that they are undermining *Vistnyk*, and so on. I say: 'If Lena says this, then she says the truth and repeats my thoughts, because I think that *My* is materially damaging *Vistnyk*. (Think now, Hikavyi says, that in the bookstores *My* is being sold for low prices (a discount is already given for 1.5 zloty for a half year). Is this not competition?! But this is typically Ukrainian: but I didn't make a noise, and I will not give in. Ugh, let them!¹¹²

When Dontsov went with Olena to the spa town of Vorokhta for leisure in the Carpathian Mountains, leaving Dontsova to run *Vistnyk* in her husband's absence, Dontsova wrote to the pair joking about the scandalous rumors: "Congratulations, Ms. [*pani*] Lena! Go to Burkut!"¹¹³ All is well. . . . Ms. Lena's husband was here in L'viv, but he did not come to me, which made me angry."¹¹⁴ Dontsova devoted one of her warmest memoirs, written after the war, to Teliha.¹¹⁵ The *Vistnykivtsi* specialist Halyna Svarnyk has argued that these reactions from Mariika, "known for her jealous character," demonstrate that there was, in fact, nothing unseemly going on. "Unfortunately," Svarnyk writes, "we too often now observe the resurrection of the 'fantastic dreams' of young and inexperienced literary critics, and, in particular, journalists, about the private life of Olena Teliha, who make attempts to explain nearly all her relations with male colleagues from the point of view of the mutated Freudianism now fashionable in Ukraine."¹¹⁶ Svarnyk especially takes issue with Iuryi (Sherekh) Shevel'ov's cruel characterization of Teliha's love for an unknown fatherland and the editor of *Vistnyk* as "a patri-erotic fascination with an abstract Ukraine and a very concrete Dontsov."¹¹⁷ Svarnyk writes that Shevel'ov, in

¹¹² Quoted in Halyna Svarnyk, "Dusha v chervonii Amazontsi, (do 100-richchia vid dnia narodzhennia Oleny Telihy)" *Sicheslav*, no. 9 (July-September 2006): 118-23.

¹¹³ A small village in Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast'.

¹¹⁴ Quoted in *ibid.*, 201-2. Mariia Dontsova to Dmytro Dontsov, July 17, 1934,

¹¹⁵ Mariia Bachyns'ka-Dontsova, "Telihy" *LNV*, no. 1 (May 1948): 82.

¹¹⁶ Svarnyk, "Dusha v chervonii Amazontsi," 122.

¹¹⁷ Sherekh, "Skarby, iakymy volodiemo," 162.

confusion, “sought to prove that the patriotism of the émigrés and their grief for an unreachable fatherland were elements of artificiality, abstractness, illusion.”¹¹⁸ On the contrary, the *Vistnykivtsi* were deadly serious about what they wrote, prepared to be killed for what they believed in, and aware that their involvement in the “romantic” world of Ukrainian nationalism was likely to put them in a situation where their resolve would be tested on this. Teliha embraced the ideal of self-conscious martyrdom that Dontsov described in his 1922 work on Lesia Ukrainka. As Teliha wrote in her poem, “Lyst” (A Letter), dedicated to Mosendz: “And in the web of crisscrossed colors / I ardently dream of the early morning / For God to send me the greatest gift: / A hot death, not a wintry expiration. . . . Let life stray and depart / Like a ship in glowing flames!”¹¹⁹

The “New Woman” and the “New Europe”

Certainly, Teliha deserves to be taken seriously as an artist and a political activist. My aim in the foregoing has not been to engage in prurient speculation, but to draw attention to the interplay of the personal and the political in the lives and works of the *Visnykivtsi*. For instance, Teliha’s enthusiasm for Nazism and Fascism throughout the 1930s is directly attributable to the influence of Dontsov. According to Livyts’ka-Kholodna, Teliha began to idolize Dontsov as if he were a Ukrainian “Mussolini” (to which Livyts’ka-Kholodna retorted that Dontsov was capable of criticism, not action, seeing only the failings of Ukraine’s struggle for liberation but remaining blind to its “tragic heroism” and “national heroes”).¹²⁰ As Dontsov’s loyal student,

¹¹⁸ Svarnyk, “Dusha v chervonii Amazontsi,” 123. Svarnyk takes exception to Shevel’ov’s characterization of the *Vistnykivtsi* as a self-deluded cohort of emigre poets engaged in flights voluntarist fancy, but were thrust into reality by war. Sherekh, *Tretia storozha*, 443-44; Svarnyk, “Chy isnuvala,” 90.

¹¹⁹ Olena Teliha, “Lyst,” *Vistnyk*, no. 11 (1936): 779-80.

¹²⁰ Livyts’ka-Kholodna, “Spomyn pro korotkyi,” 93.

Teliha hailed Nazism as a model for Ukrainians in one of her few political essays, *Syla cherez radist* (Strength through Joy), on Nazi Germany's state-administered public recreation and tourism program of the same name—*Kraft durch Freude*.¹²¹ Presenting the essay in a speech to the *Ukrains'ka Students'ka Hromada* (Ukrainian Student's Society) in Warsaw on June 15, 1937, she spoke of *Kraft durch Freude* as a youth organization that enjoyed the widespread support of the German people. Her ideas about a new type of woman and mother, racial hygiene, the synonymy of struggle and life, the revitalizing power of pleasure and humor, and the overriding imperative of devotion to a singular goal, reflected Dontsov's voluntarism and his growing appreciation for Nazi theorists, such as Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946).¹²² Teliha quoted the latter's thoughts on the subject of gender, race, and nation in her article on Ukrainian womanhood, "Iakymy was pahnete?" (How Do You Desire Us?):

But is the woman-mother and only the mother really the ideal of fascism? No! Alfred Rosenberg, one of the leading representatives of Hitlerism, in his book *Blood and Honor: The Struggle for the German Rebirth*, does not keep woman under lock and key in the house. He says that 'the preservation of our race lies in the hands of woman.' *Of the race* and not just of children and the family. She does not dare to give birth to the children of foreigners. She should teach her children 'not to consider a Syrian on Kurfürstendamm'¹²³ a compatriot and a possible husband for [her] daughters.' She should take care that her land is not settled by physical or *spiritual* janissaries. . . . True, Rosenberg seeks the

¹²¹ Olena Teliha, "Syla cherez radist," *Vistnyk*, no. 9 (1936): 649-59. in Teliha, *O Krait mii*, 97-108. Her first biographer, Iuryi Boiko writes: "The weakest of her publicistic [works] was *Syla cherez radist*'. Here she is still a student of Dontsov, his sincere, inflammatory apologist, who received the Ukrainian spiritual life of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries through his lens. . . . And all the same we read the article with interest, not only as a catalog of mistakes of the young poetess, but because, in her own mistakes, Olena also burned, overflowed with anger all around, and was also beautiful in her childish naivety. This was a volcano of dynamics and desire to live better, more heroically, than [her] predecessors lived. Thus, we take *Syla cherez radist*', not as a publicistic, but as an artistic work of fulminating [and] still unconquered internal energies." Teliha, *Zbirnyk*, 406-7.

¹²² A Baltic German, Rosenberg wrote *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (1930) and other works expounding central Nazi doctrines: biological racism and anti-Semitism, *Lebensraum*, "Positive Christianity," Aryan mysticism, and "degenerate art." Unlike Hitler, he favored the creation of a Ukrainian buffer state and the encouragement of anti-Communist, preferably non-Russian, nationalism, but did not object to the ruthless conquest and colonization of Russia proper. Rosenberg was the Reich's minister for the occupied eastern territories, and was found guilty and executed for his crimes at Nuremberg.

¹²³ A famous boulevard in Berlin.

emancipation of women from women's emancipation, but again he does not want her in the kitchen and the bedroom. 'Woman must live the general life of the nation. All paths to education must become wide open to her. *Every opportunity for the application of her power* should be wide open to woman.'¹²⁴

Teliha contrasted this fascist ideal of woman to the narrow roles afforded Ukrainian (as opposed to Western) women in contemporary Ukrainian literature. She listed three such roles: the "slave" (housewife) and the "vamp" (seductress), who do not inspire respect, and the "amazon" (feminist), who does not inspire love and adoration. All three fail the nation: the first, the "Andromache," by refusing to sacrifice her men in war, staking everything in the survival of her family without regard for the nation as a whole; the second, by degrading women and exposing them to the cynicism and brutality of a false masculinity;¹²⁵ and the third, by ignoring procreation, motherhood, and the inspiration of the nation's men altogether. She challenged her fellow *Visntyktivtsi*—Malaniuk and Mosendz—for the demeaning slave/vamp image of the Ukrainian woman and of Ukraine itself found in their poetry. Teliha especially objected to Malaniuk's conception of Ukraine as a chaotic "feminine nation" in which men and women were psychologically switching places in defiance of the natural order of things, much to the detriment of the nation's health.¹²⁶ While her ideal woman was capable of both love and camaraderie toward men, Teliha rejected Lypa's more permissive ideas about Ukrainian gender roles and sexuality as "erotomania," extolling women capable of ascetic self-discipline, self-sacrifice, strength, and patriotic sublimation of the libido in times of crisis, as well as "tenderness and humor during leisure." The Ukrainian woman, she wrote, "wants to be a Woman. A woman who

¹²⁴ Olena Teliha, "Iakymy nas prahnete?" *Vistnyk*, no. 10 (1935): 735-74. In Teliha, *O kraiu mii*, 80-91, 86-87.

¹²⁵ Teliha alleges that this cruel attitude toward women predominates in the writing of Kryzhanivskyi and Vynnychenko, comparing it unfavorably to the strong, well-rounded women in Anglo-Saxon and Nordic literature.

¹²⁶ Ievhen Malaniuk, "Zhinocha Muzhnist'," *Nova khata*, no. 12 (1931).

differs from a man yet is his equal, a faithful ally of men in the struggle for life, and, above all, for the nation.”¹²⁷

Teliha personified and represented the Ukrainian integral nationalist counterpoint to the powerful Western Ukrainian women’s movement. Unable to reject women’s rights, since this would have alienated the tens of thousands of educated women who read *Zhinka*, yet fearful of a perceived international feminist threat to the nation’s unity and masculinity, the OUN and *Vistnyk* seized upon Teliha’s conception of gender equality, which subordinated feminism to nationalism and insisted upon the preservation of “traditional” gender roles. Championing her position, Teliha initiated a polemical yet mutually respectful debate with *Soiuz Ukrainok* and its head, Milena Rudnyts’ka—the charismatic orator, activist, UNDO leader, and Sejm member—who argued that national and women’s liberation were perfectly compatible, interdependent goals. Teliha and others at *Vistnyk* charged that Rudnyts’ka and the Ukrainian feminists were guilty of “liberalism” and sentimental love of humanity, which sapped the nation’s strength and resolve.¹²⁸

The ideal woman of Dontsov and the *Vistnykivtsi* was to be proud, courageous, emancipated, modern, strong, severe, intelligent, warlike, and sexually empowered, yet emotionally disciplined, traditional, submissive to her own menfolk but contemptuous of foreign men, self-sacrificial, sexually altruistic, physically beautiful, and dedicated to wifely and

¹²⁷ Teliha, “Iakymy.” Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 183. Shkandrij notes that Teliha had to turn to *Soviet* Ukrainian literature to find male writers who wrote female characters of this sort, citing Agalaia in Mykola Khvyly’ovyi’s novel *Valdshnepy* (Woodsnipes).

¹²⁸ Omelchuk, *Literaturni idealy ukrains’koho visnykivstva*, 198. Meanwhile, the OUN attacked the *Soiuz Ukrainok* for undermining families, deforming the nation’s morals, and promoting pacifism and internationalism. Yet, even integral nationalist leaders, such as Andriievs’kyi, Konovalets’, and Onats’kyi, conceded that Rudnyts’ka, who regularly denounced the OUN’s tactics and totalitarian ideology, was in reality an invaluable representative of Ukrainian interests to the West. Diaduk, *Ukrains’kyi zhinochyi rukh*, 127, 133-34, 138. Onats’kyi, *U vichnomu misti*, 43, 139.

motherly duties. Teliha's ideal woman was similarly contradictory—"hard, yet soft," depending on what the moment called for. The *Vistnykivtsi* celebrated the apocryphal Judith, who, the story goes, used her feminine wiles to penetrate the enemy Assyrians' camp and decapitate their leader in his sleep, thus saving Israel. Another favorite was Joan of Arc, the legendary heroine who inspired martial courage and masculinity in the men of France by acting it out herself, suffering martyrdom for it, but in a distinctly feminine way.¹²⁹ Dontsov fêted the Ukrainian writer Olena Pchilka, Lesia Ukrainka's mother, as a Ukrainian exemplar of womanhood—"a woman-patriot different from tender [*nizhni*] lovers, sisters, and wives," yet "full of womanly charm and beauty."¹³⁰ As literary scholar Olesia Omelchuk explains:

The critical texts of Dontsov and the artistic texts of Malaniuk exhibit fantasies about proud, sexually and creatively active female figures. Dontsov called such women 'sanguinary' [*kryvavymy*], and the metaphor of blood in this context referred not to a racial or national sense of 'blood,' but to an archaic, vampiric, sexual essence that lies hidden within women. At a time when Teliha was rejecting women-vamps, Dontsov was obsessed with them, and Malaniuk and Livyts'ka-Kholodna introduced women from whom a sexual energy radiates, capable of conquering a man's will, into their poetry. For Dontsov, the desired femininity was also passionate and active; heroic femme fatales occupied his imagination.¹³¹

Susan Sonntag has highlighted the combination of lasciviousness and idealization in Nazi art, distinguishing it from the puritanical aesthetic of its Russian Communist counterpart.¹³²

Omelchuk argues that much the same can be said of Dontsov, who thought of erotic attraction

¹²⁹ Omelchuk, *Literaturni idealy ukrains'koho visnykivstva*, 199. Dmytro Dontsova, "Olena Pchilka (Sproba reabilitatsii)," *LNV*, no. 5 (1931): 439-52, 441; Dmytro Dontsov, "Zhanna d'Ark (Istoriia i legenda)," *LNV*, no. 6 (1929): 545-56.

¹³⁰ Quoted in Omelchuk, *Literaturni idealy ukrains'koho visnykivstva*, 199.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 207.

¹³² "In contrast to the asexual chasteness of official communist art, Nazi art is both prurient and idealizing. A utopian aesthetics (identity as a biological given) implies an ideal eroticism (sexuality converted into the magnetism of leaders and the joy of followers). The fascist ideal is to transform sexual energy into a "spiritual" force, for the benefit of the community. The erotic is always present as a temptation, with the most admirable response being a heroic repression of the sexual impulse." Susan Sonntag, "Fascinating Fascism," *New York Review of Books* (February 6, 1975). <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1975/02/06/fascinating-fascism/> [accessed March 15, 2017]

and sex between men and women as a wholesome, beautiful manifestation of the living national organism. The *Vistnykivtsi* combined the ideal of the “New Woman”—emancipated, modern, provocatively dressed, and admired for her evermore public, evermore spectacular creativity, sexuality, and physicality—with their own ideas of radical patriotism, will power, youth, violence, and vitality. “The fascination with ‘demonic’ women,” Omelchuk writes, “was a consequence of the aestheticism and individualism of the *Vistnykivtsi*.” This was a vision of unfettered personal expression, for women as well as men, so long as the individual artist voluntarily devoted his or her creative works to the greater good of the nation.

Nazism, Fascism, and Ukrainian integral nationalism were avowedly antifeminist and patriarchal movements, in theory and in practice. The French feminist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir interpreted Nazism and Fascism as phenomena that reduced women to their reproductive capacity, motherhood, denying them freedom and an erotic existence. So too has the Ukrainian feminist scholar Mariia Bohachevsky-Chomiak in her analysis of Ukrainian integral nationalism.¹³³ Yet, the striking prominence of female artist-celebrities in the propaganda of both Ukrainian integral nationalism and German National Socialism suggests a more complicated reality. There were points of contact between the interwar European far right, evolving conceptions of womanhood, and the expanding opportunities for women to move into roles previously reserved for men. “Lena” Teliha and “Leni” Riefenstahl¹³⁴ cultivated public personas couched in lofty, rebellious, steely heroism and sexual feminine mystique, producing poems and films, respectively, that revel in the cult of will, idealism, purity, physical health, the

¹³³ Mariia Bohachevs’kyi-Khomiak, *Hendernyi pidkhid: istoriia, kul’tura, suspil’stvo* (L’viv: VNTL-Klasyka, 2003), 177.

¹³⁴ The leading propagandist of the Third Reich, and a close friend of Hitler and Goebbels, Riefenstahl (1902-2003) survived the war and was “de-Nazified,” spending her postwar years much like Dontsov did: trying to cover up her past, whitewash her creative legacy, and salvage her reputation.

muscular (especially male) human form, erotic imagery or symbolism, the resurrection of mythic communities, violent struggle, and the heroic martyrdom of superior tribes and individuals.

Dontsov celebrated the “active nationalist” ideal of femininity, embodied by Lena, in his tribute to her, *Poetka vohnenykh mezh* (Poetess of the Fiery Limits), published after the war in 1953. Teliha, he wrote, “renewed the mystic-warrior spirit of old Kyiv in our literature.”¹³⁵ Like a Ukrainian Joan of Arc, there was “nothing of the plebeian in her, nothing of the whimpering poetry of the early twentieth century, with its oppressed sentimentalism.” Teliha united seemingly opposite virtues in her person as well as her poetry. She was “sometimes tender and womanly, but, when needed, tough and proud.” Dontsov linked her physicality and youthfulness to her creative work: “As elegant in her verses as in her stature, like a ‘swift Diana’¹³⁶ (an all-around woman, Shevchenko says), defiant in her approach to life, she left us a vision of authentic noble poetry in the best sense of the word—poetry devoid of everything vulgar [and] churlish.”¹³⁷ Dontsov emphasized the vibrancy of her colors, and the violence of her imagery: “She paints the setting sun like a bloody wound; pain with dense, red hues.”¹³⁸ He called her poetry “a hymn to the instinctual, unrestrained ecstasy of life, a hymn to the stormy joy of life, of growth, of awakened youth. This was the accumulated excess of vital energy. The dynamic élan vital which rumbled like a volcano and exploded into the sky.”¹³⁹ He spoke of her “burning, pulsating desire to live”—a desire that transgressed all boundaries and conventions. “Either the drunk champagne of adoration, infatuation, love; or a dancing whirlwind, an adventure, a rash

¹³⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, *Poetka vohnenykh mezh: Olena Teliha* (Toronto: Vydannia O. Tiazhoho, 1953), 7.

¹³⁶ The ancient Roman goddess of the hunt, the moon, nature, and wild animals.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 8.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 9.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 12.

deed, the strike of a whip, a word of rebuke, or a clanging bell. Nothing from an idyll!”¹⁴⁰ Her works, Dontsov felt, celebrate the “physical pleasure” of the biological drive and the amorality of nature.¹⁴¹ Such passages can be interpreted as further evidence that Dontsov and Teliha were on intimate terms in the 1930s.¹⁴² Whatever the nature of their personal relationship, they shared a worldview that hailed the arrival of both the “New Woman” *and* the “New Europe.”

Like the other *Vistnyk* authors, Teliha considered Bolshevism to be far worse than Nazism, assuming an affirmative attitude toward what she could discern of Nazi ideology and practice.¹⁴³ She followed Dontsov in approving of Hitler’s power-consolidating action, the Night of the Long Knives (July 2, 1934), in which the SA (*Sturmabteilung*: the militia of the Nazi Party) and its leader Ernst Röhm were executed without trial on the pretext of plotting a revolt.¹⁴⁴ Evidently, the vision of an absolute führer presiding over a flock of devoted vassals appealed to her. She even compared Hitler to Jesus Christ, who was willing to strike “with a bloody whip” at even his closest brothers, his own race, for the sake of an idea, for “our party.”¹⁴⁵ Teliha drew these comparisons between Dontsov, fascist leaders, and other messianic figures in her defenses of the *Vistnyk* editor from the criticisms of his erstwhile disciple, Iuryi Lypa.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.,

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 13.

¹⁴² As Shkandrij notes, “the other women in [Dontsov’s] pantheon—Lesia Ukrainia and Olha Basarab—are not allowed such biological drives, or even the suggestion of an erotic life. They are constructed as images representing pure will and fanatical devotion to the cause. Teliha is the exception.” *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 186.

¹⁴³ One should bear in mind that this was several years before the Nazi regime had committed its worst atrocities in World War II and the Holocaust. At this point, 1937, Stalin’s government was already responsible for the deaths of millions of Ukrainians.

¹⁴⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, “Ukrains’ke vacuum i ridna kul’turenii,” *Vistnyk*, no. 2 (1934): 137-46. Olena Teliha, “Review of the Iuryi Lypa, *Ukrains’ka doba*,” *Vistnyk* no. 8 (1936): 613-16, in Teliha, *O Kraiu mii*, 92-96.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

Disagreements in the Family

The starting point of the polemic between Dontsov and Lypa was literature and its relation to the national movement—the subject of a more general debate in interwar Ukrainian culture. As we saw in chapter 3, Dontsov’s positions on literature in the 1920s were modernist, avant-garde, and cosmopolitan, drawing inspiration from contemporary German, French, Russian, and Italian examples of futurism, symbolism, and expressionism. By the mid 1930s, however, Dontsov and the *Vistnykivtsi* had turned against modernism and aestheticism (art for art’s sake). They rejected modernism as too cosmopolitan—not “Ukrainian” enough—and too imitative of the sorts of Western European trends that undermine their own national cultures. They rejected aestheticism and formalism as too abstruse and disconnected from reality to be of any use to the national liberation struggle. The chief criteria for the judgment of art should not be aesthetic, but ideological and political. But *Vistnyk*’s slogan—“Art for the Nation” (*mystetstvo dlia natsii*)—said little about this art would look like. It was understood that Ukrainian art and literature should belong to and serve the nation, expressing its essence and encouraging the development of the qualities that Dontsov had described in *Natsionalizm*, but what would its content and style be?

Dontsov enlisted artist, set designer, and playwright Natalia Gerken-Rusova (1897-1989) to give an answer to this question in *Vistnyk*. Arguing for a “traditionalist,” Hellenic, classical aesthetic—a “heroic theatre” that would be the carrier of a “concrete national idea”—Gerken-Rusova dubbed her ideal “warlike art” (*voiovnyche mystetstvo*). “Warlike art” would express the “spirit of the nation,” promoting an ethos of “dynamism, energy, expansion”; it would be edifying for a new elite capable of leading the nation and destroying its enemies. The opposite of “warlike art”—“humane art” (*liudiane mystetstvo*), or “the art of the herd”—was capable only of

expressing the “soul of the people.” Saccharine and sentimental, it sapped the strength of the nation. Emotional aestheticism and formalist interpretations of reality, she argued, are incapable of inspiring action, in part because most people cannot understand or relate to abstract, unusual, or conceptually challenging paintings, novels, and music. Ukrainians needed art with “Ukrainian” content, a nationalist agenda, and a positive, external, militarizing effect on the nation itself. Gerken-Rusova nevertheless insisted that “warlike art” or “art for the nation” would not be primitive or subservient to “public taste.” Rather, it would develop in harmony with artistic ideas and aesthetic and technical innovations while promoting the development of the nation and expressing its inner feelings. She denied the very possibility of “art for art’s sake,” and called for a campaign “to cultivate the artist’s ethics, educate the public, form a respectable art criticism, [and] begin national-cinematic activity.”¹⁴⁶ Dontsov and the *Vistnykivtsi* (especially Ol’zhych, Teliha, Klen, and Mosendz) promoted the same neoclassicist vision in literature, prizing clarity, perfection of form, conciseness, order, discipline, heroism, monumentality, supreme confidence, and historical-mythological themes.¹⁴⁷ The transgressive, antibourgeois militarism of futurism persisted, but now the *Vistnykivtsi* eschewed modernist experimentation as superfluous, anarchic, and self-indulgent, subordinating their creative endeavors to the perceived demands of the national movement as a whole.¹⁴⁸ Dontsov turned away from the modernist rebellions of futurism and expressionism toward the discipline of classicism, calling for the establishment of “a series of dogmas, rules, axioms in all fields of collective life, sharply delineated, clearly opposed to all others, uncompromising.” The great task of this art and

¹⁴⁶ Natalia Gerken-Rusova, “Aktsiia heorichnoho teatru,” *Vistnyk*, no. 4 (1938): 739-756, and “Zavdannia i organizatsiia heorichnoho teatru,” *Vistnyk*, no. 3 (1938): 567-91.

¹⁴⁷ Bohdan Rubchak, “Sertse nadvoie rozderete (Frahment)” in Mykola Ilnyts’kyi, ed. *Poety praz’koi shkoly: Sribni surmy: Antolohiia* (Kyiv: Smolokyp, 2009), 703.

¹⁴⁸ Shakndrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 154.

literature would be “to create and raise a new ruling caste,” and “to inflame the masses with an all-encompassing faith that regards all other gods as pagan idols.”¹⁴⁹



Figure 5.9. Natalia Gerken-Rusova. *Source*: Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine

The journal *Nazustrich*, edited by the literary critic Mykhailo Rudnyts'kyi (1889-1975),¹⁵⁰ opposed Dontsov and *Vistnyk* with the ideal of a Ukrainian art and literature that is autonomous, independent from political ideologies and projects, and evaluated above all on the basis of aesthetic criteria. The editorship of *Nazustrich* argued that the best way to make art and literature serve the nation was to permit artists and writers to experiment freely, to encourage them to stay abreast of the latest innovations in high culture worldwide, and eventually produce internationally recognized leaders and innovators of their own.¹⁵¹ It should be oriented toward

¹⁴⁹ Dmytro Dontsov, *Ob'iednannia chy roz'iednannia* (1938), in Dmytro Dontsov, *Khrestom i mechem*, 129, 131.

¹⁵⁰ Rudnyts'kyi was the brother of Milena Rudnyts'ka, head of *Soiuz Ukrianok*.

¹⁵¹ Pavlo Kovzhun, “Budenna i mystets'ka diisnist'. Za kulisamy VII-oi vystavky A. N. U. M.,” *Nazustrich*, no. 21 (1936), 2; Mykhailo Rudnyts'kyi, “Pliany,” *Nazustrich*, no. 1 (1934): 1.

Western European modernism, yet develop from a purely national basis, which was not to be understood literally as art that contains only Ukrainian themes or forms, but as the stylistically diverse expressions of Ukrainian artists responding to Ukrainian reality using whatever methods they choose. *Nazustrich*'s advocacy for the idea of Ukrainian art that might take "non-Ukrainian" forms and is not obliged to serve the national interest provoked a polemic with Dontsov and the *Vistnyktivtsi*.¹⁵²



Figure 5.10. This contemporary caricature by E. Kozak depicts Rudnyts'kyi laughing at Dontsov in the dentist's chair in the top panel, and the reverse in the bottom panel. The caption reads: "At the dentist one might encounter the two 'friends' Dr. M. Rudnyts'kyi and Dr. D. Dontsov. –Dr. Rudnyts'kyi: 'Ha-ha-ha! I see a wisdom tooth has already gone rotten for you! –Dr. Dontsov: 'Ha-ha-ha! You think that an artificial wisdom tooth will help you somehow?'" *Source*: Sofiia Lehin, "Humor po-l'vivs'ky, abo 10 vidomykh mistian u vitsakh ta karikaturakh," photo-lviv.in.ua <http://photo-lviv.in.ua/humor-po-lvivsky-abo-10-vidomyh-mistyan-u-vitsah-ta-karyaturah/> [accessed March 11, 2017]

¹⁵² Vorobkalo, "'Mystetstvo dlia natsii' vs 'Mystetstvo dlia mystetstva.'"

Dontsov denounced *Nazustrich* for betraying the Ukrainian national culture and movement in favor of a rootless, cosmopolitan aestheticism and modernism, but he himself faced accusations of disparaging Ukrainian traditions and offering nothing positive to replace them but the imitation of foreign models. Lypa produced the most forceful articulation of this critique. His cultural and political works—*Bii za ukrains'ku literaturu* (The Battle for Ukrainian Literature, 1935), *Ukrains'ka doba* (The Ukrainian Era, 1936) and *Pryznachennia Ukrainy* (The Destiny of Ukraine, 1938)—which secured his reputation as a Ukrainian nationalist ideologue on par with Dontsov, signaled his final break with the latter and the *Vistnykivtsi*.¹⁵³ *Bii za ukrains'ku literaturu* angered Dontsov because the majority of its contents were articles previously published in *Vistnyk*. In December 1935 Lypa submitted an article to *Vistnyk*, but received a rejection letter from Dontsov:

In *Vistnyk*'s three years, fourteen of your articles have appeared and not one of them lied around as long as some of the articles of other authors. Does this mean that the standards of *Vistnyk* are too high for you? Only two pieces were not accepted—one, of memoirs of Ivan Lypa [Iuryi Lypa's deceased father —TE]—the second, of memoirs about Ivan Lypa. I think this does not give you the right to assert that the journal is doing you some kind of wrong. . . . Not one of the contributors to *Vistnyk* can boast of having such a high percentage of material published. . . . Perhaps you have a plan to move to *My*? Perhaps they are pulling you there? Then I would ask them to openly and bravely say this, and not search for pretexts for the justification of such a step. But if this is only gossip and if you have nothing in common with uncultured people . . . if you will write to me that you now as ever condemn the word of *My*—then I will be the first take pleasure in this.¹⁵⁴

Lypa answered that where he chose to publish his writing was none of Dontsov's business, but denied having any intentions of going over to *My*. The conflict between the two worsened when Lypa gave a speech at a meeting of the anti-Soviet club "Prometei" (Prometheus) in Warsaw, in

¹⁵³ He followed these up with two influential geopolitical works during World War II: *Chornomorska doktryna* (The Black Sea Doctrine, 1940) and *Rozpodil Rosii* (the Partitioning of Russia, 1941).

¹⁵⁴ Dmytro Dontsov to Iuryi Lypa, January 11, 1936. Quoted in Svarnyk, "Iuryi Lypa i Dmytro Dontsov," 220.

which he called for an end to the sectarianism and internal strife to which Dontsov's teachings and behavior had allegedly given rise. Dontsov responded to Lypa in his 1936 article, "Vony i my" (Them and Us). He summarized Lypa's position against him as a rejection of "cliquishness" and "dissension" in a time of national catastrophe when "agreements in the family should reign." Dontsov countered that the time for such agreements had long since passed.¹⁵⁵ Lypa opposed the divisive language of "ours" and "not ours," preferring a positive attitude toward anything so long as it is *Ukrainian*, which he found lacking in Dontsov and his ilk. The latter expressed surprise at Lypa's betrayal "in a time of malicious attacks against *Vistnyk*":

Strange as it may seem, an unexpected voice from one of the leading contributors to *Vistnyk* has joined the choir of my opponents—that of Dr. Iuryi Lypa. . . . According to him, my ideology is only 'polemical,' and has nothing 'positive' in it. He asserts that cliquishness denies Ukrainians their greatness. That the positive will be built, not only with 'our own,' but all the forces of the nation. . . . With this speech Dr. Iuryi Lypa showed that the ideas of the opponent of our journal [*Vistnyk*] are closer to him than the ideas disseminated in *Vistnyk* by its contributors. Thus, he alone placed himself outside the group of these contributors.¹⁵⁶

Lypa's "loving heart" was of no use when the situation called for vituperative "dynamism."

The polemic between Dontsov, the remaining *Vistnykivtsi*, and their supporters on one side, and Lypa, *My*, *Nazustrich*, and their supporters on the other, continued until the eve of World War II. Dontsov's *Nasha doba i literatura* (Our Era and Literature) was an answer to Lypa's *Bii za ukrains'ku literature*. Kryzhaniv's'kyi, who called Lypa's book "one of the most significant documents of our epoch of rebirth," thought that the conflict between Lypa and Dontsov started because the latter felt threatened by it.¹⁵⁷ Taunting his former master, Lypa struck back with a 24-page brochure, *Ukrains'ka doba* (The Ukrainian Era), in which he assessed

¹⁵⁵ Dontsov, "Vony i my" in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 4, 151-64, 152.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 160.

¹⁵⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, *Nasha doba i literatura* (L'viv: Kvartal'nyk Vistnyka, 1936). Andrii Kryzhaniv's'kyi, "Review of *Ukrains'ka doba*," *My* (Spring 1935), 175.

the Dontsov phenomenon as having had a detrimental effect on Ukrainian culture and politics. He criticized *Nasha doba i literatura* and its author for his ostentatious rhetoric, unbefitting a serious political thinker, whose chief concern should be facts and lucidity. “Verses and poems pale before his articles. Perhaps he really is the greatest poet of Ukraine? Perhaps his doctrine is simply the axis of his own literary creativity, his personal creative expansion?” Lypa sarcastically remarked.¹⁵⁸ He repeated the accusations that Dontsov lacked a “positive doctrine” and merely sowed discord among Ukrainians, promoting hatred of some foreigners and undignified, inauthentic mimicry of others, while rejecting of homegrown traditions.

Other Ukrainian nationalists of the integral and liberal varieties proffered similar critiques of Dontsov. *My* and *Nazustrich* sided with Lypa, relishing his defection, which was embarrassing for *Vistnyk*. Dmytro Paliiv, formerly Dontsov’s coeditor at *Zahrava* and cofounder of the Ukrainian Party of National Work (see chapter 3), founded a rival movement, dubbed “creative nationalism” (*tvorchyi natsionalizm*), replete with its own organization, the Front of National Unity (*Front natsional’noi iednosty*, FNE), in L’viv in 1934. The FNE differed from the OUN and Dontsov on several points. It regarded Jews as a greater threat to Ukrainians than Russians and Bolsheviks. They alleged that Polish Jews had caused or worsened Ukrainian poverty and unemployment during the depression. Paliiv published “black lists” of Ukrainian lawyers who hired Jews and Poles in his journal, *Novyi chas* (New Times, 1922-1933). Defenses of Nazi Germany’s discriminatory policies toward its Jewish population appeared in the Front’s other organ, *Peremoha* (Victory, 1933-1936), which regularly incited hatred of Jews.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Iuryi Lypa, *Ukrains’ka doba* (Warsaw: Narodnyi stiah, 1936), 15. As Lysiak-Rudnyts’kyi observes: “The young publicists-dilettantes undertook the solution of so-called global problems in their self-confidence. Characteristic was the style of these writings: pathos, high-flying words and tendencies toward poetic cliché. . . . This literature did not serve knowledge of the world, but had the purpose of creating a certain emotive atmosphere.” Ivan Lysiak-Rudnyts’kyi, *Mizh istoriieiu i politykoiu* (Munich: Suchasnist’, 1973), 243.

¹⁵⁹ Zaitsev, *Ukrains’kyi integral’nyi natsionalizm*, 360.

Rostyslav Iendyk, one of Dontsov's most loyal supporters and *Vistnyk* authors, also contributed his racially anti-Semitic commentary to *Peremoha*.¹⁶⁰ The FNE concurred with Dontsov on the harmfulness of the centrist Ukrainian National Democratic Union (UNDO), using similar metaphors, such as the superiority of "organic" national unity over "mechanical" tribal (*pleminna*) unity, which echoed Dontsov's critiques of provincialism.¹⁶¹

But the FNE's ideologues also produced critiques of Dontsov and *Vistnyk* that anticipated or reflected Lypa's charges of divisive sectarianism and demoralizing negativity. Among them was Mykola Shlemkevych (1894-1966, pseudonym M. Ivaneiko), who attacked Dontsov directly in his 1935 book *Tvorychyi natsionalizm iak filosofiiia militans* (Creative Nationalism as a Militant Philosophy).¹⁶² Shlemkevych asserted that the *Vistnyk* editor, far from being the antithesis of Drahomanov, was the continuation and final result of the latter's ruinous criticism of his fellow Ukrainians and native predecessors.¹⁶³ "*Creative nationalism rejects demagoguery on the spiritual plane. It is decisively opposed to both of [demagoguery's] consequences. It is aware that in this way it does truly European work, spiritually combatting the genuinely Muscovite dilemma: lawlessness in anarchy [Drahomanov] or lawlessness in despotism [Dontsov]. It is the spokesman of Ukrainian spiritual law.*" Shlemkevych thus turned Dontsov's criticisms of Russian despotism and Ukrainophilia back against him.¹⁶⁴ The problem with Dontsov's anticolonialism, Shlemkevych averred, was that it left open the possibility of

¹⁶⁰ See, for example, Rostyslav Iendyk, "Rasa v modernim natsionalizmi," *Peremoha*, no. 4 (1933): 10-12.

¹⁶¹ See the discussion of *Natsionalizm* in chapter 3.

¹⁶² As Zaitsev notes, Shlemkevych's biography mirrored Dontsov's: Both started out Marxists in the USDRP, but opposed the Bolsheviks. Both studied philosophy in Vienna. Shlemkevych contributed numerous articles on the subject of Ukrainian spirituality to *LNV* under Dontsov's editorship.

¹⁶³ M. Ivaneiko, *Tvorychyi natsionalizm iak filosofiiia militans* (L'viv: n.p. 1935), 10-11, 15.

¹⁶⁴ Especially as expressed in *Pidtsavy nashoi polityky* (1921). See chapter 3.

colonization from the West. Ukraine's "spiritual liberation" from "old Europe," represented by liberal France, in favor of the "New Europe" of national revolutions, represented by Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, was also needed.¹⁶⁵ He rejected Dontsov's conception of Ukraine's national mission to serve as the bulwark of Europe against the encroachment of Asiatic despotism, arguing that this defense was not necessary—"either Europe defends itself, or it is not worth defending."¹⁶⁶ Rather, Ukraine should focus on self-perfection as a representative of Slavic culture, becoming a "spiritual metropole" in its own right. FNE publicists also rejected Dontsov's anti-intellectualism, amorality, and uncritical imitation of foreign thinkers, such as Sorel and Nietzsche.¹⁶⁷ The FNE extended these critiques to the OUN, condemning the latter's terrorist methods and Dontsovian cult of violence as immoral, counterproductive, and responsible for the pointless "self-immolation" of Ukrainian youth.

OUN émigré leaders echoed Lypa's critique of Dontsov, arguing that the latter's worldview lacked a practical plan of action or organization apart from abstract talk about a new breed of violent, amoral, and fanatical nationalists. Dontsov demoralized Ukrainians with his scornful, dismissive overview of their history and traditions. The OUN ideologue Volodymyr Martynets' published a brochure, *Zabronzovuimo nashe mynule!* (Let Us Bronze Our Past!), in which he called for a new national autobiography, filled with edifying images and great victories, instead of the chronicle of humiliating defeats and decline found in Dontsov's writings. Martynets' asserted that "only bright images from our past and contemporary times, only heroes and great characters, only great acts and passions are educational tools," urging his compatriots:

¹⁶⁵ M. Ivaneiko, "Metropoliia dukha i natsionalizm," *Peremoha*, no. 2 (1933): 2-4.

¹⁶⁶ M. Ivaneiko, "Ideol'ogichni pidstavy tvorchoho natsionalizmu (Referat vyholoshenyi na 1. Kraievii Konferentsii F. N. Ie. dina 23. bereznia 1935 r.)," *Peremoha*, no. 30 (1935): 3-8.

¹⁶⁷ Iuryi Studyns'ky, "Chomu ukrains'kyi natsionalizm mavby formuvatys' pid klychem 'amoralii' i 'antyintelektualizmu'?" *Peremoha* (November 15, 1933), 4-6.

“Do not create black myths but instead bronze our past!”¹⁶⁸ Ideologues of Dontsov’s type were giving Ukrainians an inferiority complex, just as a constantly berated child grows up to become an “ignoramus and a good-for-nothing.”¹⁶⁹ Exasperated by what he saw as the media’s unfair and relentless persecution of *Vistnyk* and “the denseness of our general public,” Dontsov complained directly to Konovalets’: “I am so sick of fighting all those idiots in *Nova zoria*, *Hromads’ki holos*, *Dilo*, *Ukrains’ki visti* [Ukrainian News], and so on. Maybe a ‘Führer’ is exactly what this country needs?”¹⁷⁰

But Dontsov also had supporters in his debate with Lypa and the other “bronzers,” especially among young Galicians: the Ukrainian Students’ Society, for example, carried a resolution in his favor in 1936, while Mosendz and Teliha both wrote exceptionally harsh reviews of Lypa’s *Ukrain’ska doba* for *Vistnyk*.¹⁷¹ Given her devotion to Dontsov and previous closeness to Lypa, the tone of Teliha’s review is especially personal, scornful, and mocking: Lypa, being “unprincipled” and “confused,” betrayed his colleagues and mentors at *LNV* and *Vistnyk*, to whom he owed so much, suddenly and inexplicably abandoning all the ideas that he had hitherto ardently supported. What Lypa did not appreciate, Teliha asserted, was the necessity of distinguishing between “us and them,” “ours and yours.” Fanatical loyalty to “our party” and the service of its idea alone was needed for success, as “Loyola, Mussolini, Hitler and the Bolsheviki” have demonstrated. Although Lypa accused *Vistnyk* of emptiness and negativity, he himself had failed to endow the modifier “Ukrainian” with any content. Lypa called for the

¹⁶⁸ Martynets’, *Zabronzovuimo nashe mynule!*, 23. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 107. Martynets’ continued this line of attack after World War II. See his memoirs (published in 1947), *Ukrains’ke pidpillia*, 32, 158-60.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 23.

¹⁷⁰ Dmytro Dontsov to Ievhen Konovalets’, April 28, 1938. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 107.

¹⁷¹ Leonid Mosendz, “Marginalii do ‘Ukrains’koi doby’ Iuriia Lypy,” *Vistnyk*, no. 9 (1936): 728-30.

perfect unity of the Ukrainian nation, but contradicted himself by supporting the same cliquishness that he complained of in Dontsov's circle. According to Teliha, Lypa opposed liberalism and socialism because "reality" had destroyed these things, but it was *Vistnyk*, not reality, that had driven them out of (Western) Ukrainian life. Responding to Lypa's charge that the *Vistnykivtsi* ape Hitlerism even though they call Nazism a "product not for export," Teliha pointed out the Dontsov had been a fascist since at least 1923, when *Zahrava* appeared. Lypa praised fascism's traditionalism, claiming that Ukrainian tradition is denigrated in *Vistnyk*; Teliha countered:

Was it not *Vistnyk* that built a cult of *Slova o polka Ihoria* [The Lay of Igor's Campaign],¹⁷² of the period of kings [i.e. Kyivan-Rus' —TE], Mazepa? . . . Then who, if not *Vistnyk*, raised the youth, and at one point Lypa as well — in the greatest respect for the blood spilled for the fatherland. Where, if not in *Vistnyk*, do all the poems, articles, [and] memoirs call for the honor of struggle for the fatherland, for the honor of blood already spilled, for the honor of future sacrifices?¹⁷³

Lypa accused Dontsov of harmful, indiscriminate iconoclasm, but Teliha insisted that some Ukrainian traditions must be rejected without hesitation, just as some Ukrainian individuals must be rejected, no matter how authentically "Ukrainian" they might be. Noting that Lypa protested Dontsov's overbearing style as an editor despite contributing to *LNV* and *Vistnyk* for fourteen years, Teliha asked: "Does Dontsov really not suffer individualities? No, he suffers *only individuality*. Rather, he does not tolerate people who have forty thoughts and forty convictions without delineating a single one. Do all contributing authors reject *Vistnyk*? No, the greater part of them were rejected by *Vistnyk* itself for their lack of principle, as happened with Lypa." Teliha accused Lypa of being shallow, materialistic, fearful of not making it to the promised land yet

¹⁷² The most famous extant text of Kyivan Rus', *The Lay of Igor's Campaign* is an epic thirteenth-century poem about a failed raid by Prince Igor Sviatoslavych against the Turkic, nomadic Polovtsians in 1185.

¹⁷³ Teliha, *O kraiu mii*, 92-93.

unwilling to change himself in order to reach it. She defended Dontsov's preoccupation with attacking the negative in Ukrainian life because there was so much that needed to be purged, even if it was unpleasant for readers: "No one knows as well as Dontsov that we will succeed in building something only with our own powers, not those of foreigners, but these powers need to be extracted. And one cannot extract them with the sweet-sluggish system of Lypa." The latter opposed "exclusivity" (*vyniatkovist'*), but the exclusion of incompatible ideas and individuals was essential to the success of the national revolution.¹⁷⁴

Given Mariia Dontsova's intimate history with Lypa, she suffered his betrayal as a deeply personal offense. She wrote to Dontsov after a series of arguments with Lypa at their home in L'viv on July 17, 1937: "One conversation was very heated: I told him all about *Bii* [*za ukains'ku literaturu*], about the disloyalty to *Visnyk*, and the rest. He did not confess the reason for his behavior to me, but began to justify himself, [saying] that he relates to our work positively, that he did not go to *My*, and neither has Malaniuk. . . . That you predicted much, even the fall of Russia, and so on." She reports that Lypa took great offense at Dontsov's unwillingness to publish his father's memoirs and proverbs. He stayed a few nights and was productive in his room, so she suggested that he publish what he had written in *Visnyk*. At first, Lypa went for the idea: "You can tell Talia [Pyrohova-Zybenko]¹⁷⁵ that Lypa gave me a lecture owing to which I have become convinced that despite his declamations about nobility and chivalry, he is either hysterical, or uneducated, or maybe both at once. I would really like it if she told him this herself because I did not say goodbye to him and today I have a *Katzenjammer*."¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 93-96

¹⁷⁵ Natalia Iakhnenko, pseudonym of Pyrohova-Zybenko, writer and friend of Lypa, the Dontsovs, Teliha, and Livyts'ka-Kholodna.

¹⁷⁶ German: a headache from a hangover.

But I survived, ambiguously, and I will endure Lypa's slight."¹⁷⁷ Now in his mid thirties, Lypa had grown from the Dontsovs' novice protégé into a rival ideologue who carried himself with the cockiness befitting a rebellious apostate.

Tensions between Lypa and the Dontsovs flared up again after the appearance of *Pryznachennia Ukrainy* (The Destiny of Ukraine) in 1938. Lypa devoted several paragraphs to his former guru in this work: "Dontsov's book *Natsionalizm* is a brilliant lyrical reaction to the passivity of Ukrainians, [but] without deep, Ukrainian, synthetic thought. This is properly, international nationalism, very similar to his conception toward Marxism. . . . Now, as Moscow begins to build the 'Soviet Man,' Dontsov does not himself have any 'Ukrainian Man' to oppose to it: his role is not that of a builder."¹⁷⁸ In effect, Lypa accused Dontsov of cosmopolitanism and rootlessness. Rejecting both Stalinism and Hitlerism, Lypa instead looked to centuries-old cultural and legal traditions as the basis for an expanding Ukrainian identity and a new "Ukrainian era," in which a "Pontic Ukrainian race" would take its place alongside the Anglo-Saxon, German, and Roman "races." His definition of the latter term was political, not biological: "Race is a great spiritual community in the moral and emotional dimension."¹⁷⁹ As Shkandrij argues, Lypa viewed Ukraine as a cultural, psychological, and historical fusion of many ethnicities into a stable identity that was capable of resisting both Nazi racial and Soviet social engineering. He nevertheless argued that "Ukrainian" (Indo-European) genes were distinct from and stronger than "Russian" (Finno-Mongolic) genes, citing research on blood groups.¹⁸⁰ Unlike Dontsov, Lypa's faith in the oppressed masses' will and strength to fight and elevate

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in Svarnyk, "Iuryi Lypa i Dmytro Dontsov," 221.

¹⁷⁸ Lypa, *Pryznachennia Ukrainy*, 278.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 209.

¹⁸⁰ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 210.

themselves, with or without authoritarian leaders, suggests that the nineteenth-century Ukrainophiles and the Ukrainian National Communists were admirable, inspiring figures in light of their difficult circumstances.¹⁸¹ He also acknowledged the historical importance of Jews in Ukraine, criticizing the Russian Black Hundreds and the imperial Russian state for poisoning Ukrainian-Jewish relations with the infamous forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and reminding Dontsov of his supportive attitude toward Jews during his Social Democratic past—in 1906 the latter had taken part in the organization of Jewish self-defense groups in Kyiv, and in 1911 he defended Jews from Ukrainian nationalists.¹⁸²

Positive, time-hallowed myths that ennoble the oppressed people, build solidarity, and express their yearning for freedom are needed. But Dontsov's doctrine was, like Bolshevism, purely hate-driven, detrimental for the race, and foreign to Ukrainians, whom the *Vistnyk* editor, Teliha, and Malaniuk pointlessly berate with "Nietzschean bombast" for failing to abandon their good nature, love of beauty, and conservatism in favor of the invented traditions and runic humbug of "Baltic mysticism" (Nazism).¹⁸³ Rather, Lypa argued, the native Ukrainian past must be honored and preserved if Ukraine is to have a bright future. Authoritarian, sullen, iconoclastic, and intolerant, Dontsov and the *Vistnykivtsi* were out of step with the Ukrainian people. The latter exemplified voluntary association, "true individualism," and stubborn resistance to hierarchies, exploitation, and state regimentation. Lypa cited Ukraine's traditions of spontaneous peasant rebellions (the Green and Black armies), underground schools and universities, trade unions, and farming cooperatives.¹⁸⁴ The Ukrainian führer that Dontsov hoped for was a

¹⁸¹ Lypa, *Pryznachennia Ukrainy*, 241-58.

¹⁸² Ibid., 151.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 259.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 21, 188, 197, 242-43.

contradiction in terms.¹⁸⁵ Ukraine had developed organically and unconsciously, drawing its strength and vitality from the bottom up, from instinctual, spontaneous order, from accumulated experience; forcefully imposing an alien, “mechanistic,” “collective ideal” upon it would only harm the nation and incite resistance, just as Bolshevism had done.¹⁸⁶

Lypa’s book infuriated Dontsov, who coauthored the scathing review of it that appeared in *Vistnyk* with the anthropologist Rostyslav Iendyk and the art critic Oleksandr Lahutenko.¹⁸⁷ “Everything in [*Pryznachennia Ukrainy*] pleases the Little Russian soul: the size (300 pages!), the fluidity and superficiality of exposition, the muddledness and inexpressiveness of the assertions, and the tepid, purely Little Russian patriotic *tramtadratsiia*.”¹⁸⁸ The reviewers blamed Lypa’s purported Russophilia on his “Russian upbringing”: “For, evident throughout Iuryi Lypa’s book, is a great respect for Soviet scholars and ill will at moments toward everything that smells of Europe.”¹⁸⁹ They doubt his expertise in anthropology, geopolitics, economics, history, archaeology, and biology, accuse him of careless research, “chaotic thinking,” uncertainty, inconsistency, and self-contradiction, especially in his evaluations of Nazism, Fascism, Bolshevism, and Ukrainian nationalism.

But Iuryi Lypa has a ‘worldview.’ And it is known to us as the old-Ukrainophile, ‘*Prosvita*’ worldview of eclectic, ‘philanthropic,’ democratic Drahomanovism, which desperately defends its demolished positions. The basis of this ‘worldview’—an appeal to the East and an organic, dedicated hatred toward the West, not to Hitlerism or Fascism—statements against these are just a pretext—but toward the West as a force that disciplines

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 177.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 18.

¹⁸⁷ Ie. L. D., “Nen’ko-sharovarnyts’ka ‘geopolityka,’” *Vistnyk*, no. 12 (1938): 902-22, in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 6, 253-67.

¹⁸⁸ Dontsov’s word, derived from Polish, meaning a person who loudly expresses their opinions with impressive phrases that lack content. Ibid., 253.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 254.

thought and action; as a strict school of hardening; as something lucid, planned, and brilliant; and, generally, as a fairy-tale country of vivid individualities with a distinct sense of right and duty, something delineated, strong, formed.¹⁹⁰

The authors rejected Lypa's opposition to Fascism and Nazism as "foreign doctrines," alleging that his approval of the socialists Marx, Rousseau, and Fourier shows his actual disinterest in the origins of an idea, so long as it contributes to the decline of "Europe." Dontsov, Iendyk, and Lahutenko attacked Lypa's "anarchistic," "fellahist"¹⁹¹ (*felakhstvo*) ideal of statehood as a spontaneous order of voluntary associations, contrasting it unfavorably to something along the lines of the Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt's "decisionism," which defines sovereignty as the power to "command," and extols the moment of decisive, unfettered action by the leader in times of crisis and emergency, ideally in dictatorial contravention of the "law."¹⁹² The approach to nation- and state-building favored by Lypa and Drahomanov, derived from the French anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's theory of mutualism, was to blame for the decline, conquest, and oppression of Ukraine by foreigners who rejected libertarian teachings. Concerning Lypa's critique of Dontsov's *Natsionalizm* as a source of "hatred and the internal ruin of the race," the reviewers cited Shevchenko's harsh critique of his fellow Ukrainians as "slaves with cockades on their heads." "But Shevchenko was the proponent of an ideal strikingly opposite to the 'ideal' of Lypa, the proponent of an ideal of the Cossack against the 'ideal' of 'millions of swineherds'," and Dontsov carried on the same tradition of unsparing national self-critique.¹⁹³ Of course,

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 260.

¹⁹¹ From the Arabic word "fellah": a North African or Middle Eastern farmer or laborer. Dontsov began using it in the 1930s to denote the common, lowly, materialist opposite of the idealistic, courageous "knight" (*lytsar*).

¹⁹² The goal of decisions is permanent dictatorship: the exception becomes the rule; the emergency becomes the norm; the law becomes synonymous with the will of the leader. Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George D. Schwab (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985).

¹⁹³ Ibid., 265.

Iendyk, Lahutenko, and Dontsov lamented, “our socialist-liberal press is enamored with Lypa’s book because there is not a trace of ‘voluntarism’ in it,” citing reviews in *Nazustrich* and the popular weekly *Hromads’kyi holos* (Community Voice, 1892-1932) that praised Lypa’s resistance to Dontsov and *Visntyk*’s “demoralization of nation.”¹⁹⁴ In the final analysis, *Vistnyk* dismissed Lypa as yet another quietist Ukrainian “Buddhist” who wants to withdraw into an idyll and trusts that “providence” will sort everything out, as if Ukrainians needed only to “become themselves” and they would emerge as the fourth great race of Europe.

Conclusion: In Search of Allies on the Eve of the Final Battle

In the 1930s, Dontsov’s opponents accused him of being both iconoclastic—for attacking Hrushevs’kyi, Drahomanov, and the majority of the inherited idols and traditions of modern Ukrainian life—and authoritarian—for not tolerating intellectual pluralism, individuality, or creative freedom in his (or any) camp. The editor of *Visntyk* faced charges of both crude xenophobia and the excessive imitation of foreign ideas and institutions, above all Russian Communism and, less convincingly for a “Moskal’” such as Dontsov, German National Socialism. Dontsov’s combative behavior, negative philosophy and attitude, siege mentality and fear of internal dissent, and inability to imagine a new type of Ukrainian that was not an awkward imitation of the “Soviet Man” or Hitler’s “master race” drove some of the *Vistnykivtsi* away. But Dontsov was convinced that he was moving in the opposite direction—toward a more “authentic,” “traditional” Ukrainian politics and culture—one oriented toward the needs of the national struggle and the creation of a new elite on the basis of the forgotten virtues of the Cossacks and Kyivan-Rus’.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 267.

The contemporary historian Mykhailo Antonovych (1910-1954) assessed Dontsov's initial success and eventual attrition of supporters in the 1930s: "His brilliant articles, normally studded with numerous quotations from European thinkers, gave the impression of depth, erudition; they thrilled and fascinated the ordinary public [. . .], the more so since what he proposed seemed such an effective break with the past, something completely new."¹⁹⁵ Yet, by the eve of World War II, "deeper and more thoughtful natures were no longer satisfied with his brilliant phrases, his firework-like quotations, and began to turn away from *Vistnyk*. Moreover, at this time Dontsov's negative qualities became prominent: an inclination to gangster journalism, dirty tactics such as publishing private letters, and a sort of hysterical, abusive tone, aptly noted by Dolenga that demonstrated his main fault: lack of a positive program, the dominance of pure negation."¹⁹⁶

Others, however, reaffirmed their commitment to Dontsov. Personalities were as important as ideological convictions in making the decision to stay or go; as we saw with Teliha, Dontsova, and Lypa, love affairs, friendships, personal rivalries, and ambitions shaped the public stances of the *Vistnykivtsi* at least as much as the reverse. Intuitively cognizant of the inextricability of the political and the personal, Ukrainian nationalists' varied responses to feminism and the women's movement were linked to their views on Nazism and Communism, literature and history, the national revolution and the national ideal, as well as their "private" notions of gender, sexuality, and reproduction. The writers who remained committed to Dontsov's ideals of self-sacrifice, radical commitment to the nation, and redemptive violence

¹⁹⁵ TsDAHO, f. 269, op. 2, spr. 33, ark. 110. Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 99.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

prepared themselves for the final battle, joining the OUN with hopes of destroying the Soviet Union and carving out a place for an independent Ukraine in Hitler's New Europe.

Just as he had a quarter of a century earlier, on the eve of World War I, Dontsov eagerly anticipated a great war between "Europe" and "Russia" after 1933—this time in the form of Nazi Germany and a coalition of fascist nations against the Soviet Union. Like World War I, this new conflict would give Ukrainians an opportunity to build an independent state under the aegis of German civilization and military might. Ukrainian nationalists stood a chance of succeeding, Dontsov believed, but only if they were willing to reject the failed idols of nineteenth-century Ukrainophilia and imbibe the spirit, worldview, and (a)morality of the new fascist era, which also understood itself to be a resurrection of primordial unities, barbarian health, racial instincts, ancient traditions, and medieval values. Dontsov believed that good things would come of Hitler's plans for "the East," invoking the Nazi leader's vision of a German conquest and colonization of Russia in *Mein Kampf*,¹⁹⁷ and tried to convince himself and others that Alfred Rosenberg's talk of building an "independent" Ukraine as a bulwark against Russia would become the official policy and strategy of the Reich.¹⁹⁸ Omelchuk argues that Dontsov was aware that the Nazi idea of *Lebensraum* threatened Ukrainians as much as Russians and other Slavic "*Untermenschen*" (subhumans)—that the "Bolshevik methods" adopted by the Nazis would be used not only against the Bolsheviks but also against their victims.¹⁹⁹ But *Generalplan Ost*—the Nazi vision for a new racial order in Eastern Europe and Russia that called for the genocide or enslavement of the Slavic, Jewish, and otherwise non-Aryan populations of the

¹⁹⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, "Kinets' rosiis'koi revoliutsii," *Vistnyk*, no. 5 (1933), 381-82.

¹⁹⁸ He cited Alfred Rosenberg's *Der Zukunftsweg eeiner deutschen Aussenpolitik* (1927). Dmytro Dontsov, "Berezn' 1939," *Vistnyk*, no. 4 (1939) in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 6, 310.

¹⁹⁹ Omelchuk, *Literaturni idealy*, 22.

region to make way for German colonists—appears not to have dissuaded Dontsov from welcoming Nazi armies on their *Drang nach Osten*. As Omelchuk argues:

The *Vistnykivtsi* became willing participants in their own subjugation. They not only served the new ‘gods,’ but also enthusiastically sacrificed their own mental stability (the aesthetics and ethics of nationalism requires total and permanent struggle from an artist), their individual voice, their biography and creativity. This is exactly why Dontsov disregarded Hitler’s plans concerning Eastern Europe, about which he certainly knew: doubts were sacrificed on the altar of a desired, aestheticized reality, which is to say one of his own imagining.²⁰⁰

The *Vistnyk* editor published articles hailing Hitler with each eastward expansion of Nazi Germany over the course of 1938—the *Anschluss* with Austria, the annexation of the Sudetenland, the conquest of Czechoslovakia—calling it “the great path from Europe to the East, the path of giants, which Alexander, Napoleon, England walked, upon which the third German empire has set out.”²⁰¹ He attributed the führer’s success to the “gigantic attractive force of an idea.”²⁰² Despite the protests of France, which Dontsov dismissed as hypocritical, “Hitler had already dreamt his dreams of power, already crafted his plan of German expansion systematically and *gründlich* [thoroughly] through all the obstacles that to others seemed as high as the Eiffel [Tower], but which in his eyes had already crumbled in ruin. Not recognizing defeat, he had then already committed to impregnate his people with the explosive, dynamic force of the idea that he carried in himself.”²⁰³ In the same article, Dontsov described the spectacular mass rallies at Nuremberg in glowing terms, presenting Hitler’s actions—which had fatally undermined the “superstitions” of international law, democracy, European solidarity, the

²⁰⁰ Omelchuk, *Literaturni idealy*, 23. On the aestheticization of politics in Dontsov and the *Vistnykivtsi*’s works, see chapter 3

²⁰¹ Dmytro Dontsov, “Viden’ i Kyiv,” *Vistnyk*, no. 4 (1938): 281-87; “Sliakhom veletniv,” *Vistnyk*, no. 10 (1938): 734-39; “Berezen’ 1939,” 289-99.

²⁰² Dontsov, “Shliakhom veletniv,” in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 6, 268.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 269.

inviolability of boundaries and minority rights, and pacifism—as a vindication of the “active nationalism” promoted on the pages of *Vistnyk*.²⁰⁴ Given Dontsov’s descriptions of Hitler as “the real Messiah” and similarly emotive language, the *Vistnyk* editor’s enthusiasm for the German chancellor went beyond a rational acknowledgement of and desire to replicate the achievements of Nazism.²⁰⁵ The Third Reich, Dontsov felt, represented glorious salvation.

There were warnings that Hitler was disinterested in Ukrainian independence before the beginning of World War II, but Dontsov refused to heed them. Following the Munich Agreement (September 1938), which formalized Germany’s acquisition of the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia, Carpatho-Ukraine, a short-lived Ukrainian state occupying a small region of Czechoslovakia in what is today the westernmost part of Ukraine (*Zakarpattia oblast’*), declared its autonomy. The subsequent German invasion of Bohemia and Moravia and the collapse of the Czechoslovakian state inspired Carpatho-Ukraine to declare its independence on March 15, 1939. Acting with Berlin’s approval, Hungary invaded and annexed Carpatho-Ukraine the following day. Dontsov urged that “the tragic fate of *Zakarpattia*,” which “displayed the heroic characteristics of our race to the world,” not be taken as cause for “hysterics” and “doubts about Germany’s intentions of risking a conflict with the USSR over Ukraine.”²⁰⁶ Dontsov insisted that Germany would inevitably return to its plans, first attempted in 1918, to destroy the Russian empire by creating a strong, independent Ukraine. “Dnieper Ukraine will not be a satellite of any empire,” Dontsov asserted: “It has its own idea and this alone is inscribed upon its banner. The forces about which I spoke above [i.e. Germany and its Western opponents —TE] and whose

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Stryjek, *Ukraińska idea narodowa*, 146-47.

²⁰⁶ Dontsov, “Berezen’ 1939,” in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 6, 310.

collision in Ukraine is possible in the near future, should themselves realize this.”²⁰⁷ Whether Ukraine will gain an ally in its struggle for independence depends upon Ukrainians alone, but they should only collaborate with a power, “that unambiguously stands for our point of view: the destruction of the Russian empire, and the creation of an independent Ukraine.”²⁰⁸

In a spring 1939 article on Nazi Germany, “Zahadka III-oi imperii” (The Mystery of the Third Empire), Dontsov again made his enthusiasm for Hitler’s leadership clear.²⁰⁹ The “mystery” of the Third Reich was this: how did a vanquished and demoralized nation, such as Weimar Germany, transform itself into such a formidable power so suddenly? Dontsov asserted that the answer lay in the ideas and qualities of great men such as Hitler and Rosenberg, and the fanatical “initiative minority” that had gathered around them, barraging the reader with quotations from the two ideologues, making his case that if the right group of Ukrainians were to grasp the power of unfettered authority, intolerance, and fanaticism from studying the Nazi example, they might undergo a similar transformation and lead the Ukrainian people to victory. Dontsov expressed only a single reservation about what Nazism might have in store for Ukraine at the end of his essay: “It is not known what roads the new Germany will take in the future. It is an open question whether, on this new path that takes it into Central and Eastern Europe, it will find an idea that will be as persuasive to this Europe as it is to itself (the idea of German *Lebensraum* is not such an idea).”²¹⁰ It is unclear how one squares this meek appeal to a German-Ukrainian understanding with Dontsov’s axiom, also accepted by Nazi ideology, that force decides everything and no sympathy, tolerance, or kindness is owed to foreigners.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 312.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Dmytro Dontsov, “Zahadka III-oi imperii” *Vistnyk*, no. 5 (1939) in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 6, 315-28.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 326.

In the final issue of *Vistnyk* for September 1939, Dontsov reacted to news of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact—the short-lived “nonaggression agreement” between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.²¹¹ Secret clauses of the pact provided for the division of East Central Europe into Nazi and Soviet “spheres of influence”: over the course of the same month, the former took western Poland, while the latter took eastern Poland, including the western regions of what became Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and, unsuccessfully, Finland. The alliance triggered World War II and ended the post-1918 independence of Poland, which was partitioned yet again, this time between two totalitarian empires, and of the Baltic States, which became Soviet republics and underwent Stalinization. The pact lasted until June 1941, when Nazi Germany and its allies invaded the Soviet Union with the intention of obliterating it—as Dontsov and his followers fervently hoped it would. Prior to that, however, the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement perfectly contradicted Dontsov’s geopolitical conviction that Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, as the manifestations of two antithetical principles—Europe and Muscovy—were destined to fight a war of annihilation that would decide the fate of Ukraine and the world. Clearly baffled by the pact (the article is a rambling series of questions and conjectures), the editor wondered if Hitler had changed his mind about carving out German *Lebensraum* in Stalin’s empire, if he was serious about his claims to have entirely lost interest in Ukraine, or if he was simply being deceptive. Dontsov fell back on the reassuring claim that no matter what happened internationally, the Russian imperial system had been collapsing since 1917 and the fate of Ukraine ultimately rested in the hands of Ukrainians alone, with or without German support. Nevertheless, making his pro-Nazi outlook perfectly clear as war loomed, Dontsov wrote “Zhydivs’ke pytannia i natsional’sotsializm” (The Jewish

²¹¹ Devius [Dmytro Dontsov], “Na marginesy novoho pakt,” *Vistnyk*, no. 9 (1939) in Dontsov, *Vybrani tvory*, vol. 6, 351-53.

Question and National Socialism), also published in the final issue of *Vistnyk*. The stated aim of the piece was to popularize Hitler's teachings in *Mein Kampf* about the dangers of the Jews for the Aryan race.²¹² A follow-up piece on the practical implementation of Nazi ideas on the Jewish question was planned, but the outbreak of war in Poland brought the journal to an end.²¹³

On September 1, 1939, the day Germany's invasion of western Poland began, the Polish authorities arrested Dontsov and his loyal assistant, Mykhailo Hikavyi, permanently shuttering *Vistnyk*. The editor was imprisoned in the Bereza Kartuska concentration camp (located in present-day western Belarus), alongside the OUN(B) leaders Stepan Bandera, Mykola Lebed, Roman Shukhevych, and others.²¹⁴ Evidently, Dontsov's pro-Nazi articles and presumed connections to Ukrainian integral nationalist organizations, such as the OUN, made him enough of a security risk to warrant incarceration under the circumstances. His time at Bereza Kartuska was brief, however, as the prison's staff abandoned it overnight upon learning of the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland on September 17 and the collapse of the Polish state. Freed, Dontsov fled west via Krakow to Berlin, without returning home to L'viv, which had already fallen under Soviet occupation and was therefore an extremely dangerous place for a famous anti-Communist such as himself.²¹⁵ The OUN member Mykola Klymyshyn (1909-2003) met Dontsov at the OUN headquarters in Berlin's Wilmersdorf locality in September or October 1939.²¹⁶ According to

²¹² A.R. [Dmytro Dontsov], "Zhydivs'ke pytannia i natsionalizm," *Vistnyk*, no. 9 (1939): 630-41.

²¹³ Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 230.

²¹⁴ The prison had been opened in 1934 for the indefinite detention without trial of presumed enemies of the state, especially OUN members and Communists.

²¹⁵ The Soviet regime attempted to accelerate the Stalinization of East Galicia and Volhynia on the basis of its experience in the rest of the USSR, destroying the social order in Western Ukraine as rapidly as possible through mass arrests, terror, indiscriminate expropriation, and collectivization of agriculture. See Gross, *Revolution from Abroad*.

²¹⁶ Mykola Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli* (Toronto: Vydavnytstvo Ligy Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, 1975), 237-38.

Klymyshyn's memoir, Dontsov gave the impression of being "haggard, but in good health" upon his arrival at the meeting, which, as Golczewski notes, threw the oft-repeated claim that the OUN and Dontsov had nothing to do with one another back into question.²¹⁷ But Dontsov, who quietly resented the Reich's pact with the Soviet Union, did not remain in the German capital for long, and there is no evidence that he began cooperating with the OUN at this point. He did, however, stick to his guns when it came to Nazism, at least until Germany's defeat seemed assured.

²¹⁷ Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*, 1014. After the outbreak of war, some fifteen thousand other Ukrainian nationalists went to Klymyshyn to begin or resume service in the OUN, many of them freed from abandoned Polish prisons. Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi*, 267.

CHAPTER 6: FROM POLITICS TO MYSTICISM: DONTSOV'S FINAL BATTLE AND THE FATES OF THE *VISTNYKIVTSI*, 1939-1973

World War II ended *Vistnyk* and scattered the *Vistnykivtsi*. Some joined the OUN and perished on the frontlines of the struggle for an independent Ukraine, acting out Dontsov's "romantic" ideal of martyrdom. The rest took refuge in other parts of wartime Europe. Those who survived typically left the Old World for Canada and the US, starting new lives on a new continent rather than face "repatriation" to the Soviet Union. Emerging from the war unscathed, Dontsov took the second path. Between 1939 and 1945, he resided chiefly in Bucharest and Prague, making several short visits to Berlin. His creative output dropped off in these years, but he did manage to found a short-lived journal, *Batava* (Phalanx), in Bucharest. Dontsov underwent the final intellectual evolution of his lifetime as the editor of *Batava*, as the concepts of "caste," scientific racialism, and traditionalism moved to the center of his revised worldview, which he expounded in his 1944 work, *Dukh nashoi davnyny* (The Spirit of Our Antiquity). While in Prague he wrote for the press of the SS-operated Reinhard Heydrich Institute, then fled the Czech capital for the American zone of occupation in southern Germany as the Red Army advanced into Central Europe in early 1945. He made his way via Paris, London, and Philadelphia, to Montreal, where he settled and sought citizenship in 1948.

Dontsov's reputation suffered in light of the defeat of the Axis Powers and the exposure of their crimes, which discredited the fascistic ideas that he had spent decades promoting, and in light of his less-than-principled, even craven and irresponsible behavior during the war.

Ukrainian émigré writers, including surviving members of the *Vistnykivtsi*, banished Dontsov from their collective literary and political life in the late 1940s. He wrote on increasingly mystical and religious themes, repackaging his teachings for Christian fundamentalist audiences in the Cold War West at the height of McCarthyism, while studiously avoiding the anti-Semitic and pro-German statements that had been de rigueur on the pages of *Vistnyk*. Rebranding himself as a pious Cold Warrior, Dontsov tried to efface his spiritual and practical alignment with Nazism in the world he had left behind by republishing his works with the offending passages excised, but there is little evidence that he had a genuine change of heart. As we shall see, each step of Dontsov's journey in the final thirty years of his life gave rise to scandal and controversy, from the newspapers to the Canadian Parliament, pitting his fervent acolytes against his no-less-adamant opponents. The latter denounced Dontsov as a sympathizer and collaborator of Nazi Germany—a scoundrel who should be tried and sentenced, not shielded and honored. His supporters countered that he was a brilliant and heroic anti-Communist who deserved the full support of “the Free World” in its struggle against the Soviet empire. Ultimately, the latter carried the day; the Canadian authorities exonerated Dontsov of the charges and permitted him to take up permanent residence in Quebec province, where he lived and worked until his death in 1973. The debate over his biography, works, and legacy did not die with him, for no one doubted that, for better or worse, he had been one of the most influential Ukrainians of his era. In this final chapter of his life, Dontsov embodied the dilemmas of “de-Nazification” and the intersection of roots, religion, and anti-Communism in the postwar Ukrainian immigration to North America.

The Sundering of the *Vitsnykivtsi*

The documentary record on Dontsov is considerably thinner for the period from his arrest in L'viv in 1939 to his emigration to North America in 1947. The timeline of his Warsaw archive terminates in September 1939. Probably fearing for his safety, he published relatively little in the chaos of the next five years. His letters and other papers from this period are scattered or lost. Thus, barring new archival discoveries and further research, only an impressionistic account of Dontsov's public, personal, and intellectual life during World War II can be reconstructed. It is unclear, for instance, what led Dontsov and Dontsova to get divorced at the outset of the war. Historian Iryna Shlikhta has suggested that Livyts'ka-Kholodna's recollection that Dontsov "was known for his affairs," including his ongoing infatuation with Olena Teliha, may have had something to do with it.¹ But, as we have seen, Dontsova either did not (or claimed not to) believe the rumors, or did not take them seriously. Even if she did, why would she wait six years, until the outbreak of war, to divorce Dontsov if this were the issue? Shlikhta points to friction between the couple about financial issues as another possible cause, but this also fails to explain the timing of the separation.² The decision may have been a measure to protect Dontsova, given the fact that she stayed in Galicia for a time after the Soviet occupation of the region had begun, and her connections to Dontsov put her at risk. Association with Dontsov had already gotten his relatives into trouble with the Soviet authorities, including his estranged brother, the old Bolshevik Vladimir Dontsov. The two met for the last time in 1920 and did not write to one another thereafter, but Vladimir and his son Petr, whom the NKVD arrested in Moscow in March

¹ Shlikhta, "Shtrykhy do portreta," 685. Livyts'ka-Kholodna, "Spomyny," 92.

² There was a financial scandal of an unclear nature in 1920, as evidenced by a letter from Oleksandr Lahutenko to Mariia Dontsova: "I am sorry to learn that you will be suing your husband. Excuse me, this is not absolutely none of my business, but I have always had respect for your husband as a man of crystal-clear honor when it comes to money matters. And it seems to me not worth it, especially now, to worsen an already scandalous time for Ukraine with an unnecessary scandal." TsDAVO, f. 3849, op. 1, spr. 19, ark. 82, 83.

1938, and accused of “anti-Soviet agitation,” spying for Germany, and connections to a “fascist organization” in Berlin via Dmytro. Vladimir confessed to trumped-up charges of having recently met with Dmytro on Khimkinskii Bridge in the eastern suburbs of Moscow to plot against the USSR, and was executed the following month for espionage. Also charged with anti-Soviet agitation, Petr Dontsov died in a labor camp in April 1943.³ According to the memoirs of her friend, Natalia Iakhnenko (Zybenko-Pyrohova), Mariia Dontsova had attempted to emigrate in the three-day grace period during which the Germans kept the new border open to allow Polish citizens to leave the Soviet zone of occupation. Unfortunately, still recovering from an illness, she was unable to carry her luggage across the border checkpoint, the porter ran off with her belongings, and she was forced to remain in Galicia.⁴ In 1941 Mariia—now (again) Bachyns’ka—left with her brother Volodymyr for Kovel (a town in the neighboring region of Volhynia). While in Kovel, Nazi police arrested and briefly imprisoned her in the course of an antipartisan operation in 1943. After her release, she made her way to Prague, and then to Germany, where she participated in *Ob’ednannia Ukrain’skykh Zhinok v Nimechchyni* (the Union of Ukrainian Women in Germany, not to be confused with *Soiuz Ukrainok*), where she edited the last three issues of the union’s paper, *Hromadianka* (Woman Citizen). In 1950, Bachyns’ka (Dontsova) emigrated to the United States. She settled in New York City, joined *Soiuz Ukrainok Ameryky* (the Union of Ukrainian Women of America), and wrote for the émigré

³ Kumok, “Tri brata,” 64.

⁴ Natalia Iakhnenko, *Vid biura do brygidok: Trokhy spohadiv z 1939-1941 rokiv: L’viv* (Beralia and Munich: Nakladom Avtorky, 1986), 31. Iakhnenko emigrated to Germany during the war, eventually settling in Sidney, Australia, where she died in 1995.

press (her articles appeared in the reputable publication *Svoboda* [Freedom]). Mariia Bachyns'ka died on December 30, 1978.⁵

After 1939, Dontsov's life path separated entirely from that of his former wife. Instead of staying in Berlin and attempting to drum up support in German circles for the idea of Ukrainian independence, as he had done during World War I, he traveled to Bucharest, Romania—a neutral country at the outset of World War II where Dontsov could count upon the support of his friend and colleague, the biologist Yuriy Rusov (George Roussow). Romanian dictator Ion Antonescu (1940-1944) brought the ultranationalist Iron Guard party and paramilitary movement into the government in September 1940. The Iron Guard launched a campaign of horrific violence against Romania's Jewish population and attempted to seize power in Bucharest, but was suppressed and dissolved by Antonescu's army in 1941. Dontsov did not voice his opinions on the Iron Guard movement, but its anti-Semitism, ultranationalism, and radical Christian Orthodoxy was close to his own, especially during World War II. Rusov headed the National Zootechnical Institute in Bucharest, and had written for the *Visnyk* quarterly. While living in the Romanian capital, Dontsov worked with Rusov to create and edit the short-lived Ukrainian nationalist monthly, *Batava* (Phalanx).⁶ Self-advertised as “the journal of national traditionalism,” *Batava* ran for just seven months, and featured a small number of authors, who often used cryptonyms. The journal sought readers among the 120,000 Ukrainians then living in Romania, but its print run was somewhere beneath 2,000. Apart from Dontsov, only Rusov and the latter's wife, Natalia Gerken-Rusova (artist, designer, playwright, and one of the chief

⁵ Shlikhta, “Shtrykhy do biohrafii.”

⁶ See Oleksandr Maslak, “‘Natsional’nyi tradytsionalizm’ — politychna filosofiia kola bukharests’koi ‘Batavy’ (prolhomeny do rekonstruktsii osnovykh idei),” *Hileia: Naukovyi visnyk. Zbirnyk naukovykh prats’. Istorychni nauky. Filosofs’ki nauky. Politychni nauky* 52 (2011): 456-62.

theorists of *Vistnyk*'s positions on art), are known to have regularly published in it.⁷ *Batava* signaled an intensification of Christian mysticism, conservatism, the cult of aristocracy, and antimodernism in Dontsov's thinking, which, as we saw in chapter 3, had recently passed through an anticlerical, morally nihilistic, and avant-garde phase.⁸ Sosnovs'kyi notes the change in emblem between *Vistnyk* and *Batava*; instead of the former's silhouette of a wolf's head bearing its fangs—a symbol of nature in all its ferocity, representing “active nationalism's” social Darwinian ethos—the latter's imprint is a Cossack saber and a quill in the sign of a cross—symbols of old Ukraine.⁹ Gerken-Rusova, who was also fascinated by the myths and legends of Kyivan-Rus', designed the new emblem, which is reminiscent of Christian monarchical insignia. To this was added the Latin slogan: *Deus, Patria, Dux* (God, Fatherland, Leader).

The ideology undergirding *Batava* was a synthesis of Dontsov's “active nationalism” with the Hetmanites' ideology, to which Rusov and Rusova were also connected.¹⁰ Thanks to Rusov, Dontsov met with Pavlo Skoropads'kyi several times during World War II, and began contributing to the Hetmanite organ *Ukrains'kyi robotnyk* (Ukrainian Worker), which Rusov

⁷ Rusov and Rusova published longer works on the same themes after the war as émigrés in Montreal, where they continued living and working alongside Dontsov. Iuryi Rusov, *Dusha narodu i dukh natsii* (Philadelphia: Ameryka, 1947). Natalia Gerken-Rusova, *Heroichnyi teatr* (London: Ukrains'ka vydanycha spilka, 1957).

⁸ Oleh Bahan, “Ideoloh natsional'noi velychi,” in Dmytro Dontsov, *Khrestom i mechem: Tvory* (Ternopil: Rada, 2010), 8-66, 60.

⁹ Sosnovs'kyi, *Dmytro Dontsov*, 193-94.

¹⁰ Myron Korolyshyn, “Za ob'iednanyi ukrains'kyi provid,” <http://hetman-ua.org/lipinsky/almanah/almanah-ua3.html> [accessed February 21, 2017]

edited.¹¹ Under the latter's influence, Dontsov began to idolize the Ukrainian Cossack religious philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda (1722-1794).¹²

Trained in biology, Rusov also contributed to Dontsov's growing interest in scientific racialism. According to Rusov, and now Dontsov, Ukraine's population comprised four racial types—"Nordic," "Mediterranean," "Dinaric" (*dynars'ka*) and "Oriental" (*ostiis'ka*)—in "descending" order. This typology came from German race researcher and eugenicist Hans F. K. Günther's (1891-1968) theory of "Nordicism," which divided the Aryan race into a masterly Nordic and lesser Mediterranean, Dinaric, and Eastern (Baltic) subtypes of varying qualities, each with hidden "biological potentialities."¹³ The *Batava* circle attributed the state-building element in Ukrainian history since Volodymyr the Great (958-1015) and his Viking forebears to the Nordic element. The Mediterranean element supposedly brought achievements in the arts and appreciation for beauty. *Batava*'s writers esteemed the "Dinaric" race, thought to be predominant in Central and Southeastern Europe, as adept in combat and manual labor, while the "Oriental" race, imagined as a Tartar-Mongol-Russian mix, offered the least of value to Ukraine, corrupting the Ukrainian gene pool with slavish, disorderly traits. Such ideas had become a commonplace in Europe thanks to the rise of Nazism in Germany.

Dontsov and the Rusovs used *Batava* to develop the notion, only suggested in the former's 1930s writings, of a new Ukrainian ruling "caste" derived from the exemplars and traditions of the medieval and Cossack periods of Ukrainian history, as well as this

¹¹ Iuryi Rusov, "Materiialy do natsional'-derzhanytsva," *Batava*, no. 6 (1941): 7-13.

¹² The fascination with Skovoroda is peculiar, however, as the philosopher critiqued religious and other forms of intolerance as a sin against God and a symptom of ignorance of the multiplicity of eternal truth in everyday life. Dontsov never embraced the ideals of religious toleration, let alone multiculturalism; his vision, to the end of his days, was a holy crusade against the heathen Communist empire.

¹³ Günther's 1922 work, *Rassenkunde des duetschen Volkes* (Racial Types of the German People) impressed Hitler enough for it to become the basis for Nazi eugenics.

anthropological-racial theory. He presented these ideas in “Holovni prykmety providnoi kasty” (The General Features of a Ruling Caste)¹⁴ and “Kasta ne partiia” (Caste, not Party), expounding them more fully in his book *Dukh nashoi davnyny* (The Spirit of Our Antiquity, first published in 1944), to which we shall return later. “What is a caste?” Dontsov asks:

We are not speaking here about the castes in India, which have a specific meaning. This word is intended in a broader sense . . . [as] specific strata in a hierarchically constructed society. The ruling stratum distinguished itself from others through its special social *duties and privileges*, even its own *separate morality and customs*. . . . The caste is also elevated by the extreme severity of the laws that govern membership within it, as well as by the principle and lifestyle of a strict separation from other strata or castes of society. Precisely in this sense, castes are a powerful element in the duration and stability of society.¹⁵

Dontsov’s definitions of “the nation” and of Ukraine had changed yet again: now he conceived of the nation as an unbroken tradition—a “duration” (*tryvalist*’)—maintained by the vigilance of a ruling caste comprised of “better people” (*luchchi liudy*).¹⁶ The latter had to exhibit certain traits, above all “superiority” (*vyshchist*’)—a psychological-racial characteristic derived from blood and breeding: “The leaders truly designated by a higher power, which they feel within themselves, whose voice they obey and to whom they devote themselves, experiencing it as their calling, like an unstoppable force, to unite, inspire, order, lead. Chosen by a higher power, such a person is of a different race, molded from different clay, from which Fate carves heroes, demigods.”¹⁷ Ukraine, then, was a conglomeration of races, which, in the modern period, have tragically fallen out of their ideal proportions and proper hierarchical order. This reversal of

¹⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, “Holovni prykmety providnoi kasty,” *Batava*, no. 2-3 (1941), 1-8. Dmytro Dontsov, *Dukh nashoi davnyny* (Prague: Vydavnytstvo Iuriia Tyshchenka, 1944).

¹⁵ Dontsov, “Holovni prykmety,” 1.

¹⁶ This follows Tomasz Stryjek’s periodization of Dontsov’s intellectual biography.

¹⁷ Dontsov, “Holovni prykmety,” 1.

natural authority was the supposed source of Ukraine's decline as a nation, which the Soviet Union accelerated with its genocidal behavior and forced population transfers.

In *Batava*, Dontsov expanded his critique of “party-mindedness” (*partiinstvo*), as opposed to the ideals of a caste and an order (*orden*), implicitly targeting the OUN, which underwent a schism in 1940 (see below). “A party has a *program*, [but] a caste [has] a *credo*.”¹⁸ To belong to a caste is not a matter of personal conviction or “party discipline,” which the “party nationalists” rely upon because they lack the internal organizing principle of a caste—namely, the innate racial, spiritual, traditional, and psychological traits that its initiates hold in common.¹⁹ Reflecting on the same topics, Rusov wrote a series of installments, “Materiialy do national'-derzhavnytstva” (Contributions to National-Statehood), appearing in each issue of the journal, and Gerken-Rusova contributed an article, “Pro Kastu kavalieriv i haspydiv” (On the Caste of Cavaliers and Serpents). Given these common interests, methods, and historiosophical, political, aesthetic, moral, religious, and anthropological agendas, the *Batava* group might be considered a new “school.” It combined elitist, theocratic, and ultratraditionalist ideas allegedly drawn from the distant past with the latest theories and practices of “scientific” racialism and eugenics. This was Dontsov's last intellectual turn—all of his subsequent writing centered on the same themes.

The final issue of *Batava* appeared in November 1941, ceasing publication once Dontsov moved to Prague via Berlin, just months after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. He later claimed that the Nazis forced him to relocate against his will, forcing him into hiding or putting him under house arrest, but it is more plausible that the German authorities either facilitated or did not care to interfere in Dontsov's travels. Commencing on June 22, 1941, Operation

¹⁸ Dmytro Dontsov, “Kasta—ne partiia,” *Batava*, no. 5 (1941): 2-7, 5.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

Barbarossa, which quickly brought the whole of Ukraine under German control in the wake of a panicked Soviet retreat, restored Dontsov's faith in Hitler's anti-Russian, anti-Bolshevik agenda. The strategy was intended prevent a repeat of the hunger-induced collapse of morale on the German home front by extracting Ukrainian grain and labor. In possession of the Ukrainian black earth region and the oil of the Caucasus, the Third Reich and its satellite states (*Mitteleuropa*) would be autarkic and invulnerable to Allied blockades. As we saw in chapter 2, the German war machine had already attempted this near the end of World War I by maintaining a Ukrainian puppet state, the Hetmanate, in which Dontsov served. This time, however, the Germans proved to be hostile to the idea of Ukrainian statehood and independence, as the volatile wartime relationship between the Nazis and the OUN demonstrates.

The May 1938 assassination of Ievhen Konovalets' by an NKVD-rigged exploding cake in Rotterdam led to a succession crisis and a schism of the OUN into two hostile factions in August 1940: the first, the OUN(M), led by Andrii Mel'nyk, represented the older, more conservative leadership of the OUN abroad (the *Provid*), which kept a certain distance from Dontsov's voluntarist, antidemocratic ideas; the second, the OUN(B), led by Stepan Bandera, comprised the younger, more radical cadres in Galicia who had been freed from prison following the collapse of the Polish state and who refused to recognize Mel'nyk's authority. The OUN(B)'s leaders were enthusiastic followers of Dontsov's doctrines of amorality, the initiative minority, and creative violence.²⁰ Like Dontsov (and the Nazis), the OUN(B) regarded Jews as agents of Bolshevism and enemies of Europe's nationalists. Also like Dontsov, the OUN(B) regarded an alliance with Nazi Germany in its crusade against the Soviet state as the best available path toward independent statehood. The outbreak of World War II intensified their anti-Semitism and

²⁰ See the discussion of *Natsionalizm* in chapter 4.

hostility toward minorities. Practically and ideologically, the OUN(B) moved closer to the Nazis, upon whom they depended, taking an active role in the large-scale violence against Jews and Poles in German-occupied Galicia and Volhynia between 1939 and 1944.²¹

At the outset of the war, the Nazi regime approved and sponsored the OUN(B)'s formation of the Nachtigall and Roland Battalions under the auspices of the German Abwehr (military intelligence). Intended as the kernel of a future Ukrainian army, the two units participated in the invasion of Soviet Ukraine. After their arrival in L'viv on June 30, 1941, the OUN(B) proclaimed Ukraine's independence, with a future capital in Kyiv, Iaroslav Stets'ko (1912-1986) as prime minister, and Stepan Bandera as supreme leader. Hoping that the Germans would appreciate their dependence upon Ukrainian support in the ongoing war against Soviet Russia and acquiesce to this *fait accompli*, the OUN(B) declared its willingness to rule Ukraine in accordance with Nazi interests and wage an unrelenting struggle against the "Muscovite-Bolshevik enslavers." The proclamation's third point thus read: "The newly formed Ukrainian state will work closely with the Nation-Socialist Great Germany, under the leadership of its leader Adolf Hitler, which is forming a new order in Europe and is helping the Ukrainian people free itself from Muscovite occupation."²² There were voices in favor of tolerating or even promoting Ukrainian statehood for practical reasons—Alfred Rosenberg, most prominently, and military commanders, who were more concerned with winning the war in the east than Hitler's conviction that Ukrainians and other Slavs were racially inferior to Aryans and therefore unworthy of self-government. But the plan to depopulate Ukraine, reduce the survivors to helots,

²¹ On the OUN's role in the anti-Jewish pogroms that followed the German conquest of L'viv, see Himka, "The L'viv Pogrom," and Carynnyk, "The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists."

²² "Akt proholoshennia ukrains'koi derzhavy," *Samostiina Ukraina*, no. 3 (July 10, 1941, Stanislaviv), 1.

and colonize it with militarized German farmers won out.²³ In response to the OUN(B)'s action, the Nazi authorities launched a crackdown on the group, imprisoning or executing most of its leaders, and forcing the rest of the organization underground. The OUN(B) nevertheless continued to operate, dispatching clandestine expeditionary groups into Eastern Ukraine to inspire and organize nationally conscious Ukrainians, participate in the extirpation of the Soviet-Russian system and its hidden supporters, and lay the groundwork for independent statehood. The OUN(M) also cooperated with Nazi Germany, included members who adhered to fascist and Dontsovian ideas, and sent expeditionary groups into formerly Central and Eastern Ukraine behind the advancing Wehrmacht.

Oleh Ol'zhych and Olena Teliha participated in the first OUN(M) expedition to Kyiv at the outset of the Nazi-Soviet war. We have so far said little about Ol'zhych (real name, Kandyba), whom Teliha hailed in 1936 as "the most brilliant representative of today's young poetry"; a heroic, vibrant figure, for whom "life and struggle are synonyms."²⁴ Like Teliha, Ol'zhych took a romantic view of martyrdom for the nation, expressing this in his poetry: "How magnificent that we shall not be given the chance / to live to thirty!" "Oh, believe the bright fire of courage, / And you will throw off, like a torn rag, / the weakness, the doubt and the vanity of life."²⁵ Anarchaeologist by profession, Ol'zhych graduated from Charles University in Prague in 1929, wrote his dissertation on the Trypillian culture of the Neolithic period in Galicia, and

²³ As John Armstrong explains, "the Nazis preferred to play off the scorned Slavic elements against each other, rather than risk giving the Ukrainians a free hand." Despite their treatment under Nazis rule, the OUN proved willing to collaborate with the Germans again in 1943, since it meant weapons, training, and support in its fight against the greater Polish and Russian enemies. Armstrong, "Collaborationism in World War II," 409. Also see Timothy Snyder, "The Causes of Ukrainian-Polish Ethnic Cleansing, 1943," *Past & Present* 179 (May 2003): 197-234.

²⁴ Teliha, "Syla cherez radist'," 102.

²⁵ Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 204-5.

participated in digs across Eastern Europe. He drew inspiration from the prehistoric and ancient world for his poetry and politics, which—despite following Dontsov’s lead in rejecting democracy, liberalism, socialism, communism, conservatism, materialism, and pacifism—was skeptical of Nazism. His archaeological work challenged the notion that prehistoric “Aryans” were the source of civilization in Ukraine.²⁶ A leading member and cultural spokesmen of the OUN since 1929, Ol’zhych wrote extensively on Ukrainian culture and nationalism, focusing on its continuities with ancient myths and folklore, the mystical power and beauty of the distant past. He reimagined the Slavic pagan gods, Dazhboh and Japheth, as the divine ancestors of the Slavic nations; the basis for a myth of warlike vitality, idealism, expansionism, and unity for modern and future Ukrainians.²⁷ Yet, his aesthetic and political vision was modernist, voluntarist, and forward-thinking; he praised his fellow *Visnykivtsi* as representatives of a “militarized neoclassicism,” rooted in heroic medieval values, oriented toward European high culture, and capable of inspiring great strength, faith, love, and hate.²⁸ He placed Ukraine on the avant-garde of a new European civilization that would overcome the decadence and chaos that had been unleashed by World War I.²⁹ On the eve of Operation Barbarossa, Ol’zhych wrote a paean to war and premodern tradition that was close to Dontsov’s thinking at the same time: “Militarism is a universal worldview and a morality that forms an individual and a people. It does not see in the enemy a criminal or a monster, but another human being, placed in an

²⁶ Liubomyr Vynar, *Oleh Kandyba-Ol’zhych: Doslidzhennia ta dzherela* (New York: Ukrains’ke Istorychne Tovarystvo, Natsional’nyi Universytet “Ostrozka Akademiia,” 2008), 41-42, 77.

²⁷ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 203-4. Oleh Ol’zhych, “Natsionalistyncha kul’tura” (1940) and “Ukrains’ka Kul’tura” (1942).

²⁸ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 201-2.

²⁹ Oleh Ol’zhych, “V avanhardi heroichnoi doby,” (1938) in Oleh Ol’zhych, *Poeziia, Proza* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, 2007), 263.

adversarial position by the profound, creative, and tragic wisdom of life. This is how knightly *ethics and virtues* originate. A militaristic worldview ennobles life, calling forth courage, steadfastness, soldiery camaraderie, a sense of higher duty and honor.”³⁰ Armed with this martial fatalism, Ol’zhych, Teliha, and their comrades went to German-occupied Kyiv with an anti-imperial gospel.



Figure 6.1. The 1941 OUN(M) expeditionary group: sitting (l-r), Oleh Ol’zhych, Olena Teliha, and Ulas Samchuk; unidentified comrades standing. *Source:* Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine

Like Dontsov, Ol’zhych and Teliha were enthusiastic about the achievements, aesthetics, and ethos of Italian Fascism and German Nazism, but they were independent thinkers and political actors—serious artists who lived out the Spartan worldview rhapsodized in their writings. Their defiant nationalism put them in direct conflict with the nascent Nazi empire. Ol’zhych played an active role in the abortive independence of Carpatho-Ukraine, and opposed the schism in the OUN, but sided with the Mel’nyk faction, serving as its second-in-command. In 1939-1940, he headed the cultural activities of the Leadership of the Ukrainian Nationalists (PUN), together with Teliha, in Krakow. Their OUN(M) expeditionary group, under Ol’zhych’s

³⁰ Oleh Ol’zhych, “Ukrains’ka istorychna svidomist’,” (1941), quoted in Shkandrij *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 202.

direction, reached Kyiv in September 1941, began publishing a newspaper, *Ukrains'ke slovo* (Ukrainian Word), and founded the Ukrainian National Council (*Ukrains'ka natsional'na rada*), a political and civil body intended to serve as the basis for a future Ukrainian state. In Kyiv, Teliha edited a literary weekly, *Litavry* (Kettledrums), a subsidiary of *Ukrains'ke slovo*, which had a press run of over 20,000 copies and disseminated Ukrainian nationalist views. The publication ran for just a few months, however, running afoul of the Nazi occupation authorities who opposed its pro-independence stance. The Germans shut down *Ukrains'ke slovo*, arrested its staff, and replaced it with the strictly pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic, and anti-Ukrainian independence *Nove ukrains'ke slovo* (New Ukrainian Word) in December.

Refusing to cooperate, Teliha had a chance to flee Kyiv before facing arrest, but chose to remain in the city. “There has to be someone who looks death in the face and does not retreat,” she said.³¹ On February 21, 1942, Olena Teliha, her husband Mykhailo, and over forty other OUN activists were shot at Babyn Iar, a ravine on the edge of Kyiv where the Nazis killed tens of thousands of Jews and others. Ol'zhych went underground, leading the OUN(M)'s operations in Ukraine until his arrest by the Gestapo on May 25, 1944, in L'viv, where he was discovered with a collection of documents describing Nazi crimes that he had been compiling.³² Since the beginning of the war he had become disillusioned with the Nazis, whom he called “a mob of racists, cutthroats, and gangsters.”³³ Imprisoned at Sachsenhausen, Ol'zhych was tortured by Nazi interrogators until his death by execution or suicide on June 10. The deaths of Ol'zhych and Teliha demonstrated the resolve behind their premonitions of personal martyrdom. Both

³¹ Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 176.

³² Vynar, *Oleh Kandyba-Ol'zhych*, 175-88.

³³ Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 199.

subsequently achieved cult status in the Ukrainian nationalist pantheon, proving themselves more committed to Dontsov's doctrine than he himself was, even in his youth.

The latter's rebellious former disciple, Iuryi Lypa, also took the heroic path of a resolute "active nationalist," joining the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA)—the military wing of the OUN—as a physician and propagandist. Instead of retreating west with the Germans, Lypa returned to his hometown of Odesa, despite its recapture by Soviet forces, in the summer of 1944. The NKVD arrested him on August 19. Two days later his mutilated body was discovered, dumped in the garbage pit at the edge of town. NKVD agents had tortured and castrated him.³⁴

But Dontsov, who had inspired Ol'zhych, Teliha, Lypa, and many other young Ukrainians with a morbid ethos of fanatical violence, self-sacrifice, and courage, was nowhere to be found in Ukraine at its darkest hour. After World War II—in which one in every six inhabitants of Ukraine, over five million individuals, perished—Dontsov created a monument to only one of them: Teliha. His eulogy to the martyred Olena, *Poetka vohnenykh mezh* (which we touched on in chapter 5), hailed her as "the poetess of the fiery limits, on the path of a new epoch of our civilization, an epoch that she heralded and in the struggle for which she laid down her head."³⁵ "In our 'progressive' age, in the age of the triumphant boor, in the age of the herd, of the degradation of all individuality, of the brilliant and the brave—one's gaze stops with pride on the figure of Olena Teliha."³⁶ She possessed the "mentality" of a Ukrainian ruling caste, the mystique of the word and a combative spirit," a true militant who wanted to "beat plowshares into swords with a prophetic word."³⁷ As a woman and as a poet, Teliha was warlike, fanatical,

³⁴ Iuryi Lypa, *Vseukrains'ka trylohiia*, vol. 2 (Kyiv: Mizhrehial'na akademiia upravlinnia personalom, 2007), 2, 388.

³⁵ Dontsov, *Poetka vohnenykh mezh*, 7.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 34.

overflowing with the will to life and power. Wrapping himself in her glory, Dontsov exalted her as the most perfect embodiment of his ideals in their time. He praised her “tragic optimism” and willingness to suffer and die for a great cause, her depth of faith and love for Ukraine. “Her love was not a sweet and shallow emotion, it was a courageous love, severe, and merciless toward herself; not a powerless compassion but a sacrificial act.”³⁸ Dontsov concluded his eulogy with a call to arms, in the spirit of this Ukrainian Joan of Arc, but his war cry rang hollow. After all, it was the already defeated Nazis, not the Bolsheviks, who had destroyed the young poetess, while he was still a committed acolyte of Hitler. What sacrifice had Dontsov made? What selfless severity and courage had he shown in his love for her?

Despite the execution of Olena Teliha—whom he loved, to all appearances—Dontsov carried on collaborating with the regime that had killed her, espousing pro-Nazi views until the end of the war. It is not clear when he found out about her death, but word of such an event would surely have traveled fast in Ukrainian nationalist circles. The deaths of millions of other Ukrainians, murdered by the soldiers and police of Nazi Germany and its allies, incited no protests from Dontsov’s pen. Instead, he quietly deepened his cooperation with Hitler’s empire after 1941. Once the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was scrapped, the Third Reich presented opportunities for pro-Nazi intellectuals from Eastern Europe such as Dontsov to apply their expertise on the politics, history, and culture of “the East” in the service of Germany’s war against the Soviet Union and its “Jewish-Masonic” agents abroad. In Nazi-occupied L’viv in 1941 there appeared a second edition of Dontsov’s book, *De shukaty nashykh istorychnykh tradytsii* (Where to Seek Our Historical Traditions, 1938), in which he repeated the pro-Nazi, pro-Hitler line that he had taken up in 1933, reassuring Ukrainians that “Germany never did

³⁸ Ibid., 57.

anything against our national unity.”³⁹ But he published next to nothing in the years 1942-1943, leaving scant evidence of his day-to-day life behind. Meanwhile, in accordance with *Generalplan Ost*, Nazi soldiers and death squads terrorized his homeland, leveled its cities and villages, massacred, starved, and enslaved its people.

The hopes that many Ukrainian nationalists had had about Hitler’s New Europe in the summer of 1941 had become untenable by 1943—there would be no independent Ukraine under the aegis of Nazi Germany, from which Ukrainians should instead expect genocidal treatment as bad as anything they had suffered under Stalin. The OUN(B) began to revise its platform in light of this disillusionment with Nazism as well as at least three other factors: 1) the formation of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA)⁴⁰ in the spring of 1943 and the consequent recognition of the need for a strategy that would prioritize military considerations, i.e. preparing for a war with the Red Army, the Wehrmacht, and/or Poland (whichever triumphs and seeks to dominate Ukrainian lands); 2) the outreach efforts of both OUN factions among Eastern Ukrainians, who were formed by the Soviet system and thus less receptive of radical, Dontsovian ideas; and 3) the growing likelihood, given the declining fortunes of the German war effort after the Soviet victory at Stalingrad in February 1943, that Ukrainian nationalists would have to rely on the liberal-democratic, anti-Communist Western powers in their struggle for independence after the Nazi-Soviet war. At the Third Extraordinary Grand Conference of the OUN(B), August 21-25, 1943, the organization adopted a considerably more liberal, pluralistic platform, promising

³⁹ Dmytro Dontsov, *De shukaty nashykh istorychnykh tradytsii* (L’viv: Ukrain’s’ke vydavnytstvo, 1941), 84.

⁴⁰ The UPA took shape through the OUN(B)’s violent consolidation, under its exclusive authority, of OUN(M) fighting groups and the original UPA—the Polissian Sich—which had been formed by Taras Bulba-Borovets’ (1908-1981) in 1940 to resist the Soviet conquest of Volhynia the year prior. (Borovets’ cooperated with the OUN(M) but opposed the OUN-B, which attacked him for refusing to submit, killing his wife in the process. He was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned at Sachsenhausen in 1943. Like Dontsov, Borovets’ immigrated to Canada after the war, died in Toronto, and is buried in the same Ukrainian cemetery as Dontsov in South Bound Brook, NJ.)

minority rights for non-Ukrainians living in Ukraine. This was a reversal of the “Ukraine for Ukrainians” stance taken at the OUN(B)’s Second Conference in February 1943, which set the agenda behind the UPA’s subsequent massacres of the Poles in Volhynia and Galicia—an outburst of ethnic cleansing that continued into 1944, resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands of Polish civilians.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the Third Conference expressly condemned “fascist and national-socialist programs and political concepts,” as well as internationalism, and “Russian-Bolshevik communism,” outlining a social democratic program for a future independent state. The OUN(B) changed its command structure from one-man rule (Bandera was imprisoned at Sachsenhausen at this point) to an elected triumvirate, creating the Ukraine Supreme Liberation Council (*Ukrains’ka holovna vyzvol’na rada*, UHVR), intended as a nonpartisan coordinating committee of all pro-independence Ukrainian forces, which also adopted a democratic platform in July 1944. The changes were not, however, accepted by the entire OUN(B). Conflicts arose between Bandera and his lieutenants abroad—who remained committed to the antidemocratic Dontsovian ideals of hierarchy, elitism, dogmatism, and uncompromising fanaticism—and the leadership in Ukraine (Roman Shukhevych, Mykola Lebed, Zynovyi Matla, and others), which was directly engaged with the insurgency and recruitment.

Unwilling to openly denounce the brutal treatment of his fellow Ukrainians, Dontsov nevertheless managed to criticize these ostensibly democratic 1943 revisions in his

⁴¹ The killings peaked in July and August 1943. An early 1944 OUN order stated: “Liquidate all Polish traces. Destroy all walls in the Catholic Church and other Polish prayer houses. Destroy orchards and trees in courtyards so that there will be no trace that someone lived there. . . . Pay attention to the fact that when something remains that is Polish, then the Poles will have pretensions to our land.” Quoted in Mark Mazower, *Hitler’s Empire* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008), 506-7. The methods used were extremely brutal and sadistic; presumably, Dontsov would have applauded the cruelty, intolerance, and fanaticism that inspired the men who carried out these massacres. Many of those who participated in the violence were former police men for the Reichskommissariat Ukraine, and therefore had training and experience in the genocide of the Jews. They deserted the police with their weapons en masse on the orders of the OUN(B) command in March-April 1943. It is thus important to note that the Nazi occupation of Ukraine, which turned mass death into an everyday reality, deliberately exacerbated and encouraged this Ukrainian-Polish hostility. Snyder, “The Causes of Ukrainian-Polish Ethnic Cleansing.”

correspondence with the OUN(B) ideologue and member of the UHVR Iosyp Pozychaniuk (1913-1944). Dontsov especially took exception to the absence of anti-Semitic and xenophobic rhetoric in the new platform: “There is no echo of Ukrainian historical traditions, social, material, or political, in the program. And not only of the traditions of Cossackdom, but also of the recent traditions of the insurgent movement in 1917-1921, with their xenophobia against the newcomers from the north, with anti-Semitism, religiosity, and private-property tendencies.”⁴²

The OUN’s public stance, Dontsov thought, should “recognize that the mentality and politics of world Jewry are harmful to the Ukrainian nation and statehood. The struggle against Jewry is in the interests of and traditions of the Ukrainian nation.” He added that “the OUN should stand against imperialist powers, including Jewry, but not against imperialism [as such].”⁴³

Pozychaniuk, like a number of OUN(B) members as of late 1943, regarded support of anti-Semitism and Nazism as counterproductive because public association with these increasingly unpopular doctrines harmed the organization’s reputation. Moreover, the Jewish question had already ceased to exist in Ukraine; the Nazis had killed most of the Jews who were living in Ukraine at the beginning of the war, and many of the rest had fled to safety. Pozychaniuk replied to Dontsov that “one would have to be a political infant not to understand that regardless of our traditions with regard to the Jewish question, now, for a slew of reasons, we must disavow even the slightest shade of Hitlerism.”⁴⁴ This correspondence ended by December 1944. Taken together, Dontsov’s comments on the OUN(B)’s Third Conference imply that he still regarded

⁴² Quoted in Volodymyr V’iatrovych, *Stanovlennia OUN do evreiv: formuvannia pozytsii na tli katastrofy* (L’viv: Vydavnytstvo Ms, 2006), 83. V’iatrovych, acting in his capacity as director of the Ukrainian Institute for National Memory, does not have a good reputation among professional historians of Ukraine, especially those researching the OUN and UPA. Nevertheless, I would hope that he is not engaged in outright fabrications. Presumably, the letter from Dontsov to Pozychaniuk, as quoted, is authentic.

⁴³ Ibid., 83-84.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 84.

Nazi imperialism as a positive force in Ukraine and Europe, and thought of anti-Semitism as a time-hallowed Ukrainian “tradition,” a corollary of Ukraine’s similarly traditional Christianity, Russophobia, and rejection of socialism.

Caste, Race, and the Nazi-Soviet War: Dontsov and the Reinhard Heydrich Institute

Apart from this private intervention in the deliberations of an organization that he steadfastly refused to join, Dontsov laid low in the relative safety of Prague while activists in the Ukrainian nationalist underground risked lethal encounters with the Gestapo and the NKVD in order to put his “worldview” into bloody practice. What was the sixty-year-old ideologue doing in the Czech capital, the eye of the storm? What did Dontsov do during his brief visit to Berlin in early 1942? To whom did he speak? Nazi officials? OUN agents? Well-connected colleagues? This is not known. It is clear, however, that he became involved in a major new Nazi academic project during his time in German-occupied Prague: *die Reinhard-Heydrich-Stiftung* (the Reinhard Heydrich Institute).

Originally founded as *die Reichsstiftung für wissenschaftliche Forschung* (the Imperial Institute for Scientific Research) on July 25, 1942, at Charles University⁴⁵ in Prague, the institute was named after the high-ranking Nazi hardliner, Reinhard Heydrich (1904-1942), one month after his assassination by British-trained Czech and Slovak fighters in Prague. In search of an effective and ruthless agent of German hegemony in the Czech lands, Hitler had named Heydrich *Reichsprotektor* (Reich-Protector) of the Nazi Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in September 1941. In this capacity, Heydrich, one of the chief architects of the Holocaust, earned a

⁴⁵ During the Nazi occupation, Charles University (*Karls Universität*) was renamed “German Charles University” (*Deutsche Karls-Universität*) and reserved for students deemed sufficiently “German.”

reputation as “the Butcher of Prague” and “the Hangman of the Third Reich.”⁴⁶ Under his reign, the Nazi campaign to “Germanize” the Czech lands accelerated, claiming many victims. True to the legacy of its namesake and subordinated to the SS, the research conducted at the Reinhard Heydrich Institute—its “exploration of the ethnic, cultural, political, and economic conditions of Bohemia and Moravia, as well as the people of Eastern and Southeastern Europe”—was expected to serve the aims of Nazi empire-building.⁴⁷ These included the genocide or sterilization of undesired populations (especially the Jews and Roma), the promotion of the supremacy of the “Aryan race” and German culture in all spheres, the “denationalization” and “neutralization” of non-Germans and the assimilation of those deemed racially suitable, and the annihilation of the Soviet state and its supporters.⁴⁸ After the organization of the Heydrich Institute was completed in 1943,⁴⁹ it supported the research into social anthropology and the “ethnobiology” (*Volksbiologie*),⁵⁰ Eastern European intellectual history (*Geistesgeschichte*),⁵¹

⁴⁶ One of the darkest figures in Nazi officialdom, *SS-Obergruppenführer* (Senior Group Leader of the SS) and Chief of Police Heydrich headed of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (Reich Main Security Office), which oversaw the Reich’s notorious intelligence and secret police forces, including the Gestapo and the *Sicherheitsdienst* (Security Service). He organized *Kristallnacht*—the coordinated anti-Jewish violence against German and Austrian Jews on November 9-10, 1938; formed the *Einsatzgruppen*—the SS paramilitary death squads that operated in the German-occupied territories of Eastern Europe, shooting more than two million Jews, Communists, Gypsies, and others; chaired the Wannsee Conference in January 1942, at which Nazi leaders formalized “the Final Solution to the Jewish Problem”; and spearheaded the “Germanization” project in the Czech lands. Fred Ramen, *Reinhard Heydrich: Hangman of the Third Reich* (New York: Rossen, 2001).

⁴⁷ Andreas Wiedemann, *Die Reinhard-Heydrich-Stiftung in Prag (1942-1945)* (Dresden: Hannah-Arendt-Institut, 2000), 54. Also see Michael Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards: A Study of Ostforschung in the Third Reich* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

⁴⁸ See Chad Bryant, *Prague in Black: Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), chaps. 4-5.

⁴⁹ It was headed by SS-Oberführer Alfred Bantu (1887-1974).

⁵⁰ Directed by Karl Müller (1896-1963), who specialized in Nazi racial doctrine, conducted psychological and social studies of Czech police and schoolchildren, and sought evidence of racial and cultural inheritance from Germans among contemporary and historical Czechs. Wiedemann, *Die Reinhard-Heydrich-Stiftung*, 63-66.

⁵¹ Austrian historian Eduard Winter (1896-1982), a specialist in Church history and the history of Christianity, headed this section. During his tenure at the Heydrich Institute he had published a book on the struggle between Catholicism and Orthodoxy in Ukraine, which presented itself as instructive to the Nazi war effort in the east.

German law in East Central Europe, Czech language and literature, folk music, the history of Bohemia and Moravia, and European ethnology and “ethnopsychology” (*Europäische Völkerkunde und Völkerpsychologie*). The latter department was headed jointly by the Nazi psychologist and race scientist Rudolf Hippius (1905-1945) and the historian and SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Joachim Beyer⁵² (1908-1971), who worked together to combat and reverse the assimilation (*Umvolkung*) into Slavic cultures of Germans living in Eastern Europe. To do this, they developed a taxonomy of racial and psychological types with practical applications for the Nazi regime’s conquest and ethnic remolding of the populations of Bohemia, Moravia, and Eastern Europe as a whole.⁵³ The Heydrich Institute also promoted histories of Eastern Europe that were instructive for military purposes and emphasized the purportedly German-Nordic-Aryan origins of all civilizational achievements among the Slavic peoples.

After the Wehrmacht’s advance encountered stiff resistance, came to a halt in Soviet territory, and began losing ground in 1943-1944, the Heydrich Institute’s primary directive shifted away from research in support of Germanization to the study of Bolshevism (*Bolschewismusforschung*) and the peoples of the Soviet Union. The SS deemed such research

Eduard Winter, *Byzanz und Rom im Kampf um die Ukraine* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1942). Wiedemann, *Die Reinhard-Heydrich-Stiftung*, 72-73.

⁵² We first encountered Beyer in chapter 2 as a historian of the Central Powers and Ukraine in World War I (see his *Die Mittelmächte und die Ukraine*). Beyer joined the NSDAP in 1933 and specialized in the themes of race, ethnicity, and living space in Eastern Europe, proposing a hierarchy of the peoples living there. He ranked the Czechs, Ukrainians, and Poles in descending order, and advocated the extermination of the Jews. Beyer took part in Operation Barbarossa as an SS adviser on the ethnology of the East. In 1943 he became professor of folklore and nationality in Eastern Europe at the German Charles University. Following his postwar “de-Nazification,” he continued working on Eastern European history and politics. Hans Joachim Beyer, “Auslese und Assimilation,” *Deutsche Monatshefte*, no. 7 (1940), 480. Andreas Wiedemann, “Hans Joachim Beyer,” in Ingo Haar and Michael Fahlbusch, eds., *Handbuch der völkischen Wissenschaften. Personen—Institutionen—Forschungspraxen—Stiftungen* (Munich: Saur, 2008), 66. Wiedemann, *Die Reinhard-Heydrich-Stiftung*, 55-63.

⁵³ For example, Hippius conducted physical and psychological examinations of Czech students seeking enrollment at the German Charles University to determine their racial suitability for admission.

more useful to the war effort.⁵⁴ The Nazi leadership acknowledged the need for a mobilization of anti-Soviet fighters drawn from the nationalities of the Soviet Union for the defense of “Europe” from the advancing Red Army. Berlin resumed its collaboration with the OUN factions by the fall of 1944, releasing Bandera, Mel’nyk, and other Ukrainian nationalist leaders from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, where many of them had been imprisoned for most of the war, and providing them with resources to carry out rearguard actions against the Soviet forces in Ukraine.⁵⁵

For the purposes of disseminating the Heydrich Institute’s research to its target audience—the German military, especially students at the front and officers in the Waffen-SS—Rudolf Hippius founded and edited a paper, *Volkswissenschaftliche Feldpostbriefe* (Ethnological Dispatches), in March 1944. Information on the situation in Ukraine, which had already grown dire for the Wehrmacht, was one of the central concerns of the publication. The first issue featured an introductory article on “The Four Disguises of the Muscovite World Revolution” by Hans Koch (1894-1959), a L’viv-born German historian of Russia and Ukraine and an advisor to the Wehrmacht and Abwehr in occupied Ukraine, where he oversaw the establishment of Nazi contacts with the OUN.⁵⁶ *Volkswissenschaftliche Feldpostbriefe* showcased anti-Bolshevik, pro-Nazi experts on Ukrainian affairs in residence at the Heydrich Institute. The front-page story of

⁵⁴ Ibid., 81-84.

⁵⁵ The German command also green-lighted the creation of the anti-Soviet “Russian Liberation Army” under the command of defected Red Army general Andrei Vlasov (1901-1946).

⁵⁶ Ibid., 84. Hans Koch, “Die vier Tarnungsformen der Moskauer Weltrevolution,” *Volkswissenschaftliche Feldpostbriefe*, no. 1 (March 1944).

the May 1944 issue was an essay on “The Development of National-Political Thought in Ukraine” by an otherwise unidentified “Dr. D. Donzow.”⁵⁷

It is unclear just how active Dontsov was at the Heydrich Institute and whether he collaborated with it for the entirety of his stay in Prague (the end of 1941 to early 1945), or only briefly, around the time that his writing appeared in Hippus’s paper.⁵⁸ His contribution to *Volkswissenschaftliche Feldpostbriefe* offered a history lesson to SS officers as they retreated back across Ukraine and Soviet forces regained control of the country. Much as he had during World War I, Dontsov presented an account of the Ukrainians that emphasized their traditional affinity for Germany and their antipathy for Russia.

He divided his lesson into six stages. In the first, 1782-1825, there was the last gasp of the old, heroic “Atlantis” of the Ukrainian Cossacks and their allegedly antidemocratic and hierarchical way of life, which was snuffed out by Russian imperialism and the decadence of modernity.⁵⁹ During the second stage, 1825-1855, the Romanticism of the German philosopher-poets Herder and Novalis arrived in Ukraine, reawakening the traditions of its people, and counteracting the encroachment of cosmopolitan, democratic ideas from the French Revolution, which predominated in the Ukrainian national movement of the nineteenth century. Dontsov dismissed the Brotherhood of Sts. Cyril and Methodius for its democratic, pacifistic utopianism, and its false doctrine of Slavic brotherhood, but praised Taras Shevchenko, who was associated

⁵⁷ Dr. D. Donzow [Dmytro Dontsov], “Die Entwicklung des nationalpolitischen Gedankens in der Ukraine,” *Volkswissenschaftliche Feldpostbriefe*, no. 4 (May 1944): 1-11.

⁵⁸ Further research is needed to shed light on these crucial yet obscure years of Dontsov’s biography. The Heydrich Institute’s archives at Charles University in Prague would be the place to start, but I have not yet had an opportunity to examine these sources. Andreas Wiedemann’s study of the institute does not cover the lesser-known Eastern European intellectuals, including Dontsov, who contributed to its activities.

⁵⁹ He invoked the Ukrainian writers Vasilii Kapnist and Ivan Kotliarevskyi (1769-1838) as representatives of this dying nobility.

with the Brotherhood, for his “politically nationalistic, reactionary, predemocratic, old-traditionalist position, which paid homage to the idea of national independence above all else.”⁶⁰ The Ukrainian national poet harkened back to the golden age of “the dangerous, struggle-seeking [*kampflostigen*], heroic life of the Grandfathers, the struggle for great ideals and noble goals, the struggle for a new, ennobled, and heroic, not plebeian person.”⁶¹ Stage three, 1855-1870, brought the Great Reforms of Alexander II, which encouraged the naive belief that Ukrainians could be liberated without violence and struggle. Dontsov alleged that the Ukrainian national movement focused exclusively on cultural matters and the education of an idealized peasantry during these years.

However, in the fourth stage, 1870-1900, Ukrainian activists became increasingly disillusioned with ineffective peaceful resistance, and learned to appreciate the need for a political, not just cultural, struggle. Dontsov divided this period into two tendencies: 1) the socialism, Proudhonism, Russophilia, and nihilism of Mykhailo Drahomanov, who advocated the decentralization and federalization of the Russian Empire, as well as the freedoms of speech, assembly, the press, and the individual (mere attenuations tsarist absolutism in Dontsov’s reckoning); and 2) the traditionalist, patriotic, anti-Russian attitude of the populist historian and archaeologist Volodymyr Antonovych (1834-1908), professor at Kyiv University, who supposedly planted the seeds for a genuinely nationalistic movement. Dontsov’s account of the fifth stage, 1900-1917, praised the “nationalist, anti-Jewish” writings and activities of Mykhailo Mikhnovs’kyi and Olena Pchilka,⁶² favorably distinguishing them from Hrushevs’kyi, the

⁶⁰ Dontsov, “Die Entwicklung,” 2-3.

⁶¹ Ibid., 3.

⁶² Ibid., 7.

USDRP, and the other socialists. Naturally, Dontsov omitted his membership in the latter camp at the time. He invoked the Union of Russian People and the Black Hundreds as manifestations of “a type of Russian fascism” “sixteen years before [Mussolini’s] March on Rome,” emphasizing the Russians’ desire to grow their empire and oppress other nations. The implication was that fascist empire-building at the expense of Russians would be just retribution. Advancing to the sixth and final stage of the development of Ukrainian national political thought, 1917-1939, Dontsov returned to the subject of Petliura and the Schwartzbard Trial. “Social Democratic, antimonarchist, a proponent of democratic freedoms and the republican form of constitution, absolutely not anti-Jewish-minded,” Petliura came to appreciate the need for a military struggle against the Russians and Bolshevism only in the course of the Ukrainian Revolution. “In person,” Dontsov explained to his German military audience, “[Petliura] was of an honorable and noble nature, brave and ready for sacrifice, as later became clear when the Bolshevik Jew Schwartzbardt shot him on a Paris street in 1926.”⁶³ The crimes against Ukrainians committed by the Soviet state precluded the possibility of cooperation with Bolshevism for virtually all Western and emigre Ukrainians. All of this was intended, presumably, to assure German soldiers that patriotic Ukrainians supported their just and heroic struggle against a hated common enemy—the Jewish-Russian-Bolshevik cabal.

In his concluding remarks, Dontsov condescended to make a few positive remarks about Lypyns’kyi and the Hetmanites. The latter advocated a “Ukrainian state, whose foundation should not be the democratic masses and the déclassé intellectuals, but the Ukrainian conservative nobility and the conservative Ukrainian village.”⁶⁴ However, the Hetmanites were

⁶³ Ibid., 10.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 10-11.

guilty of supporting an alliance of Ukraine, Muscovy, and Belarus rather than national independence (as evidenced by Skoropads'kyi's declaration of federation with Russia at the end of World War I),⁶⁵ while the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic conservatives (Osyp Nazaruk, Bishop Hryhorii Komyshyn, and Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi) were guilty of holding internationalist, pro-Polish opinions. Dontsov himself, and he alone, had formulated a Ukrainian nationalist ideal worthy of German support. His own doctrine, he wrote, "was antisocialist and antidemocratic, as well as anti-Russian."

[Dontsov's] nationalism, propagated since 1922, broke away from the half-measures of the democratic program of federalism and the illusions of a peaceful understanding with Moscow. He preached a total spiritual transformation of the Ukrainian psyche and the return to the hard virtues of the past, advocated a 'Western orientation' for Ukraine, battled the Russian spirit and Russian culture as civilization-destroying forces. He struggled against the four Ms—Moscow, materialism, Freemasonry, and Marxism—for the virtues of Ukrainian traditionalism, for the idea of a new leading stratum, formed from a stricter vetting . . . of a new caste of 'better people.'⁶⁶

Addressing Ukrainian audiences, Dontsov attempted to explain what this "caste of better people" looked like in his work, *Dukh nashoi davnyny* (The Spirit of Our Antiquity)—his final noteworthy treatise on ideology, and the last major revision of his worldview—which he published in Prague in 1944. Written in the spirit of the *Batava* group, *Dukh nashoi davnyny* promised answers to a series of burning questions for Ukrainians: How did we lose our land? Why have Ukrainians become helots and slaves? What has brought about these apocalyptic times? Invoking the critique of modern society and the rise of the "mass-man" in Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset's *The Revolt of the Masses* (1930),⁶⁷ Dontsov called for a return to

⁶⁵ See chapter 2 on the Hetmanate and chapter 4 on the Ukrainian Catholic critique of Dontsov, the OUN, and integral nationalism. Dontsov referred the reader to Heydrich Institute fellow Eduard Winter's history of Christianity in Ukraine, *Byzanz und Rom im Kampfum die Ukraine*.

⁶⁶ Dontsov, "Die Entwicklung," 11.

⁶⁷ While clearly impressed with y Gasset, Dontsov conveniently avoids the Spanish thinker's damning critique of fascism as the apotheosis of the mass-man, "who does not want to give reasons or to be right, but simply shows

hierarchy: “Selections [*dobory*] not elections [*vybory*].”⁶⁸ It was the demoralization and loss of Ukraine’s elite that was to blame for the modern decline of the nation. Ukraine had lost its “apostles, ascetics, martyrs, and heroes,” such as the Cossacks once produced. In the absence of a strict power vertical, capped by a ruling stratum endowed with a sense of commitment to its mission, an “egoism of the parts”—parties, classes, individuals, etc.—filled the void, leaving the nation primed for defeat.⁶⁹ Dontsov argued that the Polish and Bolshevik oppression of Ukrainians were manifestations of the “wrath of God,” visited upon them for their sinful lack of faith, their pride, skepticism, and materialism, which deprived them will and a sense of higher justice.⁷⁰

A caste—from the Latin *castus*, meaning pure, clean—is defined by its segregation from other castes. Dontsov believed that “without castes, society does not exist,” and the “fish rots from the head.”⁷¹ Invoking Plato’s notion of “gold,” “silver,” and “bronze” castes in *The Republic*, he warned against the ruinous consequences of alloys.⁷² The Cossacks once constituted a proper aristocracy, but the entry of inferior peasant elements into its ranks and the rise of democratic notions changed its “psychology.” Tainted by “swineherds” (*svynopasy*)—they became hedonistic, scholarly, and Russified. They began to shun war—their *raison d’etre*—

himself resolved to impose his opinions. That was the novelty: the right not to be right, not to be reasonable: ‘the reason of unreason.’” (Y Gasset quotes from *Don Quixote*, Dontsov’s recurring symbol of faithful, knightly idealism.) A more rigorous reading of y Gasset would lead one to conclude that Dontsov’s fixation on violence, irrationalism, voluntarism, and fanaticism put him unequivocally in the “mass-man” camp, panegyrics to “ruling castes” notwithstanding. Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1957), 73.

⁶⁸ Dontsov, *Dukh nashoi davnyyny*. The first edition had a 3,300-copy circulation.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 16-17.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 18-22.

⁷¹ Ibid., 109.

⁷² Ibid., 32.

losing their pride, courage, desire to rule, and love of glory.⁷³ The “Little Russian intelligentsia” that emerged from this racial-spiritual deterioration gave way to “Marxist-Democrats” who were so obsessed with equality that they forgot about liberation—freedom and self-government: “This was the era when the poison flower blossomed and the weeds of democracy, Freemasonry, and Marxism, with an impure admixture [*domishka*] of Judeophilia, grew among us; the era of the greatest decline of the Ukrainian national movement.” Answering critics who charged that he attacked Ukrainian traditions and imitated foreigners, contributing to the unmooring and demoralization of his countrymen, Dontsov insisted that he was the real traditionalist, while the Ukrainian intelligentsia from the nineteenth century forward were the rootless iconoclasts, who smeared and negated the former glory of Kyivan-Rus’ and the Cossack period.⁷⁴ The great prophets of the Ukrainian idea—Shevchenko, Koltliarevs’kyi, Skovoroda—were “rooted in the Cossack, knightly [*lytsars’kyi*] (not in the democratic) era, far removed from Marxism, democratism, cosmopolitanism, humanism, and the other ‘virtues’ of the populist elite.”⁷⁵ Dontsov listed the three characteristics of this long-lost caste: nobility (*shliakhetnist*’), including courage, extreme dedication, hatred for Russia and the Moskals; wisdom (*mudrist*’), or “recognition of the law of a higher moral force than oneself, faith in God, recognition of the superiority of the general over the particular, love of the fatherland, respect for the ancestors”; and courage (*vidvaha*), “the heroic warrior spirit.” All “values opposite to those that rule the democratic intelligentsia,”⁷⁶ which celebrated a “cult of the masses,” suffered from an “inadequacy of environment, race, and blood,” and “tore away from the spirit of the ruling castes

⁷³ Ibid., 32.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 39.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 41.

of our great historical epochs and their traditions.”⁷⁷ The problem, thought Dontsov, affected not only Ukraine, but all of modern Europe, which needed to look backward to the moral, political, and cultural ideals and practices of medieval Christendom for the way forward.⁷⁸ A new Crusade, this time against Russian Communism, would give the reemergent ruling castes of Europe a great cause to serve.

Dontsov used biological metaphors to describe the composition of societies. Nations are organisms, and their constituent classes are organs. The development of strict hierarchies is an unavoidable natural phenomenon—the question is only whether the rulers will be supplied from within or from without, by foreign conquerors. Like the *Batava* circle, Dontsov invoked the race science of Hans Günther and Eugen Fischer (1874-1967)—two major influences on German National Socialist thought and practice, especially with regard to the idea of a pure Aryan society and the eugenical and genocidal methods used to achieve it—to flesh out his account of castes.⁷⁹ According to Dontsov, the Nordic type exhibits the greatest “biological potential” and “might occupy the highest rung on the ladder of the various human types.”⁸⁰ Once spread across Ukraine and well represented in the Viking-derived nobility of old Kyivan-Rus’, Nordic blood was now rarely encountered there. The more common of the “form-giving” racial types in Ukraine was the “Pontaic, Mediterranean.” Far more common were the lesser “Oriental”

⁷⁷ Ibid., 59.

⁷⁸ “The catastrophe into which Ukraine has fallen with the Bolshevik invasion was from the beginning a general European catastrophe.” Ibid., 261.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 188. Demonstrating more than a passing familiarity with the latest race science of the day, Dontsov also cited the French anthropologist Georges Vacher de Lapouge (1854-1936), whose thought on race, society, and eugenics were similar. Thus, for example, in Lapouge’s conception: The medieval Franks, as “Aryans,” and their descendants down to the modern day, were the natural rulers of France, whereas the Gauls, of inferior racial stock, were the ancestors of the French peasantry.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 189.

(*ostiitsia*) and “Dinaric” (*dynartsia*) types—the alleged anthropological essence of the “peacefully submissive” Ukrainophile democrats, whose racial makeup determined their “psychology,” their “orientation toward life,” their politics and “understanding of beauty.”⁸¹ Short-limbed, small-statured, flabby, stooped, timid, effete, lazy, cautious, conformist—neither heroic and adventurous, like the Nordic, nor cheerful and artistic, like the Mediterranean—the unrefined “Oriental’s” “single dream in social and political life is state assistance, hence his love for state posts, pensions, for a bureaucratic socialism, in which everyone is a state worker.”⁸² He hates all who stand apart from the crowd, individuals of exceptional talent and genius; he thinks in narrow terms (obsessed with home and hearth, hence the endemic nepotism); he is sheep-like and collectivistic, with a “pathological yearning for oneness [*sobornist*’] and unity [*ob’iednannia*], even at the price of slavery.”⁸³

Dontsov maintained that this race arrived in the form of Russian colonists in Eastern Ukraine, and now predominates there. “Dinaric” racial traits, by contrast, supposedly reigned in Western Ukraine.⁸⁴ According to Günther, the Dinaric type descended from ancient Alpine tribes spread across Southern and Central Europe. “Strongly built,” “healthy and muscular,” carnal, cheerful, hedonistic, expansive, loud, undisciplined, [and] musical, Dinarics possess “a feeling of dignity, courage, a sense of honor, [and] are warlike (in defense).” Though lacking the Nordic’s “boldness” and “clarity of thought,” Dinarics are supposedly “natural warriors.” Prone to

⁸¹ Ibid., 190.

⁸² Ibid., 192.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Dontsov cites *Vistnyk*’s anthropological expert, Rostyslav Iendyk, *Antropologichni prykmety ukrains’koho narodu* (L’viv: Prosvita, 1934).

outbursts of temper, they are nevertheless good-natured and warm.⁸⁵ The Ukrainian Cossacks, Dontsov averred, were undeniably Dinaric, as were Makhno and his anarchist followers. But the Mediterranean and Nordic types alone are born to rule; thus, Dontsov asserted, Ukraine's future ruling caste must be drawn from them. He left it to the reader to infer that the German invaders then marauding across Eastern Europe might be the "better people" he had in mind.

Beyond the "zoological,"⁸⁶ another aspect of the national organism is spiritual, nonmaterial, vital (in the Bergsonian sense), and embodied in the ruling caste, which breathes "form" and "creative energy" into society, like fire and kindling. History and tradition, no less than biology, are the source of this aristocratic *élan vital*: "The spiritual face of a nation, like the physical, depends above all on its racial substance, but the universe of its historical traditions also leaves its mark on the face of the nation." He compares the few who lead to birds of prey; the masses who serve to peaceful herbivores.⁸⁷ Stoic, ascetic, unwavering, fearing neither pain nor death, the ruling caste focuses only on the good of the whole organism, and is willing to sacrifice everything for an abstract idea.⁸⁸ All parts of society must be directed toward a single end: the internal order, strength, and preservation of the nation as a whole. "Heretics" should be killed. "Cruel punishments" should be handed down to individuals who challenge the leadership and the sacred beliefs and traditions that ensure the nation's perseverance.⁸⁹ Xenophobia and isolationism are signs of national health. The "apostles" of the ruling castes should spread their fate among unbelievers with "the sword." They should learn "to be hard and unforgiving toward

⁸⁵ Dontsov, *Dukh nashoi davnyiny*, 193-95.

⁸⁶ Dontsov embraced this word, though his critics used it as a term of opprobrium to denigrate his doctrine as bestial.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 176-79.

oneself in order to be hard and unforgiving toward enemy communities, the forces of the external world, and toward one's own society."⁹⁰ In the modern world, every human failing is blamed on "environment," sins are tolerated, and "the Devil" thus triumphs everywhere.⁹¹ The nation that rejects domination, hierarchy, violence, coercion, and discipline within itself will receive these instead from a foreign nation.⁹² Dontsov called for "swords, not ploughs," for the defense of a sacralized territory; Ukraine's steppe is a site of war and death, not peaceful fields—a sacred terrain to be defended, not a row to plough.⁹³

Dontsov's commentary on events had been voluble and incessant before the war, but he ventured to take a public stance on the situation in Europe only once during World War II, in the conclusion to *Dukh nashoi davnyny*:

Central Europe reacted to the democratic chaos and the threat of Bolshevism in our times with such movements as the National Socialism of A. Hitler, the Fascism of B. Mussolini, and also the Falangism of General Franco, which in Italy in 1922, in Germany in 1933, and in Spain in 1936, prevailed over Communist movements. Liberating public life from the influences of Jewry, National Socialism (together with the two other just mentioned and akin tendencies), in opposition to democracy, to the Western-Jewish Communism of Karl Marx and the Eastern-Russian Communism of Lenin—created its system, which, over the course of several years, significantly altered the hitherto structure and face of the German (and, in part, the Latin) world, strongly hindering the further evolution of our continent.⁹⁴

Dontsov rationalized Fascism and Nazism as a natural and necessary reaction to Bolshevism, while conceding that they had done great damage to Europe, impeding its progress.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 182.

⁹¹ Ibid., 184.

⁹² Ibid., 226-35.

⁹³ Ibid., 206-9.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 245.

Dontsov compiled and republished many of his works after the war, excising pro-Nazi comments that had been discredited by the outcome of World War II and the growing realization of the extent of Nazi war crimes and crimes against humanity. But in 1944, Germany might still conceivably have won, and Dontsov had clearly thrown his lot in with it. Dontsov removed the passage from his second edition of *Dukh nashoi davnyny* in 1951 (by which point he was living in Montreal).⁹⁵ The sections on race science, however, reappeared, suggesting that Dontsov never abandoned Günther's teachings. The melodramatic closing points of *Dukh nashoi davnyny* mark a turn toward the apocalyptic mysticism and the occult that dominated Dontsov's worldview for the last thirty years of his life.⁹⁶ Like many other "literary fascists"⁹⁷ then and since, he invoked the "Kali Yuga," the Hindu concept of a period of decline during which everything falls into "anarchy and ruin" at the end of a cosmic four-stage cycle. The modern world, descending deeper into chaos through the erosion of hierarchy, tradition, and faith, will eventually give way to a new age, in which clean and unclean, Aryan and non-Aryan, will return to their proper, i.e. separate and unequal, station and rank.⁹⁸

But Dontsov's preferred source for religious imagery was the Christian tradition. The modern era is the "epoch of the anti-Christ" foretold in the *Book of Revelation*. Dontsov's

⁹⁵ Dmytro Dontsov, *Dukh nashoi davnyny*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Zhyttia i chyn, 1951).

⁹⁶ The radically antimodern, anti-egalitarian, and antidemocratic traditionalism of the Italian esotericist and self-declared "superfascist" Julius Evola (1898-1974), an admirer of Nazism who collaborated with the SD during World War II, might be the most apt comparison for the elderly Dontsov. Julius Evola's *Revolt against the Modern World* (1934) presented a cyclical "law of the regression of the castes," a degeneration of races, a mixture of the "Hyperborean, Aryan" high and the "Telluric, non-Aryan" low. The modern "Kali Yuga" is but the latest instance of a periodic return to formless, undifferentiated chaos. There are other points of comparison between Evola and Dontsov: aryanism, anti-Semitism, antiliberalism, authoritarianism, admiration for caste systems, closeness to the Conservative Revolutionary movement, style of prose, and an exceedingly aloof, provocative, and enigmatic public persona. Zaitsev, "Fascism or Ustashism?," 187.

⁹⁷ Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 51. The Russian neo-fascist, neo-Eurasianist Alexandr Dugin (1962-) is a good example of the same type.

⁹⁸ Dontsov, *Dukh nashoi davnyny* (1944), 251.

remedy: a ruling caste with “burning faith” in “its own truth and God,” the will to kill and die for it, to prosecute a relentless struggle against the Bolshevik “kingdom of Satan,” to punish the ungodly and the followers of other idols. The new caste must fight democracy, carrying within them the “fear of God . . . not the fear of man, judgment, torture, and death.”⁹⁹ Above all, they must be “apostles of truth” and “have a deep sense of their apostolic calling” to serve the “spirit of traditionalism” against the catastrophic “cult of matter.” Dontsov closed the book with a call to arms on Europe’s eastern frontier. Ukraine was the first to resist Bolshevism with its “knightly, martial spirit”; forged in the fire of this struggle, painfully conscious of the evil essence of Russian Communism, Ukraine was poised to lead a holy pan-European crusade against the “gangrene of Bolshevism, Jewry, and Freemasonry.”¹⁰⁰

Dontsov’s new of blend radical traditionalism, racism, nationalism, and mysticism was perfectly compatible with Nazism, provided only that the latter soften its line regarding the status of the Slavic nations in Hitler’s empire, granting statehood and a measure of independence to Ukrainians so that they, too, could revive the best of their native traditions and racial qualities, becoming an indispensable ally to the Third Reich in the process. It may have been naive of Dontsov to hope that Hitler and his henchmen would have a change of heart and reach out to the Ukrainians as respected partners, but the dire situation on the Eastern Front compelled some Nazi German intellectuals to call for a new policy toward some Slavs. In March 1945, Hippus, Beyer, and other members of the Heydrich Institute formed a working group for the “study of the Bolshevik danger” to offer the SS strategic insights into the history and psychology of the population of Ukraine. The group argued that a new line was needed in order to gain the

⁹⁹ Ibid., 254.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 263.

desperately needed support of the Slavic peoples in the war.¹⁰¹ They advocated the abandonment of the Nordic *Herrenmensch* (master race) idea in favor of a more pluralistic, inclusive vision for a German-led Europe that would also value the unique qualities and contributions of non-Aryan European nations and races. (Dontsov, we will recall, had parenthetically suggested that Nazi Germany abandon this rhetoric as alienating to potential non-German allies on the eve of the war.)¹⁰² Hippius and Beyer tried to repackage Nazi foreign propaganda with the concept a “European civil war” against both “the Bolshevik horde of Asians” and “Americanism,” in defense of a diverse yet united family of indigenous European cultures and states. This notion would replace the idea of German *Lebensraum*, which held no appeal for the non-Germans whose existence, freedom, and prosperity were incompatible with it. Nothing came of the new proposals, however, as the Heydrich Institute ceased to exist at the end of April, after Soviet forces had driven the Nazis out of the Czech lands. Nazi Germany capitulated to the Allies the following month, bringing World War II in Europe to a close. Dontsov fled Prague for the American zone of occupation in southern Germany.

Born Again: A Cold War Epilogue

Dontsov joined a Ukrainian diaspora that grew substantially in the aftermath of World War II. The war had killed one in six of Ukraine’s inhabitants and left another ten million homeless who had either been deported into Germany as *Ostarbeiter* (“east workers”) or fled the return of Soviet rule for the Western zones of occupation, as merchants, peasants, intellectuals, and political activists such as Dontsov did. Having struck an agreement with Stalin at Yalta, the

¹⁰¹ Wiedemann, *Die Reinhard-Heydrich-Stiftung*, 94-97.

¹⁰² Dontsov, “Zahadka,” 326.

Western Allies permitted the vast majority of these people to be forcibly repatriated to the Soviet Union where they faced precarious futures, arrest and deportation to harsh labor camps in the USSR's interior, and in some cases execution at the hands of the NKVD. Only about 250,000 Ukrainians succeeded in making it to the West as displaced persons (DPs), resettling in Canada (38,000), the US (80,000), and Australia (21,000), as well as the UK and various countries in South America.¹⁰³ Their salvation was thanks in large part to the governmental lobbying and social organizational efforts of the Ukrainian diaspora in North America.¹⁰⁴

However, the newcomers—especially fervent nationalists such as Dontsov—also introduced internal conflicts into the already fractured diaspora. The postwar émigrés' experiences in wartime Europe and in the OUN-dominated DP camps had radicalized and united them. The efforts of diaspora organizations such as the Ukrainian Canadian Committee and the Central Ukrainian Relief Bureau (CURB) to rescue Ukrainian DPs and bring them to the West galvanized Ukrainian patriotism and cohesiveness in the diaspora. Heated differences of opinion reigned within and between the latest wave of immigration and those already well established in Canadian, American, or British society. The two groups came to resent one another, clashing over who had the right to lead the national struggle—those who had firsthand experience in the oppressed old country, or those who best understood how to navigate politics in the New World. Socialists and Communists in the Ukrainian diaspora distrusted the DPs, denouncing them *en bloc* as war criminals, anti-Semitic collaborators, and dangerous carriers of anti-Soviet opinions and damning memories of Soviet crimes. Indeed, politically active DPs such as Dontsov joined or created Ukrainian nationalist organizations in the West that set out to expose Soviet human

¹⁰³ Vic Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 89.

¹⁰⁴ See Lubomyr Y. Luciuk, *Searching for Place: Ukrainian Displaced Persons, Canada, and the Migration of Memory* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2000).

rights abuses, and undermine the Soviet Union from within by fomenting national revolutions there. The nationalists strongly opposed the Ukrainian left, which went into decline after the fallout from the crushed Hungarian revolution in 1956, but they too failed to create a united front of their own, as the OUN(B)-OUN(M) split persisted and additional rifts formed. Conflicts between religious denominations—Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox—also divided the Ukrainian diaspora, as did economic class and social station. How one understood the real, imagined, or remembered “homeland” and the “good” Ukrainian’s proper relation to it—whether to fight for Ukraine’s liberation from, or to accept and even praise, Soviet rule—put Ukrainian émigrés in irreconcilable yet sometimes redundant camps, sapping their strength and alienating potential new recruits (especially among the younger generation born abroad). Moreover, the support of their newly adopted states and societies was by no means guaranteed, and Ukrainian immigrants to Canada, the US, and the UK faced intense scrutiny over their loyalty and their potentially checkered pasts. As we shall see, Dontsov was no exception to this scrutiny, while his presence and activities in the West proved divisive for all parties concerned.

Dontsov’s behavior during World War II alienated the former *Vistnykivsti* who survived it. Dontsov’s perceived hypocrisy, cowardice, and faithlessness to the young poets of *Vistnyk*, his disciples, appalled Leonid Mosendz, a devotee of the editor and a close friend of Teliha’s before 1939. Vasyl’ Ivanys,¹⁰⁵ Mosendz’s mentor, commented on the latter’s disillusionment with Nazism and Dontsov by 1945:

I discovered this in a letter from L.M., in which he wrote: ‘the spiritual creator of an ideology at the decisive moment deserted the youth that had been enthralled by him. Dontsov is a corpse. I have written this to him and will have no more to do with him.’ [...] And he kept his word. In 1945 in the cafe Beranek in Prague he accidentally met

¹⁰⁵ Vasyl’ Ivanys (1888-1974) was Mosendz’s friend and mentor, professor and founder of the Ukrainian Husbandry Academy in Podebrady.

Dontsov sitting at a table, but asked not to be introduced and left. In all his letters he often recalled this leader [*vozhd*] of his with disdain.¹⁰⁶

Unlike Teliha and the scores of other young Ukrainians who, inspired by Dontsov, had taken action and, in many cases, made the ultimate sacrifice, the aging publicist had fled to safety and opportunistically submitted to the Nazis.

Most of the other former *Vistnykivtsi* broke ties with Dontsov, distancing themselves from his worldview immediately after the war as members of the émigré Ukrainian literary organization *Mytets'kyi ukrains'kyi rukh* (MUR, Artistic Ukrainian Movement). Formed on September 25, 1945, in Fürth, West Germany, MUR was created to bring together Ukrainian writers displaced by the war, assist in the publication of their works, and provide a forum for discussion. Its ideologically and artistically diverse membership included Ulas Samchuk (the head of the organization), Iuryi Klen, Ievhen Malaniuk, Iuryi Kosach, and Iuryi (Sherekh) Shevel'ov. Kosach and Shevel'ov spearheaded efforts to purge Dontsov's influence from Ukrainian culture, to atone for the excesses that it had helped to inspire, and to lead the way back to the humane European values that *Vistnyk* had undermined. MUR was, however, unified by a Ukrainian liberationist, anti-Bolshevik agenda. Kosach, who published in *LNIV* but never in *Vistnyk*, rebuked Dontsov, not for his avowed "traditionalism," but for his iconoclasm of humanism—one of the core traditions of Ukrainian and European literature.¹⁰⁷ The Dontsovian nationalist paper *Orlyk* (Eagle, 1946-48) based in Berchtesgaden, West Germany, responded with constant attacks on MUR. Joining MUR in and of itself signaled a rejection of Dontsov, but

¹⁰⁶ Letter from V. Ivanys to Petro Danyliuk, October 19, 1954; quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 197-98. Mosendz spent six more years a wanderer in foreign lands before dying of tuberculosis in a sanatorium in Switzerland (a "wintry expiration," to use Teliha's phrase). His final, unfinished novel, *Ostanniy prorok* (The Last Prophet) suggests that he had come to reject integral nationalist ideas in favor of nonviolence and asceticism.

¹⁰⁷ Iuryi Sherekh, "V oboroni velykykh (Polemika bez osib)" in *MUR: Mytets'kyi ukrains'kyi rukh: Zbirnyk III* (Regensburg: Ukrains'ke slovo, 1947), 11-26, 18; Iuryi Kosach, "Vil'na ukrains'ka literature," in *Mytets'kyi ukrains'kyi rukh: Zbirnyk II* (Munich: n.p. 1946), 47-65.

Klen went further, expressing his disenchantment with militarism, expansionism, and authoritarianism in his final works.¹⁰⁸ As a German citizen, Klen had been conscripted into the Wehrmacht and served as a translator on the Eastern Front, witnessing the Germans' brutality toward Eastern Europeans firsthand. Contrite over his role in the crimes of Nazism, Klen found solace in classical, medieval Christianity, but in a way opposite to Dontsov, who did the same. Klen's Christianity was a religion of humility, tolerance, suffering, peace, restraint, and love of one's enemies, not one of inquisitions, warrior elites, and crusades against infidels.¹⁰⁹



Figure 6.2. MUR members, 1947: sitting (l-r), Ievhen Malaniuk and Iuryi Shevel'ov; standing Vasyl' Barka, Ulas Samchuk, Ihor Kostets'kyi. *Source*: Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine

Samchuk also turned away from Dontsov. During the war, Samchuk had edited *Volyn'* (Volhynia, 1941-43), a newspaper in the western Ukrainian city of Rivne that toed the pro-Hitler,

¹⁰⁸ See his "Pro henezu poemu 'Popil imperii'" (On the Genesis of the Poem Ashes of Empire), and "Pryhody arkhhangela Raphaila" (The Adventures of Archangel Raphael), in Iuryi Klen, *Tvory*, 4 vols. (Toronto: Fundatsiia imeni Iurii Klena, 1957). Iuryi Klen died young, on October 25, 1947, in Augsburg, Germany, before he could complete these works.

¹⁰⁹ Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 244-52.

anti-Semitic, anti-Polish line.¹¹⁰ The paper nevertheless ran a few pieces that were perceived as critical of the Germans, alarming the authorities. The Gestapo arrested much of *Volyn*'s staff, and later executed six of them. The SD arrested Samchuk in February 1942, but released him after two months.¹¹¹ Having survived, Samchuk felt guilt about his acquiescence in the face of the murderous Nazi occupation of Ukraine and the death of Olena Teliha. Unlike him, she had refused to cooperate with the Nazis. Samchuk and Ol'zhych both expressed guilt about their role in encouraging her to represent the OUN(M) in Kyiv.¹¹² Samchuk's postwar works and leadership of the anti-Dontsovian MUR testify to his rejection of Dontsov's calls to violence, monomania, self-sacrifice.¹¹³ Samchuk immigrated to Toronto, Canada, in 1948, after which MUR ceased to exist.

The most effective critic of Dontsov and *Vistnyk* produced by MUR during its brief life was Shevel'ov, one of the best-known Ukrainian literary critics of the second half of the twentieth century. His essay, "Dontsov khovaie Dontsova" (Dontsov Buries Dontsov), published in the 1948 collection, *Dumky proty techii* (Thoughts against the Current), charged that "Dontsov does not polemicize, he calumniates, and does not fight with 'legitimate methods,'" misrepresenting his opponents' positions, deceptively ripping their statements out of context, deploying sarcasm and inflammatory language to hypnotize his readers into ignoring the baselessness and irrationality of his claims. Dontsov accused his opponents of precisely the same

¹¹⁰ In a 1941 article, "Zavoioivumo misto" (Let Us Conquer the City), for example, he wrote: "All that element that has populated our towns, whether a Jewish or a Polish influx, has to disappear from our towns. The problem of Jewry is in the process of being solved and it will be solved in the framework of the general reorganization in the New Europe. The empty space that may be created must immediately and irrevocable be filled by the real masters and owners of this land, the Ukrainian people." Quoted in Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 241.

¹¹¹ Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 151.

¹¹² Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 189.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, chap. 10.

things that they accused him of: promoting “amorality,” atheism, bestiality, political and ideological opportunism, affinities for Bolshevism, Russophilia, and hostility toward Ukrainians.¹¹⁴ All of this, according to Shevel’ov, was Dontsov projecting what he knew to be true about himself onto others. Shevel’ov offered a damning critique of *Dukh nashoi davnyny*. Instead of a nuanced reconstruction of the medieval Ukrainian worldview that it promises, the latter volume offered the ravings of an out-of-touch, curmudgeonly old cynic and a stream of falsified quotations. Dontsov’s “Christianity” is a “religion of the anti-Christ and a god of curses, cruelty, and misanthropy.”¹¹⁵ His “comical” notion of an ideal “caste”—a group of “führer-like thugs”¹¹⁶—arose from a paradox: “Dontsovism grew from an inability to understand the people and find a common language with them. Preaching fanatical strength grew from a feeling of tragic weakness.”¹¹⁷ Thus, “it is easy to understand why the Bolsheviks love to make use of Dontsov’s name in their anti-Ukrainian propaganda: their propaganda can invent nothing more compromising for the Ukrainian national movement and the Ukrainian national idea than this hysterical man who has lost all connection with the soil, with the people, and wants to make up for this with the cynicism of an executioner, the fatalism of a caste of ‘apostles’—inquisitioners.”¹¹⁸ What Dontsov advocated was indistinguishable from Bolshevism in practice, and useful to it in the press.

Most importantly, Dontsovism and the *Vistnyk* school of literature were no longer relevant, healthy, forward-thinking: “Everything in the world has its time. The time of

¹¹⁴ Iuryi Sherekh, *Dumky proty techii: publisystyka* (N.p.: Vydavnytstvo Ukraina, 1949), 1-11.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 31

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 11.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 33.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 32-33.

Dontsovism has ended. The greatest harm to Dontsov in our day is done by Dontsov himself. The harm is that, by not understanding and not wanting to understand that the Ukrainian liberation movement has moved to a new and higher stage, he pulls this movement back to the preceding stage.”¹¹⁹ *Vistnyk* had played an important role in the 1930s, but the war changed everything, forever discrediting ideas that had been responsible for carnage and ruin in Ukraine and the scattering of its people, Dontsov and MUR included. As of 1947, all of Ukraine’s regions had been united under the hammer and sickle, and were experiencing a wave of Stalinist terror to “purify” the country after its extended Nazi occupation and the ongoing resistance of the OUN and UPA.¹²⁰ “The stage of *Vistnyk*-ism has passed in our common life. And the struggle of the epigones of *Vistnyk*-ism against the conception of MUR means, objectively speaking, the weakening of the Ukrainian national front, and thus the support of the enemies of the Ukrainian movement [*ukrainstvo*], and above all the main enemy, Russian Bolshevism.”¹²¹ Shevel’ov conceded only that Dontsov might still be instructive reading for Ukrainians living in the USA or Canada, those who lacked firsthand experience with the horrors of Soviet reality and thus failed to recognize Bolshevism as the greatest evil facing their people.¹²²

Moving to Canada and offering his well-honed brand of Russophobic anti-Communism to the powers of the West in the Cold War was precisely what Dontsov decided to do. He traveled from West Germany to Paris as a political deportee in 1945, to London at the beginning of 1946, and on to New York in December 1947, publishing dozens of vehemently anti-Soviet calls to arms in the Ukrainian press, including the Philadelphia-based Catholic newspaper

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 41.

¹²⁰ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, chaps. 3-5.

¹²¹ Sherekh, *Dumky proty techii*, 42.

¹²² Ibid., 39.

Ameryka (America), for which he was London correspondent, and the London-based, pro-OUN *Ukrains'kyi klych* (Ukrainian Call).¹²³ By 1947 he was living in Montreal, and attained permanent-resident status in Canada the following year.

True to form, Dontsov courted controversy as soon as he had arrived in Canada on a tourist's visa from the US, launching a public investigation into his past that jeopardized his application for Canadian citizenship. He took his 1948 brochure *Khrest proty dyiavola* (The Cross against the Devil) on a speaking tour across Ontario.¹²⁴ Dontsov gave talks at Plateau Hall, organized by the Ukrainian Canadian Committee in Montreal on January 25, 1948, and at Massey Hall in Toronto on February 22, on the invitation of the local Ukrainian Canadian Committee and Ukrainian Protestants, and as sermons to assemblies of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and of the Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church, to which Dontsov belonged, in Montreal.¹²⁵ This speaking tour, which outraged and alarmed large sections of the already settled Ukrainian diaspora on the left and right, was probably a response to a similar outreach effort at the same time among the Ukrainian DPs in Canada undertaken by the OUN(M) leader Dmytro Andriievs'kyi (whom we last encountered in chapter 4).¹²⁶

Dontsov's rhetoric had taken a Biblical, millenarian turn, but he could not shake his pro-Nazi past so easily. His high-visibility emergence on the scene with a virulently anti-Soviet lecture circuit provoked widespread protests against him. The issue of his citizenship application turned into a public debate on the postwar immigration into Canada of Europeans with dubious

¹²³ LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 31.

¹²⁴ Dmytro Dontsov, *Khrest proty dyiavola: vidchyt vyholoshenyi v Massei Hal v Toronto, 22. II. 1948* (Toronto: n.p. 1948).

¹²⁵ LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 18.

¹²⁶ Andriievs'kyi urged them to join already established Canadian-Ukrainian groups rather than starting their own. Luciuk, *Searching for Place*, 442-43.

wartime histories. Ukrainian Canadians on the far left reportedly spearheaded the denunciation of Dontsov as a fascist and a Nazi collaborator, calling for his expulsion from Canada. Their case was soon taken up by major media sources. On March 13, 1948, “Sean Edwin’s Sound Track,” a sardonic political column in *The Montreal Gazette* issued the following “Memo to the RCMP”—the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, charged with guarding Canada’s borders:

Nazi propagandist Dmitri Dontzow, an old school Ukrainian fascist, is in Ourltown in a St. Kay east walk-up. (His address is available at his office.) During the war years, Dontzow turned the crank for Hitler’s propaganda machine in the Ukraine. . . . As Mussolini and Hitler became more powerful, he lauded their methods and objectives, and was particularly vituperative against parliamentary government. When others died in the ovens after Hitler’s mob walked in, Dontzow lived in luxury as a Nazi pet. At the moment he shields himself under the anti-communist cloak. The commies reverse this protective coloration, but it doesn’t fool very many. Right now, Dontzow isn’t fooling anyone.¹²⁷

In follow-up attack one week later, “Sean Edwin” he called for the deportation of Dontsov, “the one-time Hitler-Mussolini bootlicker” who sneaks around “polluting the Canadian atmosphere.” “Thousands of decent starved Europeans are being kept out of the Dominion through quota restrictions, and we take a dim view of this jerque [sic] being allowed in.”¹²⁸ After offering an incriminating quotation from the July 1936 issue of *Vistnyk*,¹²⁹ the outraged Edwin asked: “What about it? When’s he going to get the boot?”

The controversy surrounding Dontsov’s residence in Canada reached Parliament in Ottawa, which took up the matter when John Diefenbaker (1895-1979), Progressive

¹²⁷ Sean Edwin, “Sound Track,” *Montreal Gazette* (March 13, 1948). The actual author of the column was a certain Mr. McCormick, mentioned in subsequent correspondence between the editor of the paper, Mr. Larkin. LAC MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 21.

¹²⁸ Sean Edwin, “Sound Track,” *Montreal Gazette* (March 20, 1948).

¹²⁹ “The ideal of new style of life, which—as in Italy and Germany—has melted in its fire the old party system, has laid down new canons, has built its own altars, has found new emblems . . . Such a plainly anti-Semitic, beautiful, red league of nations . . .” Ibid. It is unclear where Edwin obtained the awful translation of the passage, allegedly from *Vistnyk*, but it must have been supplied to him by an opponent of Dontsov with a rudimentary knowledge of Ukrainian.

Conservative MP from Saskatchewan in the House of Commons and future prime minister of Canada (1957-63), opened an official query into Dontsov's past.¹³⁰ In a speech before the house on May 14, 1948, Diefenbaker insinuated that the Ukrainian publicist was a Nazi sympathizer demanding answers to the following questions: "When was Dontsov, then residing in Montreal, admitted to Canada?"; "What was he doing during the Second World War, and in what countries was he working and for whom?"; "Is he now engaged in work for the government? If so, what?"¹³¹

Dontsov rushed to defend himself from the allegations in the press, writing (in halting English) a letter to the editor of *The Montreal Gazette* demanding a full retraction. Meanwhile, Dontsov's supporters rallied behind him, contacting Diefenbaker directly and writing to the Canadian Immigration Commission to clear his name. They underscored his innocence in World War II, the unfairness of the Communists' smears against him, his longstanding anti-Communist credentials, and his abilities. The esteemed Canadian scholar of Eastern Europe, pro-Ukrainian, and anti-Communist crusader Watson Kirkconnell (1895-1977)¹³² praised Dontsov, with whom

¹³⁰ Diefenbaker cultivated a reputation for interrogating the representatives of the state on behalf of the people.

¹³¹ LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 18.

¹³² Kirkconnell specialized in Eastern European languages and considered himself an advocate for the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada. The Canadian government employed him during World War II to help secure the support of Eastern Europeans. He energetically opposed Nazism, but considered Communism a greater threat, depicting it as pure evil even while Canada and the Soviet Union were still allies against Hitler. He came to resent what he considered the hidden Communist sympathizers in the West, but postwar Canadian politicians and academics accorded his views respect. He became the president of Acadia University, helped found the Humanities Research Council of Canada (HRCC), and enjoyed a wide readership, using this prestige to promote his vehemently anti-Communist agenda. He argued that a Communist fifth column threatened Canada with Soviet tyranny. As a leader of the HRCC, he considered it his mission to purge Canada's universities and student organizations of alleged Communist influences, and to redirect the humanities toward a thorough critique of the Soviet totalitarian "slave society" in defense of "the intellectual and spiritual freedom associated with liberal education" that was the heart of "our Western way of life." When it came to the Cold War, Kirkconnell went from respected scholar to far-right demagogue, accepting the conspiracy theory that the fluoridation of water was a Communist plot and so on. It is not hard to see why Kirkconnell had such a positive view of Dontsov and was willing to vouch for him. More important, however, was Kirkconnell's general and adamant opposition to handing over Ukrainian DPs against their will to the NKVD as "a moral calamity" tantamount to murder. Luciuk, *Searching for Place*, 75-77. Reg Whitaker and Gary

he was only familiar from having read a few issues of *Vistnyk*, in his letter to the immigration authorities as a “a man of marked intellectual gifts and strong religious power, whose crusade against Communism on religious grounds led to incessant attacks on him by communists.”¹³³

Eugene Dudra, a concerned Ukrainian Canadian citizen in Toronto, wrote to his representative in Parliament, Larry Skey (1911-1977), urging him to speak with Diefenbaker, who had clearly been misled by Communists concerning Dontsov. “Mr. Diefenbaker’s comments are disconnecting,” Dudra wrote. “But why should an anti-Communist, Mr. Diefenbaker, who no doubt shares with Donzow the same dislike of Communism and the same sentiments and Western ideals, who has himself been called a ‘fascist’ by the Communists, fall for the Communist line and voice their protests against Donzow?”¹³⁴ Dudra added that the Ukrainian Progressive Conservative Club in Toronto would be sending a complaint to Skey as well. Another member of the House of Commons, Anthony Hlynka (1907-57), a strong advocate for the opening of Canada to Ukrainian immigrants after World War II, and the publisher of a strongly anti-Communist paper, *Klych* (The Call),¹³⁵ protested Dontsov’s treatment by established leaders of the Ukrainian diaspora in the UK and Canada.¹³⁶

Marcuse, *Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1994), 277-79.

¹³³ April 12, 1948. Watson Kirkconnell to the Immigration Commission of Canada. LAC MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 22.

¹³⁴ LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 25.

¹³⁵ A member of the conservative-populist Social Credit Party of Canada. It blended fundamentalist Christianity with the monetary theories of C. H. Douglas. It also had a reputation for anti-Semitism in the early years after its inception in 1935, but changed its stance after the war. Hlynka has been accused of being indiscriminate in his advocacy for admission of Ukrainians, including Waffen SS veterans, about whom he knew little. Peter J. Melnycky, “Review of *Anthony Hlynka, MP*,” *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 32, no. 1 (Summer 2007): 117-20. Hlynka edited the paper *Suspil’nyi kredyt* (Social Credit), which Janine Stingel has argued “exploited traditional Ukrainian antipathies towards the Jews.” See her *Social Discredit: Anti-Semitism, Social Credit, and the Jewish Response* (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000), 199.

¹³⁶ LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 19. See Luciuk, *Searching for Place*, 72-74.

According to Dontsov, he and Hlynka met in London in 1946. Dontsov was in conflict with the head of the Central Ukrainian Relief Committee (CURB), Bohdan Panchuk, who allegedly regarded the USSR as an ally and therefore disliked Dontsov. CURB described itself as an apolitical relief organization dedicated to opposing the forced repatriation of displaced Ukrainians to the Soviet Union. In vain it sought recognition from the British and Canadian authorities, which were concerned that CURB might stoke nationalism among the DPs it claimed to protect or upset relations with the Soviet Union. One of CURB's associates, Rev. Wasyl Kushnir—head of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, established by the Canadian government to represent Canadian Ukrainians in 1940—supposedly disliked Dontsov for similarly political reasons. W. Galan, the former head of the Ukrainian Relief Committee in the US also disliked Dontsov, purportedly because he had previously stolen 100 dollars from him. Fearing the political repercussions of association with Dontsov, Panchuk removed him from the CURB relief house at 218 Sussex Gardens in London shortly after his arrival there in February 1946. Dontsov had CURB's secretary Stanley Frolick (born in 1920) to thank for his brief asylum in the UK. (Frolick, who joined the OUN(B) during the war and was closely associated with the Banderite Ukrainian Information Service and *Homin Ukrainy* in London, came into conflict with Panchuk for his publicly radical positions and was removed from CURB in late 1946.) CURB's move to send Dontsov packing sparked denunciations from Hlynka at Panchuk's treatment of Ukrainian DPs in general.¹³⁷ Dontsov alleged that established, relatively assimilated Ukrainians in the diaspora feared competition from new arrivals such as himself. Further complicating Dontsov's application was an open investigation into his past being conducted by Scotland Yard, to which

¹³⁷ On this episode, see Luciuk, *Searching for Place*, 92, 371.

he claimed to have been denounced by personal enemies—OUN(M) members in the UK who resented his refusal to join them.

Several Ukrainian Canadian religious leaders entered the fray to disabuse the Canadian public and government of the “Communist slander” that Dontsov had a pro-Nazi past. The Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox priests of Toronto and Montreal (Revs. Sluzar and Samez) reportedly came to his aid, as did Greek-Catholic and Protestant Ukrainian Canadians.¹³⁸ Representing the latter, the Ukrainian Evangelical Alliance of Canada and the US declared their intentions of offering Dontsov employment—a typical requirement for permanent residence status in Canada—noting that he would be “a tremendous boost to our Protestant movement and a welcome addition to the ranks of all those freedom-loving people who have no wish to succumb to Communist spiritual and political enslavement.”¹³⁹ Rev. Michael Fesenko (1900-2003), minister of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and a prominent figure in the Ukrainian community in Toronto, also wrote on Dontsov’s behalf, emphasizing his political and spiritual usefulness, and providing assurances that the publicist had never been pro-Nazi or a Nazi collaborator, but was, in fact, a victim of Nazism:

He is an outstanding statesman, editor, and writer. . . . All the leftist[s] whom he exposed without mercy hate him and are afraid of him. I think that Dr. Donzow could do a great deal of good in Canada exposing communism. . . . When Dr. Donzow came to Canada they [the communists —TE] became alarmed and attacked him in the press and [at] their meetings. . . . Usually Communists call all their opponents fascists. Now they are trying hard to represent Dr. Donzow as one. Dr. Donzow during the war was under German surveillance. He never took part in any Nazi propaganda. He also was not allowed to go to Ukraine. . . . He never belonged to any Ukrainian groups that favored Nazis and they often attacked him. . . . I am certain that Dr. Donzow will be a good Canadian and I think that we need [men] like this.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ LAC, MG30 D130, vol. 1, file 19.

¹³⁹ The Ukrainian Evangelical Alliance to the Immigration Commission of Canada, April 1, 1948. LAC, MG30 D130, vol. 1, file 22.

¹⁴⁰ Michael Fesenko to Rev. H.R. Pickup, director of the Immigration Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, May 22, 1948. LAC MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 7.

Dontsov published several articles on religio-political themes in Fesenko's Toronto-based newspaper, *Ievanhel's'ka pravda* (Evangelical Truth, 1939-2002).¹⁴¹ This new source of support for the publicist, who just fifteen years prior had considered himself "anticlerical," allowed him to address a new, evangelical Protestant audience. Accordingly, he switched the emphasis of his rhetoric to the role of Western Christianity in the Cold War.

Naturally, Ukrainian nationalist papers (*Ukrains'ke slovo*, *Homin Ukrainy*, and others) backed Dontsov's cause, as did the New Jersey-based Organization for the Defense of the Four Freedoms of Ukraine (ODFFU, *Orhanizatsiia Oborony Chotyr'okh Svobid Ukrainy*).¹⁴² The latter wrote on his behalf to the US Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, which was depriving Dontsov of a certificate of return pending further questioning in Montreal, on April 17, 1948.¹⁴³ The ODFFU claimed to have "not found anything pro-Nazi or pro-Fascist" in *Visntyk*. "It is true that [Dontsov] treated Nazism and Fascism, not in a ridiculous way, but as very strong, dynamic and dangerous forces, but he did not foster their approval." The ODFFU asserted that Dontsov was a fugitive and a victim of the Third Reich during World War II:

With the outbreak of war, he removed himself completely from public life, as such life would necessitate some direct or indirect connections with Nazi authorities. For the most part he kept himself in hiding, since the Nazis wanted to arrest him. His niece, a young woman of 25, pregnant at the time, Nana Holubetz, and her mother, were murdered by

¹⁴¹ Dmytro Dontsov, "Ievanheliia pro providnykiv narodu," *Ievanhel's'ka pravda*, no. 9 (1948); and "Ievanheliia i suspil'nyi lad," *Ievanhel'ska pravda*, no. 1 (1949).

¹⁴² Formed in New York City on October 17, 1946, the ODFFU was based in Newark, NJ, and coordinated representatives from various US and eventually Canadian Ukrainian organizations to fight for the famous "four freedoms"—*from* want and fear, and *of* speech and worship—propounded in US President Franklin Roosevelt's 1941 State of the Union address. The ODFFU published Dontsov's articles in its periodical, and offered his book on Ukrainian literary history, *Tuha za heroichnym. Postati ta idei literaturnoi Ukrainy* (Yearning for the Heroic: Figures and Ideas of Literary Ukraine) as a part of its library.

¹⁴³ LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 24.

the Nazis for their alleged connections to the [UPA] that at the time was fighting Nazis.¹⁴⁴

In conflict with this account, Dontsov elsewhere insisted that Nazi authorities had forcibly removed him from Bucharest, to which he had fled at the outbreak of war, transported him to Berlin, where he was kept under close surveillance, and then, for reasons unstated, shipped him to Prague for the remainder of the war.¹⁴⁵ The subject of Dontsov's publication for the Reinhard Heydrich Institute, of which even his rivals seem to have been unaware, was not broached in any of these recriminations.

In any event, the investigations of the US Department of Justice, Scotland Yard, and the RCMP into Dontsov's past turned up nothing damning and he was granted permanent residence in Montreal, Canada. Responding to this outcome and the angry letters from Dontsov and his supporters, *The Montreal Gazette* ran a retraction on April 24, 1948. "Sean Edwin" (McCormick) admitted that he had gotten his tip "from the Reds," writing that Dontsov had "a sweet-smelling bill of health from the RCMP"; "the commies" had slandered the publicist with "nasty stories" for opposing them, but he was guilty of no wartime crimes. On June 19, 1948, Kirkconnell reported to Dontsov on a private consultation with Diefenbaker, who had "clarified his attitude" toward the Ukrainian publicist; now the future PM "spoke most favorably" of Dontsov.¹⁴⁶

Indispensable to Dontsov's transition to life in North America was *Batava* colleagues, Iuryi Rusov (whose name in Canada was George Roussow) and Natalia Gerken-Rusova, who helped him settle in Montreal and find a professorship in Slavic literature at the University of Montreal,

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Dmytro Dontsov to Watson Kirkconnell, July 31, 1946. LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 23.

¹⁴⁶ LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 23.

where Rusov was teaching biology.¹⁴⁷ Thus, like the researchers behind the Reinhard Heydrich Institute, Dontsov's wartime activities—writing for an institution named in honor of one of the chief architects of the Holocaust—did not prevent him from securing a respectable academic post.¹⁴⁸ Appalled by this turn of events, the Toronto-based Communist paper *Ukrains'ke zhyttia* (Ukrainian Life) taunted Dontsov for his self-imposed exile in Canada, ridiculing the notion that he had been a “victim” of the war.¹⁴⁹ But he was there to stay. Dontsov taught in Montreal until 1952, then retired and took up residence at a country home in Lac-Supérieur, Quebec. This withdrawal from city life did not end his writing and publishing, which continued, albeit at an ever-slower pace, until his death in 1973. His articles appeared in the Banderite-controlled LVU's organ *Homin Ukrainy* (Echo of Ukraine), and other nationalist publications, including *The Ukrainian Review* (London), *Vyzvol'nyi shliakh* (Path of Liberation, London), *Ukrains'kyi samostiinyk* (Ukrainian Independentist, Munich), *Shliakh peremohy* (Path of Victory, Munich), and *ABN-Correspondence*, the paper of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN). He wrote on anti-Russian and anti-Communist themes, drawing comparisons between the Soviet Union and its erstwhile “ally,” Nazi Germany, exposing Stalinist crimes against Ukrainians and the persistence of Russification and human rights abuses in the UkrSSR, and covering the responses of religious communities and institutions in the West to developments in the Soviet Union.

¹⁴⁷ The lecture notes for Dontsov's courses on Russian and Ukrainian literature, for those capable of deciphering them, are kept in the Library and Archives of Canada, along with the rest of his postwar papers. LAC MG31 D130, vol. 15.

¹⁴⁸ Beyer, Winter, Müller, and other Reinhard Heydrich Institute leaders fled Prague to safety in the American Zone and took up positions at various West German institutions. Only Hippus failed to escape; arrested after the Red Army's capture of the city, he died in a Soviet detention camp on October 23, 1945. Wiedemann, *Die Reinhard Heydrich-Stiftung*, 97-98.

¹⁴⁹ *Ukrains'ke zhyttia*, June 23, 1949, and July 28, 1949. LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 13.

The ABN was headquartered in Munich, a major hub for the gathering of anti-Communist forces, including German expellees from Eastern Europe and Eastern European nationalist émigrés, in the early years of the Cold War. Munich also attracted the Reinhard Heydrich Institute leaders Hans Joachim Beyer and Hans Koch; on February 1, 1950, the latter founded the Munich East Europe Institute (*Müncher Osteuropainstitut*), which Beyer joined, using it as a platform for his ongoing work on Eastern European history and anti-Russian, anti-Communist themes.¹⁵⁰ The mass expulsion or flight of Germans from Eastern Europe that followed World War II flooded Munich and other West German cities with refugees embittered and radicalized by their harrowing encounters with the Red Army. “De-Nazified” specialists on Russia, such as Koch and Beyer, already despised the USSR, but could now set their activities in a humanitarian light—providing assistance to German civilians abused by Communism. Similarly, the OUN(B) and the ABN recruited among the more than two million Ukrainians who found themselves in the dozens of displaced persons camps that appeared in West Germany. All but 200,000 of the Ukrainian DPs were repatriated back to the UkrSSR in 1946. Reasonably fearing persecution there, those who refused to return to the Soviet zone generally stayed in West Germany, then emigrated to the US or Canada in the late 1940s.¹⁵¹ The *Banderivtsi* attempted to monopolize the profoundly anti-Communist, nationalistic mood in the Ukrainian DP camps, starting turf wars with the *Mel'nykivtsi*, the Hetmanites, and other groups that became endemic to the politics of the Ukrainian diaspora. Formed in 1946, the ABN was OUN(B) leader Iaroslav Stets'ko's project to coordinate anti-Communist nationalist émigrés from the Soviet Union and

¹⁵⁰ The institute's director, Hans Koch, served as an advisor to Konrad Adenauer (1876-1967) in the West German chancellor's diplomatic trip to Moscow in 1955. Responding to criticisms of anti-Soviet partisanship, the Munich East Europe Institute went through a political evolution from the 1960s on, stripping its original Cold War agendas, and still exists today as one of the few Ukrainian studies research hubs in Germany.

¹⁵¹ Wsevolod W. Isajiw, Yury Boshyk, and Roman Senkus, eds., *The Refugee Experience: Ukrainian Displaced Persons after World War II* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies Press, 1992).

other socialist countries.¹⁵² The ABN enjoyed the support of the US intelligence community (CIA, Army Intelligence, etc.),¹⁵³ and established links with Estonian, Lithuanian, Belarusian, Georgian, Croatian, and Latvian nationalists, as well as with delegates from East Asian countries in the World Anti-Communist League (WACL). In this sense, the ABN was a “cosmopolitan” venture, however nationalistic in form and intent; its slogan may well have been: “Anti-Communists of all countries, unite!” Dontsov also promoted the idea of an anti-Bolshevik coalition of all non-Russian nations. Taking inspiration from the anticolonial movements of Africa in the late 1940s and 1950s, the ABN advocated armed insurrection of the captive nations of the Soviet Union against Russian domination as an alternative to another world (and probably nuclear) war. It organized anti-Soviet rallies, demonstrations, and press conferences, producing and distributing anti-Soviet propaganda. Though distrustful of the governments of the West, which were not interested in getting into a conflict with Moscow over the independence of Ukrainians or any other Soviet minority, the ABN claimed to defend the “European ideals” of “heroic Christianity,” “human dignity,” and “national independence,” and sought the “psychomoral, political and ideological revolutionization of all strata of society” in the non-Russian societies of the USSR.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² The ABN can be traced back to an underground OUN(B)-organized conference of non-Russian nationalists near Zhytomyr, Ukraine, in 1943.

¹⁵³ Jeffrey Burds, *The Early Cold War in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944-1948* (Pittsburgh: Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 2001). In the mid to late 1940s, the CIA and US military intelligence assumed control over German contacts with the UPA insurgency in Western Ukraine, providing tactical and material support in exchange for anti-Soviet intelligence. The OUN(B) leader Mykola Lebed (1909-1998), notorious for his role in orchestrating the UPA’s ethnic cleansing of the Polish minority in Volhynia and the formation of the *Sluzhba Bezpeky* (Security Service), the OUN(B)’s “secret police” force, emigrated to New York and began working closely with the CIA in 1949.

¹⁵⁴ Quoted in Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora*, 159. In the 1980s, following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the ABN offered its services to the Mujahedeen, sowing discord among the ethnic Ukrainians fighting for the Red Army there. It also managed to forge ties with the anti-Communist neoconservatives of the Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher era.

While Dontsov generally aligned himself with pro-Bandera groups such as the ABN and the League for the Liberation of Ukraine (LVU), the various OUN factions contested his status and that of his doctrine. These internal disagreements were rooted in the 1943 revision to the OUN(B)'s program, which Stepan Bandera and his supporters resisted implementing because they considered it too close to socialism. After Bandera's assassination by a KGB agent at his Munich apartment on October 15, 1959, Stets'ko assumed control over the OUN(B). Prior to this, in December 1956, the more moderate members of the Bandera faction had split off to form the OUN "abroad" (*za kornodu*), or OUN(z), whose leaders, Zynovyi Matla (1910-1993) and Lev Rebet (1912-1957)—also assassinated by the KGB in Munich—sought to distance the OUN(B) from Nazism and Dontsovism, instead aligning the organization's positions with those of the generally liberal-democratic West and Ukrainian diaspora.¹⁵⁵ Postwar OUN(M) theorists also attempted to update their ideology for the changing times. Iuryi Boiko (1909-2002) (real name Blokhin), for instance, rejected both the OUN(B)'s tenacious Dontsovism and Shevel'ov's critiques thereof.¹⁵⁶ A leading member of the OUN-M in postwar Munich and professor of literature at the Ukrainian Free University,¹⁵⁷ Boiko conceded that Dontsov's influence had had a pernicious effect on Ukrainian literature and politics, but disagreed with Shevelov's position that all literature with a political agenda, such as that of the *Vistnykivtsi*, is inherently inferior to

¹⁵⁵ The CIA directly funded the OUN(z) through its main contact in New York, Mekola Lebed, who led the group after Rebet's death.

¹⁵⁶ Hailing from the Eastern Ukrainian city of Mykolayiv and Soviet-educated in literature, Boiko was arrested in connection with the SVU show trial in 1929 (see chapter 4), but the GPU released him. He moved to Kharkiv, where, during World War II, he joined the OUN(M) and wrote for its paper, *Nova Ukraina* (New Ukraine), to which Shevelo'v also contributed. Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 128.

¹⁵⁷ Based in Prague during the interwar period, the UFU relocated to Munich to serve displaced Ukrainians. Shevel'ov enrolled there in 1946, defending a doctoral dissertation in philology the following year. The UFU still exists in Munich today, offering advanced degrees in Ukrainian studies.

nonpartisan literature that is more sophisticated in form.¹⁵⁸ In his 1951 work, *Osnovy ukrains'koho natsionalizmu* (Foundations of Ukrainian Nationalism), Boiko called for a rejection of Dontsov's elitist contempt for "the masses," his refusal to appreciate the historical agency of common people, and his view of human individuals as "mechanical little soldiers" to be ruthlessly sacrificed for the sake of great ideas.¹⁵⁹ Boiko accused the *Vistnyk* editor of intellectual dilettantism, negativity, and superficiality, offering hyper-emotive myth-making instead of in-depth research and cool-headed exposition.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, Boiko acknowledged that Dontsov had made some positive contributions to the development of Ukrainian nationalism. Moreover, Boiko took a similar turn toward a more theological conception of nationalism, linking it to religion and faith as powerful sources of conviction, unity, and resolve that are exempt from rational scrutiny.¹⁶¹

Petro Mirchuk, one of the first "official" historians of the OUN, called Dontsov the most important ideologue of interwar Ukrainian nationalism.¹⁶² Mirchuk dismissed the categorization of Ukrainian nationalism as "fascism" as slander by outsiders, insisting that Dontsovism expressed the thousand-year-old traditions of Ukrainian statehood. Others sought to distance historical and contemporary Ukrainian nationalists from Dontsov and his influence, despite their connections and indebtedness to him, effacing the controversial publicist from their collective

¹⁵⁸ Iuryi Boiko, "Kudy idemo?" *Ridne slovo* 11, 2 (1946): 44-45, and "Odvertyi lyst do Iuriia Sherekha," *Orlyk*, no. 11 (1947): 19-23. Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 128.

¹⁵⁹ Iuryi Boiko, *Osnovy ukrains'koho natsionalizmu* (Na chuzhyni: n.p., 1951), 35.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 43-44. Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 129.

¹⁶¹ Iuryi Boiko, *Na holovni magistrali* (Na chuzhyni: n.p., 1951).

¹⁶² Mirchuk, *Narys istorii*.

past.¹⁶³ Nevertheless, Dontsov's influence on non-Soviet Ukrainian political and cultural life had been considerable, inspiring a wide array of both positive and negative criticisms and interpretations. Historian Mykhailo Lahodivs'kyi (pseudonym Mykhailo Demkovych-Dobrians'kyi) contended that recognition of Dontsov's uniqueness and stature is necessary to any understanding of interwar eastern Galicia, but decried the ideologue's influence on Ukrainian nationalism as pernicious mass propaganda. Dontsov's ideology, Lahodivs'kyi argued in 1947, was hostile toward free thought and deliberately provoked the basest animal instincts (a European-wide phenomenon between the World Wars).¹⁶⁴ The Ukrainian nationalist theorist Antin Kniazhyns'kyi regarded the heavy-handed emotionalism in "active nationalism" as a stifling influence on national progress, but favorably evaluated Dontsov's purported evolution away from materialism after 1941.¹⁶⁵ Perhaps the most profound critique of Dontsov was that of the FNE ideologue Mykola Shlemkevych in his 1954 work *Zahublena ukrains'ka liudyna* (The Lost Ukrainian Person), which maintained that Dontsov's concept of the "strong man" (*syl'na liudyna*) constitutes the most radical antithesis of the free spirit to come out of modern Ukrainian thought. Shlemkevych attributed the rise and fall of "active nationalism's" appeal to regressive imbalances in Ukrainian society.¹⁶⁶

The Ukrainian diaspora engaged in dynamic, emotional, and partisan debates about Dontsov and his legacy, particularly after his works became more widely available in new

¹⁶³ R. Mlynovets'kyi, *Narysy z istorii ukrains'kykh vysvol'nykh zmahan'. 1917-1918 roky. (Pro shcho "istoriia movchyt")*: V 2-kh tomakh, vol. 1 (Toronto: Homin Ukrainy, 1970), 60-61, 398-415. For a representative example of attempts to distinguish the ideology of the OUN's Bandera faction from Dontsovism, see Martynets', *Ideolohiia orhanizovanoho i t. zv. volievoho natsionalizmu*.

¹⁶⁴ Mykhailo Lahodivs'kyi. "Dmytro Dontsov. Ioho folia v formuvanni modernoho ukrainstva," *Problemy* (July 1947): 9-13.

¹⁶⁵ Antin Kniazhyns'kyi, *Dukh natsii. Sotsiolohichno-etnopsykholohichna studiia* (New York: Shevchenko Scientific Society in the USA, 1959), 204.

¹⁶⁶ Mykola Shlemkevych, *Zahublena ukrains'ka liudyna* (New York: P. Krupka, 1954), 28.

editions following his postwar emigration to North America. On the occasion of Dontsov's seventy-fifth birthday in 1958, roughly coinciding with the fifty-year anniversary of his debut as a publicist, some of his admirers proposed republishing his works, but the project never materialized.¹⁶⁷ The Canadian-Ukrainian émigré author and nationalist Pavlo Shtepa produced a bibliography of the ideologue's oeuvre in 1958,¹⁶⁸ but interest in Dontsov, increasingly out of touch, began to fall off in the 1960s after the Soviet state had publicly condemned the "excesses" of Stalinism and set a course of normalizing relations with the West. During the Thaw, a period of increased US-Soviet dialogue and the relaxation of censorship and repression under Premier Nikita Khrushchev, anticommunist Ukrainian nationalism began losing its relevance and urgency for the Ukrainian diaspora, whose members continued settling into new lives and identities in the West. Ukrainian émigré student and academic societies did organize several conferences themed around Dontsov's life and thought in the decade or so following his death.¹⁶⁹ His works eventually entered republication, but he and the publishers had furtively abridged them to match the changing mood of the Ukrainian diaspora and the political orthodoxies of the postwar West, sanitizing his ideology with falsified texts.¹⁷⁰

Still, Dontsov's worldview still commanded the loyalty of the OUN(B) and the ABN under Stets'ko's leadership. The Central Committee of the ABN empowered Dontsov to act as

¹⁶⁷ "U 75 richchia D-ra Dmytra Dontsova," *Vyzvol'nyi shliakh* no. 10 (1958): 1083.

¹⁶⁸ Pavlo Shtepa, *Bibliohrafiia tvoriv Dmytra Dontsov*. Windsor: n.p., 1958).

¹⁶⁹ The *Zarevo* Ukrainian Students Association hosted a conference on Dontsov in New York, and two were held in November 1983 on the centennial of the writer's birth in Chicago (presided over by Professor D. Shtohryn) and in Montreal (under Professor Ia. Kelebaia).

¹⁷⁰ Roman Bzhes'kyi (Paklen), *Osnovy nationalistychnoho svitohliadu i ukrains'ki natsionalisty*, vol. 3 (Detroit: n.p., 1978), 193.

its representative before the Canadian authorities,¹⁷¹ and he wrote extensively for the OUN(B)-affiliated press during the Cold War. Boiling these writings down to their essence, Dontsov made four main arguments between 1945 and 1973: 1) the Soviet (Russian) empire is fatally weakened because it follows a bankrupt ideology and its oppressed nationalities are resisting; 2) nevertheless, it threatens to start a third world war against the West at any moment—a violent conflict is inevitable; therefore 3) the powers of the West should strike first and destroy “the forces of the anti-Christ” gathered in Moscow; and 4) the Cold War should become a “holy war” or a “war of religions,” in which the nations of the West match the fanaticism of the Bolsheviks with an equally fanatical belief in their divine mission, as Christians, to spearhead a crusade against the “Satanic” Soviet Union.

Dontsov also published compilations of revised versions of his previously published works, excising the overtly pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic comments from his writings of the 1930s and early 1940s, but did not stray from the highly authoritarian, traditionalist, mystical, and racist worldview expressed in *Dukh nashoi davnyiny*.¹⁷² He did not undergo any significant ideological evolutions in his sixties, seventies, and eighties, but carried on repeating the same ideas that he had held since World War II; on the nature of “Russian messianism,” the need for a new elite, the power of the will and irrational conviction, the cult of violence, etc. Despite his efforts to purge his oeuvre and biography of connections to Nazism, Dontsov maintained a keen interest in anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, judging from the heavily underlined brochures in his personal papers.¹⁷³ He refrained from publishing overtly anti-Semitic views, but frequently noted

¹⁷¹ The order, signed by Stets’ko in Munich, was dated April 24, 1952. LAC MG31 D130, vol. 1, file 30.

¹⁷² Dmytro Dontsov, *Dvi literaturni nashoi doby* (1958); *Khrestom i mechem* (1967); and *Moskovs’ka otruta* (Toronto: Spilka vyzvolennia Ukrainy, 1955).

¹⁷³ LAC, MG31 D130, vol. 28, file 15.

when his opponents in the media were of Jewish origin, underlining their names in his newspaper clippings and scribbling “Jew” in the margins.¹⁷⁴ The elderly Dontsov attempted to purify his legacy, representing his tortuous political and intellectual journey as a forward march, with no deviations in principle from his mature worldview.

The ideologue’s old friend and assistant Mykhailo Hikavyi visited him for a month in the summer of 1964. Hikavyi recalled that Dontsov, then eighty, still got up at seven in the morning, and constantly read and wrote without glasses despite his advanced age. “He was just as he had been back in L’viv,” Hikavyi wrote. “He loved to joke and to talk about the past and plans for the future. The late Dontsov was a deeply religious and uncompromising man. In conversations he sharply condemned ‘meetings’ with Muscovite emissaries, ‘cultural exchange,’ and coexistence with the Bolsheviks—with Communists who cause the demoralization of our emigration.”¹⁷⁵ Hikavyi’s description of Dontsov as a man who “loved to joke” might seem surprising in light of what we have seen of his public persona through the years, but this was a side of him that does not come across in the sources, his caustic sarcasm notwithstanding.

Further evidence of the elderly Dontsov’s outwardly deepening piety—or at least his conviction that militant Christianity was the best answer to the religion of Bolshevism, the “Red Islam”—can be found in his essay *Der Geist Russlands* (The Spirit of Russia), published in Munich in 1961.¹⁷⁶ It also appeared in London as “The Spirit of Russia,” in the collection *The*

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., vol. 23.

¹⁷⁵ Hikavyi, “Den’ doktora Dymtra Dontsova.”

¹⁷⁶ Dmytro Donzow, *Der Geist Russlands* (Munich: Schildverlag, 1961). This work contains reworked sections of *Pidstavy nashoi polityky* with introductory and concluding sections interpreting the Cold War through the lens of Dontsov’s apocalyptic Christian mysticism. The publisher, founded in 1950 by Helmut Damerau, a close associate of Erich Koch’s (head of the Reichskommissariat Ukraine during the war), Heinrich Detloff von Kalben, Joachim Ruoff, and Felix Steiner. All were NSDAP men; the latter two high-ranking SS officers. Both POWs at the Garmisch-Partenkirchen prison camp, Damerau and Detloff started the venture as a far-rightwing, anti-Communist newspaper, *die Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, which claimed to represent the interests of German soldiers after the

Real Face of Russia (1967), which also included essays by Stets'ko, Ievhen Malaniuk, and Dontsov's erstwhile critic in the OUN(M), Iuryi Boiko, all in English translation.¹⁷⁷ The latter volume came with a foreword by J. F. C. Fuller (1878-1966)—Major General in British Army, military historian, strategist, and noted theorist of the “Blitzkrieg” approach to mechanized warfare. As one of the first disciples of the famous English poet, ceremonial magician, and esotericist Aleister Crowley (1875-1947), Fuller adhered to the voluntaristic “Thelemite”¹⁷⁸ philosophy and wrote a number of works on the occult and mysticism.¹⁷⁹ He was openly enthusiastic about Fascism and Nazism in the 1930s, collaborating with Oswald Mosley, the British Union of Fascists (BUF), and the Nordic League.¹⁸⁰ Fuller attended Hitler's fiftieth birthday in 1939 as a guest of honor, and urged his countrymen to make peace with the Third Reich thereafter.¹⁸¹ Dontsov could boast the complete sympathy of Fuller, who wrote in his forward to “The Spirit of Russia”:

This is a profound and fundamental work surpassing all publications on the world crisis that I have read so far, in that it represents the core of the problem which has been disturbing the old world for centuries and still today continues to disturb the entire world.

war. It was known for trivializing or denying Nazi war crimes. The paper's modern successor is the rightwing *National-Zeitung* (Munich).

¹⁷⁷ This lineup suggests that, as of the late 1960s, Ukrainian integral nationalists were willing to appear in print alongside one another even if they belonged to hostile factions. Boiko's contribution dealt with “the Russian historical roots of Bolshevism.” Volodymyr Bohdaniuk, ed., *The Real Face of Russia: Essays and Articles* (London: Ukrainian Information Service, 1967). The Ukrainian Information Service was an outgrowth of the OUN(B) camp in the UK.

¹⁷⁸ The Law of Thelma, developed by Crowley, expresses a voluntarist idea that would have appealed to Dontsov: “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law. Love is the law, love under will.”

¹⁷⁹ J. F. C. Fuller, *Yoga: A Study of the Mystical Philosophy of the Brahmins and Buddhists* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1925); *Atlantis, America, and the Future* (London: Kegan Paul, 1925); and *The Secret Wisdom of the Qabalah: A Study in Jewish Mystical Thought* (London: W. Rider and Co., 1937).

¹⁸⁰ The Nordic League was a clandestine, radically pro-Nazi group in the UK, created by agents of Alfred Rosenberg in 1935.

¹⁸¹ Unlike Mosley and the other leading members of the BUF, Fuller was not imprisoned in 1940 for his pro-Nazi statements and activities, probably thanks to his contacts in the high command of the British Army.

. . . What are the components of the Muscovite Messianism, the spiritual nomadism, which today threatens to extinguish Western culture and with it the Western way of life? We find the answer in this scholarly and fascinating book. Dr. Donzow has most thoroughly investigated and explained here the factors of which this Messianism consists.¹⁸²

The ringing endorsement indicates something of Dontsov's entanglement with the weirder, occult-dabbling fascist trends in the West.¹⁸³

Mystical and supernatural themes permeated Dontsov's final works. The USSR, for Dontsov, was an incarnation of Satan himself; despite being godless materialists, Russian Communists were literally Devil-worshippers—the purest evil on earth. Only a “new elite” and a “new chivalry” could “defend the sacred values and traditions of Christian civilization successfully.” Western materialists were powerless to stop it. “These sophists, economists, and calculators¹⁸⁴ will never possess the necessary nobleness of soul, wisdom of intellect, far-sightedness and will-power to kill the Apocalyptic Dragon of Moscow”:

It is this same incapacity on the part of the present leading circles of the West to assert themselves as the champions of a great, uncompromising anti-Russian idea, that makes them indifferent, if not hostile, to the only saving watchword of today, to that of the nations of Central and East Europe who are fighting for their independence—namely *the destruction of the monstrous colonialist power, the disintegration of the barbarous Russian empire, the empire of slavery, of godlessness, of genocide and of ignominy*.¹⁸⁵

In the age of the atomic bomb, Dontsov sought solutions to the problems of national liberation from Russian imperialism and an answer to the Communist threat to Western civilization in idealized notions of the political, spiritual, aesthetic, and moral universe of tenth-century

¹⁸² Bohdaniuk, *The Real Face*, 11-12.

¹⁸³ On the relationship between Nazism, Nazi “pseudoscience,” and the occult imagination see Monica Black and Eric Kurlander, eds., *Revisiting the “Nazi Occult”: Histories, Realities, Legacies* (Rochester: Camden House, 2015).

¹⁸⁴ A reference to the Irish conservative philosopher Edmund Burke's (1729-1797) famous line in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), which argued that the French Revolution was rending the fabric of society by destroying hallowed traditions (the Church, aristocracy, royalty, and so on).

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

Kyivan-Rus'. At a time when most people, especially Ukrainians, were weary of war and ready for the peaceful reconstruction of shattered lives, Dontsov longed for the next clash of the titans. Fantasies of mythic beasts, sacred orders, warrior elites, and a crusader's redemptive death in combat permeated his postwar writing. Dontsov had been susceptible to such romanticism ever since his antimaterialist turn circa the First World War, but now it was especially fitting: an elderly recluse, shaped in a bygone era on a darker continent, Dontsov withdrew from worldly politics and the present day. He took comfort in the thought—contrary to the gritty, anticlerical voluntarism and amoralism that he had trumpeted in his younger days—that the eternal forces of good and evil, God and Satan, would decide everything. Westerners, he insisted, need only regain their faith in this otherworldly struggle to reclaim the earth from the unholy tide of Russian messianism.

Dontsov lived a long life, suffering from few ailments, but his health inevitably deteriorated. In October 1972 he visited the doctor with complaints of jaundice, bouts of profuse vomiting, worsening vision, weak legs, backaches, gallstones, and biliary disease.¹⁸⁶ He died at St. Mary's hospital in Montreal on March 30, 1973, at eighty-nine years of age. The autopsy determined cause of death as septicemia (blood poisoning); in other words, old age.¹⁸⁷ In his final will, he left his properties and belongings to the Rusovs.¹⁸⁸ He had no family and no next of kin in North America; his ex-wife Mariia was living in New York, but the two had not been in contact for years. On April 4, 1973, they buried Dontsov at St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Cemetery in South Bound Brook, NJ—a place intended for the mortal remains of prominent

¹⁸⁶ LAC, MG30, D130, vol. 2, file 4.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., file, 6.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., file, 2.

Ukrainian artists, political leaders, and members of the Orthodox clergy in the diaspora.¹⁸⁹

Iaroslav Stets'ko presided over the wake, which was attended by Mykola Lebed', Mykhailo Hikavyi, Mykhailo Sosnovs'kyi, Catholic and Orthodox religious leaders, UPA veterans, and scores of representatives from other Ukrainian diaspora organizations, including the League for the Liberation of Ukraine, the World Congress of Free Ukrainians, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Organization for the Defense of the Four Freedoms of Ukraine.¹⁹⁰ Citing health problems, the eighty-six-year-old Mariia Bachyns'ka-Dontsova, then living in New York City, was unable to attend the proceedings.

The obituaries that followed offered mixed assessments of the deceased life and legacy. The Central Committee of the ABN hailed him as “the most distinguished thinker and ideologist of Ukrainian nationalism, an uncompromising fighter for an Independent Sovereign Ukrainian State, inspirer of the fighters of the OUN, Cassandra of the idea of a common anti-Russian front of the subjugated nations, author of numerous basic works about the spirituality of the Ukrainian nation and the foundations of Ukrainian politics, profound student of Russian imperialism,” as well as “a brilliant Ukrainian publicist, a prisoner of Russian and Polish prisons and concentration camps, an extraordinary figure in the history of Ukraine.”¹⁹¹ The nationalist paper *Meta* (The Aim) featured an only slightly critical eulogy by Rostyslav Iendyk, who underscored

¹⁸⁹ The *Vistnykivtsi* Ievhen Malaniuk, Oksana Liaturyns'ka, and Mykola Mukhin, and the editor of *Dazhboh* Bohdan Kravtsiv are also interred there. The church itself was built as “a symbolic tombstone over the millions of unknown graves of those who died in the struggle for their faith, their church, their people, their Homeland; they died on the fields of glory in the armed contests—they also ended their life being tortured in concentration camps, prisons, even in their home villages, during the Great Famine, in which Moscow was destroying Ukraine and the innocent victims of war.” This is according to the website of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, headquartered in South Bound Brook. <http://www.uocofusa.org/cemetery.html> [accessed March 6, 2016]

¹⁹⁰ Stets'ko's eulogy, which hailed Dontsov as one of “the greatest Ukrainians of the century,” was published alongside a description of the funeral and wake in *Homin Ukrainy* 16 (April 14, 1973).

¹⁹¹ “Dmytro Dontsov, Ideologist of Ukrainian nationalism, Dies at 89,” *ABN-Correspondence*, no. 3 (May-June 1973), 1.

Dontsov's uncompromising combativeness, ideological purity and militancy: "This creative temperament did not hesitate to thrust aside his own followers if they voiced even the slightest deviation. In this regard, Dontsov was by nature an often solitary figure to his own detriment."¹⁹² Iendyk urged Ukrainians to recognize everything positive that Dontsov, for all his negativity, had left to posterity, citing the latter's injection of "Western European ideas" into Ukrainian life. The Ukrainian Canadian nationalist youth publication *Avanhard* (Avant-Garde) declared that Dontsov's ideas had "dominated the past sixty years of Ukrainian political and spiritual life," and would continue to do so long into the future, providing "national criteria for the evaluation of social phenomena and the literary trends of our young generations."¹⁹³

In contrast to these tributes, Iuryi Kosach published a damning obituary in the pro-Soviet Edmonton-based paper *Ukrains'ki visti* (Ukrainian News).¹⁹⁴ Dontsov's rival since the early 1930s, Kosach denounced him as a "political chameleon and a routine hater, not only of any sort of progress, but of the Ukrainian people as a whole."¹⁹⁵ Kosach sneered at the hyperbolic honorifics bestowed on the late Dontsov by his admirers: "Truly, one must efface not only national ethics, but also common decency in order to call D. Dontsov 'the creator of an epoch,' 'an epochal figure in the history of the Ukrainian people,' 'the Messiah (!) of the Ukrainian nation, 'a giant of our spirituality,' and a type 'such as were T. Shevchenko, I. Franko, Lesia

¹⁹² Rostyslav Iendyk, "Dmytro Dotsov (1883-1973)," *Meta*, no. 4 (April 1973).

¹⁹³ "Dmytro Dontsov vidiishov y vichnist'," *Avanhard*, no. 2 (April 1973).

¹⁹⁴ Kosach was living in New York City at this time. He had taken pro-Soviet stances, joined collaborative efforts with Soviet writers, and sharply criticized the anti-Communist Ukrainian émigrés in his journal *Za synim obriiem* (Behind the Blue Horizon).

¹⁹⁵ Iuryi Kosach, "Kinets' shchelkopiorovshchyny," *Ukrains'ki visti* (April 12, 1973), 7. *Ukrains'ki visti* advocated Canada's recognition of Soviet Ukraine as a sovereign state. Canadian officials rejected this idea (noting the specious constitutional status of the UkrSSR), but also dismissed Ukrainian nationalist interpretations of the Ukrainians' international situation as of the early 1960s. Bohdan S. Kordan and Lubomyr Y. Luciuk, *A Delicate and Difficult Question: Documents in the History of Ukrainian in Canada, 1899-1962* (Kingston: Limestone Press, 1986), 171-73.

Ukrainka' (!), 'the mortal remains of whom will be transferred to the Pantheon of the Ukrainian nation in Kyiv.'"¹⁹⁶ "Either the 'spirituality' of the Dontsovian panegyrists is so negligible that they have destroyed all criteria for the recognition of worth," Kosach asserted, or they had internalized Dontsov's contempt for them as a "herd," "a race of helots and slaves," and thus "deliberately mock themselves over him, preparing obituaries for 'the thinker' in the form of idiotic parody." Kosach rejected the notion that Dontsov—"a man of dubious talent, of foreign 'wisdom' stolen from everywhere, of unprincipled eclecticism, of virtual political equilibrium and chronic 'reorientations,' an apologist for the most reactionary 'ideologies,' the eternal hireling of the dark powers of a foreign land [i.e. Germany –TE] whose sole aim was the oppression and genocide of the Ukrainian people, a common opportunist"—somehow belongs in Ukraine's "Pantheon." From socialist atheist to fascist bigot, Dontsov had been a "pan-Germanist" since World War I, and hailed Hitler, the butcher of millions of Ukrainians, as "a cross-bearing Messiah." Facing the righteous anger of the Ukrainian people after the war, "Dontsov fled like a mouse under a broom, reoriented himself at once, and, with the cynicism of a perpetual renegade, [disguised himself] as a pious carrier of 'the Cross against the Devil,' [and] of Anglo- and Americanophilia." Kosach asserted that Dontsov shamelessly trumpeted America's destructive global role in the Cold War, praising its "strong hand" in Korea and Vietnam, and advised his followers "to pray for the atomic bomb to destroy two thirds of Ukraine that the remaining third might have its own state."

In death, as in life, Dontsov remained a polarizing figure. He was either one of the greatest Ukrainian patriots to ever live, a sagely gadfly, "the Cassandra of a united anti-Russian front," *or* a lifelong traitor to his country, a shape-shifting careerist, a lackey of German and Polish tyrants, and a man so full of hatred that he fantasized about the nuclear annihilation of his

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. Kosach refers to the obituary in *ABN-Correspondence*.

own countrymen, promoting whatever political forces promised to bring this about. More levelheaded assessments of the ideologue would have to wait.



Figure 6.3. Dontsov near the end of his life. *Source*: LAC, MG30 D130, vol. 28, file 42.

Conclusion

The reverse of the title of one of Dontsov's key later works, *Vid mistyky do polityky* (From Mysticism to Politics, 1957),¹⁹⁷ is a fitting description of his last thirty years; the aging publicist took the opposite course, from politics to mysticism, abandoning the hard struggle of resisting Russian hegemony from within the Ukrainian lands in favor of solitary reflection on medieval esoterica, apocalyptic dragons, Christian faith, life and legacy—all from the safety of a Quebecois ski-resort town. Many of his fellow Ukrainian nationalists distanced themselves from his extremism and dealings with “former” Nazis, sought atonement for their own regrettable words and deeds, and subjected him to a substantive critique via MUR, but Dontsov was capable

¹⁹⁷ Dmytro Dontsov, *Vid mistyky do polityky* (Toronto: Spilka vyzvolennia Ukrainy, 1957).

of changing only the outward form, not the content of his belief system, despite the dramatic turn of events that had forced him to cross the Atlantic in search of asylum. Similarly, the OUN(B) split into those who wanted a new, liberal-democratic image, reputation, and platform, and those who stuck to their Dontsovian guns but dropped the Nazi dross in favor of pure anti-Communism and Russophobia (Stets'ko, the ABN, and the OUN[z]). The Cold Warriors of the West who happened to know about Dontsov valued the ideologue, helping him to secure a comfortable existence in Canada and take up his pen-sword in defense of the decidedly *internationalist* idea of (capitalist) Christendom. His anti-Soviet credentials overshadowed the plain fact that he had been on the “wrong” side in World War II. There were plenty of Western spiritual leaders, politicians, academics, and military men willing to look past or deny whatever sins he may have committed. The pressing need for anti-Communist man- and brainpower overruled the outcry at Dontsov’s appearance in Canada. At least three Western security services—the US Department of Justice, the “Mounties,” and Scotland Yard—as well as influential members of the Canadian Parliament (Diefenbaker), scrutinized Dontsov’s biography, but none found anything incriminating, accepting the contradictory accounts of his wartime experience of unexplained hideouts, house arrests, and forced movements. In reality, he was openly pro-Nazi throughout the 1930s and World War II, moved freely in Hitler’s New Europe (though he dared not set foot in Ukraine), and enjoyed a platform at the Reinhard Heydrich Institute. This fit the general pattern of Western governments offering amnesty to “de-Nazified” individuals who might prove useful in the global struggle against Communism.¹⁹⁸ Like many of his wartime German and Ukrainian colleagues, Dontsov shed his entanglement with Nazism like an old skin, stepping into a

¹⁹⁸ The most famous case of this was the Western cooptation of German nuclear physicists for the development of the atomic bomb.

respectable post in a Canadian university, and carrying on his work as a journalist and propagandist in the same anti-Communist register.

Dontsov was a cosmopolitan ultranationalist to the end. Settling in Canada, taking a professorship at the University of Montreal, embedding himself in the religious and nationalist communities of the Ukrainian diaspora in new country—all of this seems to have come remarkably easy to the ideologue, despite his advanced age and the controversy that his mere presence, let alone his public appearances, courted. His immigration became a flashpoint in the broader postwar debate over who of the millions of DPs and political refugees should be allowed into Canada, Britain, the US, and other countries. What war criminals, “cryptofascists,” and other unsavory people might be hiding among these masses of uprooted humanity seeking new homes? How guilty was Dontsov himself? His writing doubtless contributed to the popularization of Nazism among Ukrainians in the 1930s, but he played no direct role in the OUN(B)’s crimes, let alone those of the Third Reich, and made only a minor contribution to the Nazi propaganda machine during the war. For some, this was enough to warrant barring him from entry, especially since so many desperate folks with untarnished pasts were waiting in line. Others probably favored imprisoning or hanging him like the convicts of the Nuremberg trials. Dontsov realized that he would have to clean up his image and his corpus in order to be a respectable Westerner and a Canadian citizen, so he made one final mutation into a latter-day Christian prophet, an apostle of anti-Communism, and the harbinger of an apocalyptic holy war against Soviet Muscovy. Using hyperbolic religious rhetoric and anti-Soviet conspiracy theories to conceal fringe agendas (e.g. anti-Semitism, neo-Nazism, and white supremacy) was typical of far-right figures in the West during the Cold War. But the real heart of Dontsov’s worldview was not anti-

Communism so much as anti-Russianism, and he collaborated with the Cold Warriors in Ottawa for the same reasons that he had collaborated with the Nazis—to destroy Muscovy.

An iconoclast even with regard to his own past, Dontsov republished much of his life's work, but excised everything that he felt might expose him as the fascist modernist, the acolyte of Hitler, the atheist, the moral nihilist, or the Marxist who he once was. He wanted to be remembered as a man of unwavering principle who never strayed from the worldview that he held on his deathbed. His former devotees knew better; if they survived the war, they abandoned Dontsov as the opportunist, hypocrite, and coward who inspired Teliha, Ol'zhych, and countless other bright young Ukrainian patriots to become martyrs, but pledged himself to the Nazi behemoth that tortured and murdered them. Mosendz, Klen, and Samchuk felt pangs of guilt at the contributions they had made to the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust in Ukraine, seeking, through literature, to atone for their intoxication with Nazism, anti-Semitism, and the Dontsovian variety of nationalism that hallowed any offense in service of the cause. But Dontsov, never one to admit that he was wrong, acted as though there was nothing to explain, no cause for self-critique, nothing for which to atone. He refused to acknowledge any connection between the warlike, misanthropic, totalitarian ideas that he preached and the carnage that had beset Europe, and especially Ukraine. An authoritarian deprived of his authority, in search of a new god to serve, more estranged from his Ukrainian homeland and its cultural and political life than ever, Dontsov found refuge in religion, wrote his outré parting works, pruned his legacy, and awaited a quiet, "wintry expiration" in exile.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this dissertation has been to examine each step of Dontsov's journey "on its own terms" and *in situ*. I have made three central arguments: 1) Context matters—Dontsov's origins in late imperial Russia, his experience in the "borderlands" of cosmopolitan East Central Europe, his exile from Ukraine, and post-1945 emigration from Europe had a decisive impact on his intellectual development, from youth to old age; 2) Despite the commonplace that nationalism is a "feeling," a contravention of rationality, that lacks "grand thinkers,"¹ the intellectual currents of Dontsov's time also matter, as does the intellectual content of his evolving worldview, the responses to it, and his personal encounters with various individuals and their writings; and 3) Beneath the surface of these changing contexts and influences there are some common threads—what I term "iconoclastic authoritarianism" and "cosmopolitan ultranationalism."

I have attempted to push the historiography in a new direction: away from sterile debates about what label best fits Dontsov's "ideology," as if it were anything so static, systematic, and singular—and toward a more nuanced, diachronic, personal, and transnational approach that asks *why* he thought and felt what he did *when* he did, as much as how "active nationalism" ought to be categorized in retrospect. Instead of lionizing or maligning Dontsov (as most have done), I

¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 2006), 5. I am not disputing the "philosophical poverty" and "incoherence" of much of Dontsov's thought—the explicit rejection of "overly" rational, systematic thinking was a cornerstone of his thought after the early 1920s—but the moral, aesthetic, and geopolitical concepts that he developed and popularized had a tangible impact on the cultural production and methods of political struggle of his enthusiasts.

have tried to convey his humanity, and his emotional and intellectual reactions to specific moments and relationships, in the hope that this will make the traditions with which he has been most closely associated—those of the OUN, the *Vistnykivtsi*, and their descendants—less obscure and more comprehensible. Unlike previous studies of Ukrainian integral nationalism, this dissertation examines the full trajectory of its existence as a potent force in Ukrainian politics, from its roots in the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 to the early Cold War. Foregrounding Dontsov’s early years in the Russian revolutionary milieu and his critical engagement with Marxism and the Ukrainian Left before and during World War I, it demonstrates the importance of ideas that preceded and opposed Italian Fascism or German Nazism in the development of Ukrainian nationalism, but it also grapples with the “Nazification” of Dontsov and his enthusiasts in the 1930s and World War II, and their “de-Nazification” thereafter. Few researchers have traced the appearance and evolution of Ukrainian integral nationalism within its broader European, Eurasian, and Transatlantic contexts, leaving Dontsov, the OUN, and the *Vistnykivtsi* secluded in time and space, seemingly aberrant or entirely derivative. I have sought to remedy this, elucidating what made twentieth-century Ukrainian nationalist intellectuals and organizations typical or idiosyncratic in light of the contemporaneous ideas, individuals, and movements with which they interacted worldwide.

Eschewing stereotypes of Ukrainian nationalists as provincial, narrow-minded fanatics, I have argued that Dontsov’s formative experiences in the Russian-Ukrainian and Polish-Ukrainian borderlands, his cosmopolitan interests and aspirations, and his transnational life path were paradoxical yet necessary factors in the development of his worldview and its resonance in Ukrainian politics and literature. From the maelstrom of World War I forward, the forced disentanglement of Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, Germans, Jews, and others in the name of

national self-determination generated crises in the intellectual and geographic spaces in which Dontsov lived and worked. His liminal origins and lifelong proclivity for travel made his efforts to forge an unmixed, inassimilable national identity in himself and in others a source of constant anxiety, but they also made him exceptionally capable of adapting and delivering messages to broad, diverse audiences. He crossed the national boundaries—geographic, linguistic, and cultural—that he claimed to regard as sacrosanct with remarkable ease, switching codes and tailoring his persona to new environments, publics, and geopolitical realities. Dontsov not only moved through these contexts, but changed them as well, forcefully articulating a view from within the borderlands of Eastern Europe that epitomized the dilemmas of collaboration and resistance, and of imitation and opposition, faced by those who lived between the two most ideologically virulent and murderous states of Europe’s twentieth century. Too often ignored or marginalized, perspectives such as Dontsov’s help us to understand the definition and redefinition of nations and borders in interwar Eastern Europe as the people who were most directly affected by this bloody process saw it.

Dontsov’s formative experience was revolution and its inexorable corollary, war. As historian Arno J. Mayer argues, “there is no revolution without violence and terror; without foreign and civil war; without iconoclasm and religious conflict; and without collision between town and country.”² Mayer calls this cycle of escalating violence “the Furies of revolution,” invoking the chthonic deities of vengeance, the Erinyes, who ascend from the depths of hell to spur retribution against criminals and the countries that harbor them. As Mayer suggests, revolutionary and counterrevolutionary violence and terror was “singularly fierce and merciless”

² Arno J. Mayer, *The Furies: Violence and Terror in the French and Russian Revolutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 4.

because it was “fear-inspired, vengeance-driven, and ‘religiously’ sanctioned.”³ The Furies unleashed by the Russian and Ukrainian revolutions pulled the rest of Europe and eventually the world into their vortex. Dontsov found himself, at least momentarily, on all sides of the ensuing conflict. He was for, but then against, the Russian (socialist) revolution, and against, but then for, the Ukrainian (national) revolution. He defended the peasants of the Ukrainian countryside and their conservative, religious outlook against the secular Russian- and Jewish-dominated cities in their midst, but only after espousing an atheistic positivism and moral relativism born of his study of Marx and Darwin, whose influence he never entirely escaped. Collaborating with the German Empire, the Second Polish Republic, the Third Reich, and the anti-Communists of the Cold War West, Dontsov took part in the internationalization of the “domestic” conflict between Ukrainian nationalists and Russian Bolsheviks, welcoming the new extremes of violence caused by foreign intervention. His ideology came to reflect the resultant crescendo of violence, cruelty, quasireligious fanaticism, and authoritarianism to which the Furies of social and national revolution gave rise, welcoming such things as necessary to found a “utopia”—or to prevent someone else from doing so. The more resistance and terror the Ukrainian national idea encountered, the more extreme Dontsov’s prescriptions became. In the second half of his life, he exhibited a pathological hatred of Russians and openly fantasized about genocidal vengeance against them, no matter the cost to “his own” people. Ultimately, Dontsov’s vendetta took on a life of its own, crowding everything else out, save resentment, negativity, and antipathy.

³ Ibid., xvi.

Reactive Nationalism: Nietzsche contra Dontsov

The philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche—the thinker whom Dontsov most admired, misunderstood, imitated, bastardized, and vulgarized—also offers some of the best concepts for a diagnosis and critique of Dontsov, as modern man and as theorist of “active nationalism.” Despite Dontsov’s efforts to put Nietzsche to use for Ukrainians—to articulate the “Faustian” “master morality” and “will to power” that would replace their “Buddhist” “slave morality” and thereby deliver them from captivity—Dontsov actually represents an extreme case of what Nietzsche termed “*ressentiment*,” “slave morality,” the triumph of “reactive forces,” and “nihilism.”

A psychological phenomenon, *ressentiment* is characterized by the “spirit of revenge,” impotent hatred, boundless envy, jealousy, rancor, mistrust, perpetual accusations, recriminations, denunciations, and judgments against others. It seeks “to sanctify *revenge* under the name of *justice*—as if justice were at bottom merely a further development of the feeling of being aggrieved—and to rehabilitate not only revenge but all *reactive* affects in general.”⁴ This is “slave morality” and the “triumph of reactive forces.”⁵ According to Nietzsche, anti-Semitism, nationalism, romanticism, socialism, and Christianity are all manifestations of *ressentiment*. The reactive type, the slave, is a “dyspeptic” “who cannot ‘have done’ with anything.”⁶ His opposite, “the noble,” “knows how to forget.” But “experiences strike too deeply” and “memory becomes

⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1989), 73-74.

⁵ “Consciousness merely expresses the relation of certain reactive forces to active forces which dominate them. Consciousness is essentially reactive; this is why we do not know what a body can do, or what activity it is capable of. And what is said of consciousness must also be said of memory and habit. Furthermore we must say it of nutrition, reproduction, conservation and adaptation. These are reactive functions, reactive specializations, expressions of particular reactive forces.” Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 41. “What is active? Reaching out for power.” Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1968), 657.

⁶ He cannot “let go” of past injuries and misfortunes, forgiving or, more importantly, forgetting them. *Ibid.*, 58.

a festering wound” for the man of *ressentiment*.⁷ Incapable of love, respect, or admiration for friends and enemies alike, he is venomous, hateful, and depreciative, taking revenge on the external world for his own inability to be rid of the painful imprint of experience, to forget the past, take action in the present, and create a brighter future. He thus resents the good and the beautiful.⁸ If people do not love him, this is proof of their malice and conspiracies against him. He possesses a great capacity for disparagement, and conceives of all misfortunes as “someone’s fault” (certainly not his own). Constantly imputing wrongs and distributing blame, he needs sinners—mere criminals will not do. His recriminations replace genuine aggressions (the purview of stronger types). He leaves the struggle for liberation and creative achievement to others, yet “considering gain as a right, considering it a right to profit from the actions that he does not perform, the man of *ressentiment* breaks out in bitter reproaches as soon as his expectations are disappointed. And how could they not be disappointed, since frustration and revenge are the *a prioris* of *ressentiment*?”⁹ The slave’s formula is simple: “You are evil, therefore I am good.” First he posits a malevolent Other, a hostile world, then defines his goodness, his morality, as its negation.¹⁰ At bottom, the man of *ressentiment* is capable only of negation. He cannot affirm life and lacks *amor fati* (love of fate). He longs to be unburdened of existence; he craves self-destruction, death, and nothingness. His fantasies are morbid and spiteful: young martyrs, new inquisitions, apocalyptic wars, and eternal damnation for the

⁷ Ibid., 230.

⁸ Cf. Dontsov’s ridicule of the “kalos kagathos” in *Natsionalizm*

⁹ Deleuze, *Nietzsche*, 118-19.

¹⁰ The master’s formula, by contrast, takes a positive affirmation as its premise: “I am good, therefore you are evil.” The good “looks for its antithesis only in order to affirm itself with more joy.” Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, 36-39.

wicked in Hell.¹¹ His desire for annihilation is an expression of “the hatred of the misdeveloped, needy, underprivileged [one] who destroys, who *must* destroy,” because all of existence “outrages and provokes him.” His creations come from “the tyrannic will of one who is seriously ailing, struggling, and tortured . . . who as it were revenges himself on all things by impressing on them . . . and burning into them *his* image, the image of *his* torture.”¹²

The description matches Dontsov remarkably well. Dontsov projected all the worst qualities of the resentful “slave” onto the Russian masses and his fellow Ukrainians, but exhibited the same traits to the highest degree, pseudo-Nietzschean ruminations notwithstanding. He did not understand that Nietzsche’s notion of the slave is not to be taken literally as someone who is socially, economically, culturally, or politically dominated by someone else. Similarly, the master is not necessarily someone who commands, tyrannizes, or exploits others (what Dontsov tried to become as the editor of *Vistnyk*). In societies where the regime of domination is characterized by the victory of “reactive forces,” the rulers are no less slavish than their subjects because they too are incapable of self-mastery, nonconformity, and creative action, of new directions and new interpretations, of transformation. They may conquer entire continents and vanquish whole classes and races, but their “will to power”—another concept that Dontsov misunderstood—remains negative and reactive: the desire for power of those who resent their lack of it, the desire for power over others, but not over oneself. The totalitarian states of twentieth-century Europe that Dontsov extolled were, in this sense, slave regimes *par excellence*, from the supreme leader down to the subjugated masses. Dontsov’s hoped-for “masters”—the

¹¹ Nietzsche, *Genealogy*, 48-49.

¹² Nietzsche calls this “romantic pessimism,” citing Schopenhauer’s voluntarism—one of Dontsov’s mainstays—as the form it has taken in modern philosophy. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), 330.

Ukrainian “Hitlerites” who would take “Bolshevik methods to the Bolsheviks”—did not herald the triumph of the will, freedom, and independence, but the kingdom of slavery, regimentation, leveling, the apotheosis of the “herd,” mindless submission to the “New Idol” (the nation state, the Reich), sacrifice of everything (bodies, minds, loved ones, and honor) for the sake of “the demon of power.”¹³ “Active nationalism” is a misnomer, perhaps even an oxymoron; “reactive nationalism” is more fitting.

Evidently, when Dontsov read “you should love peace as a means to new wars—and the short peace more than the long”¹⁴ and “it is the good war that hallows any cause,” he failed to appreciate that Nietzsche was speaking metaphorically. In this particular context, “war” refers to the quest for knowledge that Dontsov, a consummate anti-intellectual, considered to be a fundamental part of the problem. The misunderstanding persists when Nietzsche speaks of literal war, which he classed with the “altruism of the weak who find in it an escape from their hard task of self-perfection.”¹⁵ Dontsov could conceive of no higher perfection than death in combat or some other martyrdom, though he characteristically left this to others.

Dontsov’s geopolitical conception—Russia contra Europe—and his notion of a ruling, warrior caste to save the latter also bore a superficial similarity to Nietzsche’s. Consider the following passage written by the latter in 1886:

I do not say this because I want it to happen: the opposite would be rather more after my heart—I mean such an increase in the menace of Russia that Europe would have to resolve to become menacing, too, namely, to acquire one will by means of a new caste

¹³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 146 and 220.

¹⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 46-48.

¹⁵ Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 388. Men “throw themselves with delight into the new danger of death because they think that in sacrifice for the fatherland they have at long last that long sought permission—the permission *to dodge their goal*: war is for them a detour to suicide, but detour with a good conscience.” Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, aphorism 338.

that would rule Europe, a long, terrible will of its own that would be able to cast its goals millennia hence—so the long-drawn-out comedy of its many splinter states as well as its dynastic and democratic splinter wills would come to an end. The time for petty politics is over: the very next century will bring the fight for the dominion of the earth—the *compulsion* to large-scale politics.¹⁶

It reads like something Dontsov might have plagiarized word-or-word, but appearances are deceptive. The future (ideal) Europe, for Nietzsche, is not a place of squabbling, narcissistic nation-states pursuing some vulgar, purely reactive, social Darwinian notion of racial purity, but of a cosmopolitan transcendence of nationality and nationalism.

We are not nearly ‘German’ enough . . . to advocate nationalism and race hatred and to be able to take pleasure in the national scabies of the heart and blood-poisoning that now leads the nations of Europe to delimit and barricade themselves against each other as if it were a matter of quarantine. . . . We homeless ones are too manifold and mixed racially and in our descent for ‘modern men,’ and consequently do not feel tempted to participate in the mendacious racial self-admiration and racial indecency that parades in Germany today as a sign of a German way of thinking and that is doubly false and obscene among the people of the ‘historical sense.’ We are, in a word—and let this be our word of honor—*good Europeans*.¹⁷

Dontsov, too, was an exile, a traveler, a cosmopolitan, a “homeless one,” but he was prepared to sacrifice anything for revenge against the power that had, he felt, driven him from his home and burned it to the ground (Communist Russia), even if it meant submission to a new power that was certain to do the same (Nazi Germany). He thus represents a thoroughgoing bastardization of the “good European,” despite having the biography of one and despite modeling his political project after aphorisms such as the above, which also calls for a “new slavery,” ridicules humanitarianism, “equal rights,” the nineteenth-century positivist notion of “progress,” and rhapsodizes “danger, war, and adventure.”

¹⁶ *The Gay Science*, aphorism 362. *Beyond Good and Evil*, aphorism 208.

¹⁷ *The Gay Science*, aphorism 377.

For Nietzsche—whom Dontsov called “the prophet” of the modern “age of the masses, the age of the mob, which has arrived not only for us, but for all of Europe as well”¹⁸—the mixing of races and, much more importantly, cultures was the *sine qua non* of a superior pan-European breed, the advent of which anti-Semitism and nationalism served only to delay.¹⁹ Whereas Nietzsche believed that “the Germans had entered the line of gifted nations only through a strong mixture with Slavic blood,” Dontsov’s trite Nordicism asserted just the opposite—that only Germans have brought or could bring form and order to “the East”—showing his insecurity as a Ukrainian and his obsequious desire to become German, to find a niche in “the master race.” Or compare Dontsov’s disparagement of the Russians as a horde of slavish automatons to Nietzsche’s observation that “the will” was “strongest and most amazing by far in that enormous empire in between, where Europe, as it were, flows back into Asia, in Russia.”²⁰ In comparison to the Jews and the Russian Empire, Nietzsche considered Europe’s nations artificial and tenuous: “These ‘nations’ really should avoid every hotheaded rivalry and hostility!” In the same aphorism he calls for the “expulsion [from Germany] of anti-Semitic screamers” (the adherents of proto-Nazi “Teutonism” in Nietzsche’s day). But Dontsov’s lifelong hatred of Russians, and of Jews after 1926, was another product of his *ressentiment*, not an honest assessment of their qualities or their role in Ukraine’s history, culture, and politics.

¹⁸ Dontsov, *Dukh nashoi davnyyny*, 271.

¹⁹ “The whole problem of the *Jews* exists only in nation states, for here their energy and higher intelligence, their accumulated capital of spirit and will, gathered from generation to generation through a long schooling in suffering, must become so preponderant as to arouse mass envy and hatred. In almost all contemporary nations, therefore . . . the literary obscenity of leading Jews to slaughter as scapegoats of every conceivable public and internal misfortune is spreading. As soon as it is no longer a matter of preserving nations, but of producing the strongest possible European mixed race, the Jew is just as useful and desirable an ingredient as any other national remnant.”

²⁰ “A thinker who has the development of Europe on his conscience will, in all his projects for this future, take into account the Jews as well as the Russians as the provisionally surest and most probable factors in the great play and fight of forces.” It was, Nietzsche conceded, an open question whether Russia’s overflowing will to power would take an active or reactive form. He was certain that the Jews merely wanted to be accepted, assimilated, and respected in countries they had inhabited for centuries. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 208.

“The cultivation of a new caste that will rule Europe”—what Nietzsche called “the European problem”—also occupied Dontsov, but here too he took Nietzsche’s metaphors literally, setting off in search of “blonde beasts.” Is the goal to regress into bestiality, or to uplift and transcend mankind? For Nietzsche, the elevation of some exceptional individuals above the mass of humanity, and of humanity above the beasts, was chiefly a matter of the spirit (art, religion, and philosophy), not a function of biology (race, the struggle for survival, and so on) as it was for Dontsov. While the latter considered culture important (he focused on literary criticism at least as much as politics), he subordinated it to the political project of building an ethnically purified nation state by any means necessary.²¹ Dontsov renounced spirit to glorify blood. His ideal of a hereditary caste of priests, inquisitors, apostles, and executioners, ruling with an iron fist over a cowed mass of ostensive racial inferiors—“slave morality” at its most grotesque, masquerading as a creed for “masters”—was his revenge fantasy. So too was the fanatical Christianity and ecclesiastical authoritarianism that he envisaged undergirding his totalitarian theocracy. Dontsov’s God could only be vengeful, despotic, and bloodthirsty.

Nietzsche’s concept of “nihilism,” a diagnosis of the modern (European) human condition, is also useful for understanding Dontsov’s intellectual biography. Dontsov applied the concept to Bolshevism,²² justifiably enough, but his own “active nationalism” was a symptom of nihilism too. Indeed, each chapter of his life was another stage in the illness. There were three such stages: 1) “the death of God”—the young Dontsov’s atheism and faith in “science” and “progress” (positivism, Darwinism, Hegelianism, and Marxism); 2) a crisis of meaninglessness,

²¹ Cf. “Culture and the state—one should not deceive one-self about this—are antagonists: ‘Kultur-Staat’ is merely a modern idea. One lives off the other, one thrives at the expense of the other. All great ages of culture are ages of political decline: what is great culturally has always been unpolitical, even anti-political.” Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 4.

²² Dontsov, *Pidstavy*, 138.

cosmic purposelessness, epistemological failure, value destruction, leading to an “unleashing of the beast” (fascism, racism, war, and genocide)—the middle Dontsov’s “amorality” (*amoral’nist*’), but no attempt to transcend morality per se, let alone forge new values; and 3) a retreat into mysticism, hollow yet vindictive, rancorous Christianity (certainly not the all-forgiving, all-forgetful morality of Jesus), and romantic pessimism. “Against all this,” writes Nietzsche, “the sick person has only one great remedy. I call it *Russian fatalism*, that fatalism without revolt which is exemplified by a Russian soldier who, finding a campaign too strenuous, finally lies down in the snow. No longer to accept anything at all, no longer to take anything, no longer to absorb anything—to cease reacting altogether.” Perhaps, with regard to Dontsov’s “active nationalism”—a grim vestige from a grim era—one ought to take Zarathustra’s advice: “what is falling, we should still push.”²³

Which Europe? Dontsov’s Afterlife in Post-Soviet Ukraine

From socialism to fascism, modernism to traditionalism, atheism to Christianity, Russia to Germany, Europe to North America, Dontsov was a chameleon, a man of contradictions and paradoxes. But has his posthumous legacy been as adaptable as he himself was in life? Dontsov’s works and devotees, formerly confined to the diaspora, returned to an independent Ukraine following the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. Times had changed. Russian Communism was defeated, not through the bloody crusade of Christian fanatics that the late Dontsov had called for, but through the Soviet Union’s own internal structural flaws and reforms gone awry. World War II had already discredited fascist, ultranationalist, and “third-way” concepts, also depriving imperialism of its moral foundations, and sending the French and

²³ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 209.

British empires further down the long road of decolonization. Now the Russian (Soviet) Empire was finally following suit. The expansion and deepening of the European Union (founded in 1993), with a contrite yet confident Germany at its core, heralded the end of the old system of jealously guarded, mutually hostile nation-states and the beginning of a new era of open borders, international cooperation, peace, tolerance, prosperity, liberalism, and democracy—or so it seemed until recently. Visions of national purity and autarky, wars of conquest and empire came to appear immoral and dangerous. Optimistic talk of the final triumph of liberal democracy, “the end of history,” and the beneficent incorporation of the former Soviet Bloc into capitalist Western civilization filled the air.

Vestiges of Russian imperialism and nostalgia for the Soviet era notwithstanding, the main thrust of Ukrainian politics after 1991 has been in the direction of this European project.²⁴ Neighboring Poland—a success story of post-Communist transition and EU membership—offered a beacon for Ukraine to follow. Russia, many hoped, might take the same path, renounce its imperial, totalitarian past, and become a partner of the West, economically, diplomatically, and even militarily. Fearing a possible resurgence of Russian aggression since the start of the millenium, the Baltic countries, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Poland joined NATO. Ukraine, however, took a stance of neutrality between the US-led alliance and Moscow. Hoping to maintain good relations with both sides, Ukraine relinquished its entire nuclear arsenal in exchange for security assurances from Russia, the UK, and the US in the Budapest Memorandum of December 1994. The nation’s new enemies were not foreign powers, but internal diseases—state corruption, organized crime, oligarchy, poverty, and antiquated

²⁴ Even pro-Russian political factions, such as the Party of Regions headed by former President Victor Yanukovych, paid lip service to the goal of association with and eventual membership in the EU. It was Yanukovych’s decision to renege on this campaign promise that sparked the initial protests of the upheaval that led to his downfall.

mentalities from the far right to the far left, from the far east to the far west. What relevance did the ideologue of “active nationalism” have for Ukrainians now that they had their own sovereign state, and a society motivated, on the whole, by such cosmopolitan, peace-loving, liberal-democratic, and reformist aspirations? Did Dontsov’s authoritarian, warlike teachings and damning critiques of Russian messianism and Bolshevism have anything to offer a nation striving to transcend the painful legacies of a colonial, totalitarian past in favor of a brighter, more *European* future?

Addressing these questions, a new circle of writers interested in Dontsov formed around the Kyiv-based journal *Ukrains’ki problemy* (Ukrainian Problems).²⁵ Some of them were not convinced that Dontsov had ever had a positive influence on Ukraine’s development. Ukrainian historian Heorhyi Kasianov described Dontsov’s sole contribution as a “total critique,” a “nihilism” that lacks “any element of a constructive program or a systematic worldview.”²⁶ Dontsov’s great achievement was laying the psychological groundwork for the appearance of the OUN, whose mentality and tactics Kasianov compared to the “Soviet totalitarianism of the 1930s” and “fundamentalist religious movements,” as well as to fascism.²⁷ What possible appeal could such a worldview possess for a country that had suffered so terribly from the two most infamous totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century—the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany? According to this view, while a familiarity with Dontsov is indispensable for any student of Galician and émigré Ukrainian culture and politics, especially in the interwar period, his life and

²⁵ The contributors to the journal included Serhii Kvit, Oleh Bahan, V’iacheslav Kyrylenko, Mykhailo Chuhuienko, Halyna Svarnyk, and Heorhyi Kasianov, among others.

²⁶ Heorhyi Kasianov, *Orhanizatsiia ukrains’kykh natsionalistiv i Ukrains’ka povstans’ka armii: Istorychni narysy*, ed. S. V. Kul’chyts’kyi (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2005), 448.

²⁷ Heorhyi Kasianov, *Ukrains’ka intelihentsiia na rubezhi XIX-XX st.: sotsial’no-politychnyi portret* (Kyiv: Lybid’ 1993); Heorhyi Kasianov, *Do pytannia pro ideolohiiu Orhanizatsii Ukrains’kykh Nationalistiv (OUN). Analitychnyi ohliad*” (Kyiv: NAN Ukrainy, Institut istorii Ukrainy, 2003).

thought should be read first and foremost as a cautionary tale: the path of xenophobic hatred, irrational fanaticism, contempt for “the masses,” the cult of war, violence, and expansion, led and lead only to an abyss of death, ignominy, and, despite it all, domination by foreigners. Dontsov’s iconoclasm offered nothing positive, nothing organically, authentically Ukrainian. His authoritarian quest for a leader and a ruling caste, for an unquestioned dogma and unquestioning followers, resulted in his opportunistic submission to one foreign power or conception after another, as well as the attrition of his support, even among like-minded Ukrainians.

Despite the fact that integral nationalism has been confined to the fringes of post-Soviet Ukrainian society and politics, a handful of Dontsov-inspired rightwing nationalist groups have nonetheless appeared in the country.²⁸ The OUN quickly resumed operations in Ukraine, registering as a political party under the name the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists in 1993, but has had minimal success; dedicated to the attainment of an independent state, it had lost its *raison d’être*. Similarly, the Ukrainian National Assembly (*Ukrains’ka Natsional’na Asambleia*, UNA) and its military wing the National Ukrainian Organization for Self-Defense (*Ukrains’ka natsional’na Samooborona*, UNSO), formed in 1991, never achieved more than one percent in Ukraine’s national elections.

The only Dontsovian political party to pass the five-percent threshold needed to enter the *Verkhovna Rada* (Ukraine’s national parliament) has been the All-Ukrainian Union “Freedom” (*Vseukrains’ke ob’iednannia “Svoboda”*), known as *Svoboda*. Founded in 1991 as the Social-National Party of Ukraine (SNA), with a runic *Wolfsangel* (“wolf hook,” a common symbol among neo-Nazi groups) for its emblem, the party changed its name and softened its image in

²⁸ Renata Caruso, “Dmytro Dontsov’s Ideology of Integral Nationalism in Post-Soviet Ukraine” in Giovanna Elisabeth Brogi, Marta Dyczok, Oxana Pachlovska, Giovanna Siedina, eds., *Ukraine Twenty Years after Independence: Assessments, Perspectives, Challenges* (Rome: Aracne, 2015), 265-74. Andreas Umland and Anton Shekhovtsov, “Ultraright Party Politics in Post-Soviet Ukraine and the Puzzle of the Electoral Marginalism of Ukrainian Ultranationalists in 1994–2009,” *Russian Politics and Law* 51, no. 5 (2013): 33–58.

2004. “We base our ideology . . . on Dontsov,” *Svoboda*’s leader Oleh Tiahnybok declared: “We are simply trying to modernize [Dontsov’s ideology] to make it conform better to today’s reality and the conditions of life in today’s world.”²⁹ Hailing Dontsov as “not only a man, but a man whose thought inspired an entire epoch,” Tiahnybok authored introductions to re-edited works by the ideologue and funded their republication.³⁰ Vehemently anti-Communist, *Svoboda* adheres to an ethnic definition of the Ukrainian nation that excludes Russians, Jews, and others, yet obscures the more extreme (i.e. racist and anti-Semitic) opinions of its leading members from the public.³¹ Echoing Dontsov’s most consistent stance, *Svoboda*’s propaganda calls for the separation of Ukraine, as a geopolitically pivotal region of Europe, from Russia, as an Asiatic threat to Western civilization. The party embraces a version of OUN(B) and ABN leader Iaroslav Stets’ko’s idea of permanent dual revolutions—one national and one social—and regards the “liberal regime” in Kyiv as an “antinational occupation.” The true (as opposed to “pseudo-”) nationalist “must wake up with the idea that he is an iron soldier of the Nation,” opposing “democracy and capitalism,” as well as tolerant “all-Ukrainian values” (*ukraïns’kist*). The official ideology of *Svoboda*, “social nationalism,” as described by party theorist and MP Iuryi

²⁹ Oleh Tiahnybok, “Meni b ne khotilosia, shtob moi pohliady i moia pozytsiia nashkody Iushenkovi,” (March 31, 2004), <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2004/03/31/2998984/> [accessed March 14, 2017]

³⁰ In August 2011, Tiahnybok spearheaded the republication of *Khrestom i mechem* (With Cross and Shield) in Ternopil’ in honor of the 128th anniversary of Dontsov’s birth. Oleh Tiahnybok, “Dmytro Dontsov—ne prosto liudyna—tse syla epokha (August 17, 2011), <http://www.svoboda.org.ua/dopysy/analitika/023570/> [accessed March 14, 2017]

³¹ Motyl has insisted that *Svoboda* is neither functionally nor ideologically fascist, comparing them to “Tea Party or rightwing Republicans” in the US. This is probably a fair assessment when it comes to the party’s broad support, especially at its peak in 2012, but the leadership of the party, including Tiahnybok, Iryna Farion, and Iuryi Mykhailiushyn, admire Dontsov and share his anti-Semitic and profascist views. Other political scientists specializing in the Ukrainian far right have asserted that *Svoboda* espouses anti-Semitic, ethnocentric, and xenophobic ideas. Alexander J. Motyl, “Experts on Ukraine” *World Affairs Journal* (March 21, 2014). Tadeusz A. Olszański, “Svoboda Party—The New Phenomenon on the Ukrainian Right-Wing Scene,” *Centre for Eastern Studies* 56 (2011), 6. Anton Shekhovtsov and Andreas Umland, “Ukraine’s Radical Right,” *Journal of Democracy* 25, no. 3 (July 2014): 58-63.

Mykhal'chyshyn, derives from Dontsov's corpus.³² When *Svoboda* had an electoral breakthrough in October 2012, winning 10 percent of the national vote (38 out of 450 seats in the *Verkhovna Rada*), some warned of a resurgence of the far right in Ukraine. Others dismissed such fears as the fruit of alarmist pro-Russian, anti-Ukrainian propaganda, pointing to the normalcy of neofascist parties, often with significantly higher levels of support, in other European countries.

The expectation that the Russian annexation of Crimea in February and March 2014, and the subsequent "hybrid war" in the Donbas region would move radical nationalist sentiments into the Ukrainian mainstream, bringing militaristic, authoritarian, anti-Muscovite ideas such as Dontsov's back into vogue, proved to be exaggerated. *Svoboda*'s support dropped below the five-percent threshold needed to enter the *Verkhovna Rada* in the elections that followed the Maidan Revolution of 2014.³³ But *Svoboda* got one thing that it wanted: Ukraine became the focal point in an escalating geopolitical conflict between Russia, Europe, and the US.

Ukrainian far-right organizations that saw themselves more as paramilitary groups than political parties fared better in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These groups mobilized for the confrontation with Moscow-backed Russian separatists, Russian armed forces, and Russian "volunteers" from the Russian Federation, many of whom were themselves blood-and-soil nationalists and neo-Nazis, as well as followers of the neo-Eurasianist movement led by virulently anti-Ukrainian ideologue Aleksandr Dugin (1962-). Unprepared for the war (the Ukrainian military had been plundered and neglected for years), Kyiv relied on these volunteer

³² Iuryi Mykhal'chyshyn, "Aksiomy sotsial-natsionalizmu" *Vatra* (March 15, 2011). <http://www.vatra.cc/sotsial-natsionalizm/aksiomy-sotsial-natsionalizmu.html> accessed March 15, 2017]

³³ This lends credence to the view that *Svoboda*'s spike in popularity in 2012 owed more to anger at the Yanukovych regime than a change in Ukrainian society, and that *Svoboda*, as the Party of Regions' preferred opponent, the specter of a "Banderite" menace to peaceful Russian speakers, enjoyed tacit support from Yanukovych's government (in the form of extra airtime on state television, for example).

units to manage the situation in the east. The Azov Battalion, for example, a mostly eastern Ukrainian formation, proved itself an effective fighting unit in the early part of the conflict, recapturing the key port city of Mariupol' on the Azov coast in June 2014. With a banner featuring a *Wolfsangel*—which its members claim stands for “the Idea of the Nation” (the letter “I” superimposed on “N”)—emblazoned over a background with a “black sun” (another occult, Nazi symbol), the Azov Battalion courted controversy. In October 2016 it formed a political party, “National Corps,” whose platform calls for the severing of all ties with Russia, the restoration of Ukraine’s nuclear power status, and capital punishment for “traitors.” National Corps opposes Ukraine’s membership in both the EU and NATO, instead favoring the creation of an Intermarium alliance with the Eastern European nations between the Black and Baltic seas, just as Dontsov did after World War I. Whether anything will come of the party remains to be seen, but if the experience of other far right actors in Ukraine is any indicator, it will probably fail to win substantial electoral support.

Another Dontsovian organization, *Pravyi Sektor* (Right Sector), has become world famous despite its meager numbers. Headed by MP Dmytro Yarosh (1971-), a now well-known figure in Ukraine, *Pravyi Sektor* played a prominent, albeit sensationalized, role in the violent clashes between the Maidan protesters and the police of the Yanukovych regime in January and February 2014. Yarosh is a student and admirer of Dontsov, known to cite the latter’s ideas in interviews with the press.³⁴ Yarosh also leads the Stepan Bandera All-Ukrainian Organization “Trident” (*Vseukrains’ka orhanizatsiia imeni Stepana Bandery “Tryzub,”* founded in 1993). In

³⁴ In one case, Yarosh, critiquing Ukraine’s current government, invokes Dontsov’s conception of the characteristics of a ruling caste (courage, nobility, wisdom). “Perevorot chy vystava: iak vidreahuvaly narodni deputaty na vystup politseis’kykh v Radi,” [www.24tv.ua](http://24tv.ua/perevorot_chi_vystava_yak_vidreaguvali_narodni_deputati_na_vistup_politseyskikh_v_radi_n793603/autostart) (March 15, 2016). http://24tv.ua/perevorot_chi_vystava_yak_vidreaguvali_narodni_deputati_na_vistup_politseyskikh_v_radi_n793603/autostart [accessed March 15, 2017]

May 2014, *Pravyi Sektor* formed a political party, absorbing UNA-UNSO and other smaller far-right Ukrainian groups (Patriot of Ukraine, White Hammer, Carpathian Sich, most of which subsequently left the organization), but performed poorly in the October 2014 parliamentary elections, securing a seat in the *Rada* only for Yarosh himself.

Perhaps the most influential of Yarosh's *Tryzub* comrades has been Serhii Kvit (1965-), who went from rector of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy to Ukraine's minister of education (2014-2016) in the wake of the Maidan Revolution.³⁵ Kvit has made no secrets about his affinities for Dontsov, but has tried to obscure the most controversial aspects of the latter's life and thought. In 2000, Kvit published the first edition of his biography of Dontsov, which focuses on the ideologue's interwar years.³⁶ He devoted the fifth, concluding chapter of the book to a defense of Dontsov's doctrine as "an organic development of the ideology of Ukrainian nationalism, which was begun by his predecessors," Mykola Mikhnovs'kyi and Taras Shevchenko.³⁷ Kvit argues that Dontsov was interested in Fascism and Nazism, but did not admire them: "Dontsov's appeal to the totalitarian systems of contemporary Europe needs to be seen as a search for examples of a functional organization, and not ideology."³⁸ Nevertheless, Dontsov, "like no other, felt and conveyed in his publications that spirit of authoritarianism and national mobilization that ruled contemporary Europe, and without which Ukrainians would not

³⁵ See Serhii Kvit, *The Battlefront of Civilizations : Education in Ukraine* (Kyiv: Kyiv-Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2015).

³⁶ The tone of the second edition is considerably less polemical. Specifically, Kvit replaced the final section of the first edition, which censures his contemporaries (see below). Also of interest is his new book on education in Ukraine. Serhii Kvit, *Dymtro Dontsov: Ideolohichniy portret*, 2nd ed. (L'viv: Halytska vydavnycha spilka, 2013).

³⁷ Serhii Kvit, *Dymtro Dontsov: Ideolohichniy portret* (Kyiv: Kyivs'kyi universytet, 2000), 115-19.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 176.

have been able to manage on the eve of total war.”³⁹ Kvit sought, unconvincingly, to refute charges of anti-Semitism and commonalities with fascism, asserting: “the only point that unites Ukrainian nationalism and German National Socialism in the thought of Dmytro Dontsov is anti-Communism.”⁴⁰

Serhii Kvit has advocated the use of Dontsov’s ideas in contemporary Ukrainian education, cultural production, and politics. Focusing especially on literature, aesthetics, and commonalities with philosophical currents in the West, he approaches Dontsovism as an open-ended ideology and a quest for answers rather than a closed system. In a 1993 article, he reimagined “active nationalism” as a peculiar form of existentialism, which, for geographical and historical reasons, took a totalitarian shape in Ukraine unlike in Western Europe.⁴¹ Kvit insists that Dontsov’s praise of the fanaticism and practices of Bolshevism and Nazism was, in fact, mere rhetorical flourish, but he fails to consider what Dontsov and the OUN envisioned themselves doing once in power; namely, building an authoritarian state ruled by a caste of racially superior warriors devoted to a new religion of the nation.⁴² He resents the “damaging ideological imports” of liberalism and postmodernism, regarding Dontsov’s teachings, or at least his method, and the interwar literature of the *Vistnykivtsi*, as antidotes.

A public and institutional basis for the advancement of Dontsov’s ideas and legacy has also developed in Ukraine. The Dmytro Dontsov Scientific-Ideological Center (*Naukovyi-Ideolohichnyi Tsentri imeni Dmytra Dontsova*)—founded in the Western Ukrainian town of Drohobych in 2007 under the leadership of Oleh Bahan and Petro Ivanyshyn, with Kvit and

³⁹ Ibid., 123.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 170-77.

⁴¹ Serhii Kvit, “Trahichnyi optymizm Dmytra Dontsova,” *Slovo i chas*, no. 3 (1993), 43.

⁴² Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*, 25.

Yarosh as “esteemed members”—is the most active. The center’s program declares its task as the study, development, and promotion of Dontsov’s ideology. “On this basis we plan to develop a modern philosophy of the national idea with which to evaluate political, social, and cultural phenomena in Ukraine, that is, to develop the nationcentric analytics and national-existential methodology of thought that is desperately needed in our powerfully cosmopolitanized world.”⁴³ Presenting itself as an academic initiative with a political and spiritual mission, the center republishes and disseminates Dontsov’s works, and injects itself into public debates about Ukrainian politics and culture.

Dontsov’s ghost still haunts Ukraine’s cities and universities. Officials have named streets in his honor in Dnipro, Zhytomyr, Ivano-Frankivs’k, Luts’k, L’viv, Odesa, Sumy, Kherson, Kropyvnyts’kyi, and Dontsov’s hometown, Melitopol’, which has not always welcomed the lionization of its native son. The commemorative plaque to Dontsov in Melitopol’ stirred up controversy after its unveiling in 2006, but it survived, and remains a gathering place for Ukrainian nationalists. Unknown vandals destroyed another commemorative plaque to the ideologue in L’viv, located on the façade of the Dontsovs’ former residence at 11 Lysenko Street and unveiled by *Svoboda* leader Iryna Farion in 2013.⁴⁴ *Pravyi Sektor* funded the renovation of the plaque.⁴⁵ Despite having a reputation for being bastions of “neo-Soviet” thinking and hostility toward “Banderites,” Melitopol’ and other cities throughout eastern and southern

⁴³ “Pro Tsentr,” Naukovo-ideolohichniy tsentr imeni Dmytro Dontsova, <http://dontsov-nic.org.ua/index.php?m=content&d=view&cid=7> [accessed March 15, 2017]

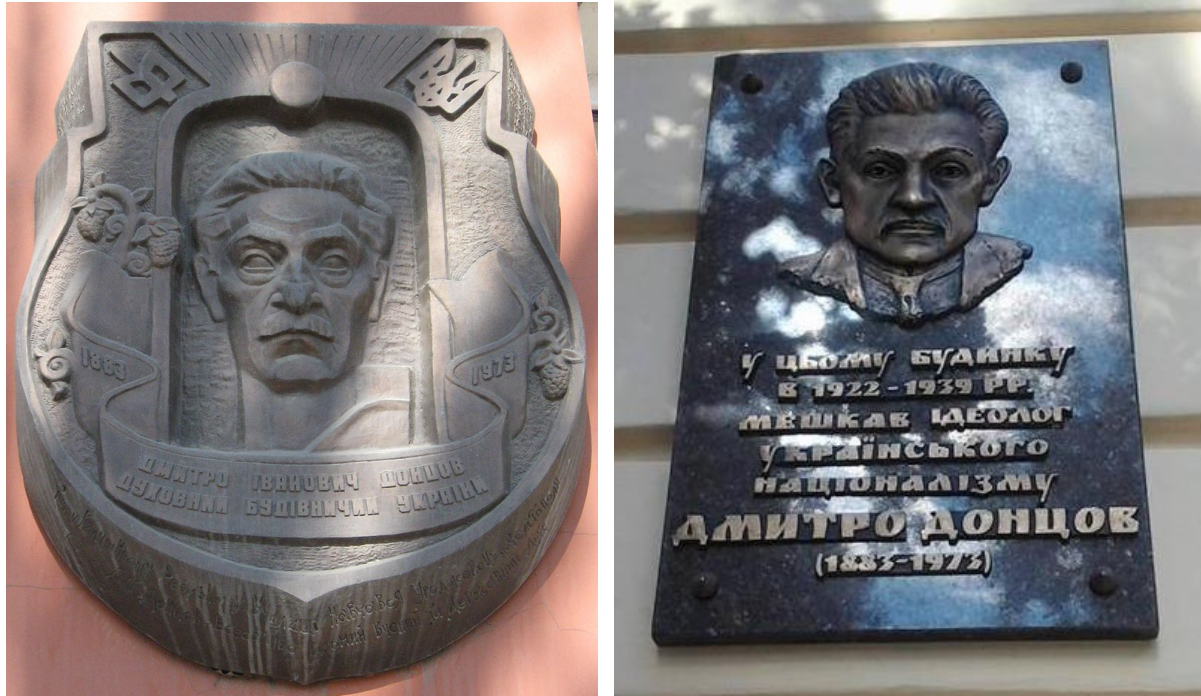
⁴⁴ “Farion otkryla memorial’nuu dosku ideologu ukrainskogo natsionalizma: ‘On sozdal novyi geroicheskii tip ukraintsia-mstitelia,’” *tzenor.net* (May 10, 2013). http://censor.net.ua/photo_news/255466/farion_otkryla_memorialnuyu_dosku_ideologu_ukrainskogo_natsionalizma_on_sozdal_novyiy_geroicheskiiyi [accessed May 18, 2017]

⁴⁵ The costs of the damage totaled 17,000 hryvnia (about 650 USD). “‘Pravyi Sektor’ zbyraie koshty memoria’lnoi doshky Dmytru Dontsovu,” *Natsional’nyi Rukh Derzhnyts’ka Initsiatyva Iarosha ‘Diia’* (November 11, 2015). <http://yarosh.lviv.ua/uncategorized/pravyj-sektor-zbyraje-koshty-na-vidnovlennya-memorialnoji-doshky-dmytru-dontsovu/> [March 18, 2017]

Ukraine—excluding the separatist strongholds of the Donetsk and Luhansk “People’s Republics”—have experienced a Ukrainian nationalist revival in response to the nearby Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

A roundtable on the subject of Dontsov “as a spiritual builder of Ukraine in light of state independence” took place on August 25, 2016, at Melitopol’ State Pedagogical University. Deputies of *Svoboda*, the president of the university, and assorted academics took part. At the meeting, Ihor Moseiko, head of *Svoboda* in Melitopol’, declared “we need to stop hiding behind democracy and human values, repeating the mistakes of the Muscophile intelligentsia of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, and bring linguistic legislation into lines with the needs of the titular nation. We must apply to the language question a Ukrainian politics as understood by Dmytro Dontsov, the spirit that will be a revitalizing, unifying force of the nation.” Another participant lamented the fact that Dontsov’s followers were not yet running the country after twenty-five years of independence. The roundtable led to an initiative to construct a monument and museum to Dontsov in Melitopol’ and found new center to engage in systematic research of the Dontsovian heritage in conjunction with the local university, which will appeal to representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada for the transferal of Dontsov’s archives.⁴⁶ Dontsov is taught in philosophy, political science, and philology departments throughout Ukraine today. Some consider him a part of the Ukrainian national canon, but others avidly dispute this.

⁴⁶ “V melitopole sozdaiut muzei Dontsova i ustanoviat pamiatnik,” *IP News* (August 26, 2016). <https://www.ipnews.in.ua/news/zp/111970-v-melitopole-sozdadut-muzej-dontsova-i-ustanovyat-pamyatnik> [accessed March 18, 2017]



Figures 7.1-2: Commemorative plaques to Dontsov in Melitopol' (left) and L'viv (right).

The post-Maidan Ukrainian government, resuming the efforts of former President Viktor Yushchenko (in office from 2005 to 2010) to revise Ukraine's "official" national history, has sponsored efforts to at least partially rehabilitate Dontsov and the Ukrainian integral nationalists of the 1930s and 1940s, while also exposing state crimes against Ukrainians during the Soviet period.⁴⁷ Known for his widely panned pro-UPA apologetics, Volodymyr V'iatrovych, director of the state Ukrainian Institute of National Memory⁴⁸ since March 2014, has led the way in this

⁴⁷ See David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating a National History in Contemporary Ukraine* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007).

⁴⁸ The institute had been dissolved in 2010 by Viktor Yanukovych only to be reestablished after the Maidan Revolution. As director, V'iatrovych oversaw the drafting of legislation that is intended to support the "decommunization" of Ukrainian society and politics, promote an official nationalist history of the OUN and UPA, and regulate scholarship on the Ukrainian national movement, including controversial laws against "denying the legitimacy" of the Ukrainian integral nationalists of the 1920s-1940s as "freedom fighters." Hastily passed in April 2015 by the *Verkhovna Rada* and President Petro Poroshenko, who came to power in the early presidential election following the revolution in May 2014, the laws theoretically criminalize assertions that the OUN and UPA were guilty of pro-Nazi collaboration, anti-Semitism, and the ethnic cleansing of Poles. In an open letter to Poroshenko, historians and other scholars specializing on Ukrainian subjects protested the laws as an assault on academic freedom and falsification of historical reality: "Open Letter from Scholars and Experts on Ukraine Re. the So-Called 'Anti-Communist Law'," <http://krytyka.com/en/articles/open-letter-scholars-and-experts-ukraine-re-so-called-anti-communist-law> [accessed March 25, 2016]. For a reasonable defense of V'iatrovych as a moderating force in the

endeavor. While V'iatrovych himself casts Dontsov in an unfavorable light vis-à-vis the OUN during World War II (as we saw in chapter 6), Ihor' Vdovychyn, a member of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, dismisses claims that Dontsov was antidemocratic or totalitarian as baseless defamations.⁴⁹ Such efforts to reimagine Dontsov as a liberal democrat are not only unconvincing, but would probably have baffled and vexed the publicist, who attacked the notions of democracy and universal human rights throughout his career.

Like their spiritual father, the neo-Dontsovists intervene in literature to denounce cosmopolitan “postmodernists” who turn a skeptical eye toward nationalist exclusivism, authoritarianism, prudery, and conformism. For instance, Yuri Andrukhovych (1960-), one of Ukraine’s most prominent living writers, has taken a radically different approach to the cultivation of Ukrainian language and literature, and to the spiritual and political renewal of the nation after empire. A species of magical realism, postcolonial as opposed to anticolonial, Andrukhovych’s writing rejects the negative, authoritarian, “traditionalist” approach to culture of Dontsov and his descendants, favoring the affirmative, carnivalesque, and comical, celebrating the hybrid, liminal, transgressive, and unbounded.⁵⁰ Dontsov is an object of fun for

polarized memory politics of postcommunist Ukraine, working to give Ukrainians what they have long been denied—a national narrative of their own—see Alexander J. Motyl, “National Memory in Ukraine: What the West Gets Wrong About Liberals and Nationalists,” *Foreign Affairs* (August 4, 2016) <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2016-08-04/national-memory-ukraine> [accessed August 4, 2016]. I do not share Motyl’s view that critics of V'iatrovych are ipso facto exponents of the “neo-Soviet narrative,” which has long stereotyped Ukrainians, demonizing and delegitimizing their national liberation movements.

⁴⁹ Ihor' Vdovychyn, *Svoboda osoby v pratsi politychnii dumtsi (20-30 rr XX st.)* (Ivano-Frankivs'k: Misto, 2010).

⁵⁰ See, for example, his best novel: Yuri Andrukhovych, *Perverzion*, trans. Michael M. Naydan (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2005). Andrukhovych renounces the use of “Bolshevik methods” to deal with the problematic legacies of Russian imperialism and Soviet Communism, which he nevertheless critiques as thoroughly as any Dontsovian. Cf. “Where Europe was just beginning to arise, to grow, to be constructed, at that same instant Asia revolted, demanding the establishment of its despotic and simultaneously anarchic status. At this moment I am not saying that this is bad. But I am just saying that this is its essence, and this essence vehemently contradicts the other essence—the European.” *Ibid.*, 224-25. Also see Yuri Andrukhovych, *The Moscoviad*, trans. Vitaly Chernetskyi (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2003).

Andrukhovych, something that Ukrainian pseudointellectuals and born-again patriots clamored for after independence, had to be imported from America,⁵¹ and tried to make Ukraine something it could (and should) never be—an impenetrable fortress, all “West” and no “East,” a new Sparta.

In 2003, Andrukhovych coauthored a book with the Polish writer Andrzej Stasiuk that criticizes binary East/West thinking, relating their perspectives on Europe from the geopolitical margins—the borderland of Galicia (Andrukhovych hails from Ivano-Frankivs’k).⁵² Taking a view of his home region as an entangled genealogy, a palimpsest for all sorts of foreign schemes—an eclectic place “in between,” never “either/or,” which cannot be reduced to ethnicity, nationality, or language—Andrukhovych, who won the Hannah Arendt Prize for Political Thought in 2014 (alongside the anti-Putin punk band in-exile, *Pussy Riot*), sought to deconstruct the myth of (Central) Europe. Nevertheless, during the Maidan Revolution, shortly after Yanukovych regime’s decision to terminate the freedoms of speech and assembly and unleash a wave of violence and intimidation against the protesters in late January 2014, Andrukhovych appealed to the conscience of the West and its self-perception as a bastion of freedom and democracy: “The Ukrainian people, without exaggeration, now defend the European values of a free and just society with their own blood.”⁵³

⁵¹ “Passing a wide-open gateway you stop. There’s someone there, Martofliak. Light-colored hair, looks like a blonde with her back turned. How about that! Maybe I should pat her behind? But the blonde leans forward and vomits, and it turns out to be Bilynkevych, who has wandered into this street and is now retching in front of this gateway, and then he turns to you and asks ‘Rostyk, will you bring me Dontsov from America?’” Yuri Andrukhovych, *Recreations*, trans. Marko Pavlyshyn (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1998), 76.

⁵² See Stasiuk and Andrukhovych, *Moia Ievropa*.

⁵³ Yuri Andrukhvych, “Open Letter from Ukrainian Writer Yuri Andrukhvych,” *New Eastern Europe* (January 24, 2014). <http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/interviews/1061-open-letter-from-ukrainian-writer-yuri-andrukhovych> [accessed March 18, 2017]

Despite being one of his country's most effective advocates in Europe, Andrukhovych has fallen afoul of *Pravyi Sektor* and Dontsov's other political descendants. In December 2014, *Pravyi Sektor* denounced Andrukhovych as a “*liberast*” (a derogatory portmanteau of “liberal” and “pederast”) and a “propagandist” of “postmodernist cynicism,” “erotomania” (the same term that Teliha used against Lypa), and “homosexuality.” Andrukhovych, *Pravyi Sektor* charged, is a purveyor of the “pornographic” “genital literature” born of the ostensibly decadent liberalism of present-day Europe.⁵⁴ Such vices “might not harm the states of Western nations, but for Ukraine, spiritually damaged by the extended Russian-Communist occupation, they had and have exclusively ruinous consequences.” *Pravyi Sektor* accused Andrukhovych of “the total rejection of the national idea, the rejection of the experience and tradition of Ukrainian nationalism, rejection or ignorance of political elites, of the state-building, person-building, and nation-building ideas of the Ukrainian classics.” Instead he espouses “anti-Ukrainian cosmopolitan ideas of liberalism, pacifism, Russophilism, Little-Russianism, and so on,” which had allegedly “led directly to the domination of criminal oligarchic clans, to the affirmation of the antinational and criminal Yanukovych regime, and, most importantly, the bloody Russo-Ukrainian war, the occupation of Crimea and Donbas by Russia (as Andrukhovych and his liberal followers wanted).”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ “Pravyi sektor zvynuvatyv Andrukhovycha u propahandi ruivnykh idei,” *Ukrains'ka Pravda* (January 4, 2015). <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2015/01/4/7054134/> [accessed March 18, 2017]

⁵⁵ The last aside is a reference to Andrukhovych's comment in 2010 that Ukraine would be better off if Crimea and Donbas left, arguing that the two regions are “politically” (not ethnically) “a part of Russia,” and resist all attempts to establish a reformist, Western-oriented government in Kyiv. “They do not leave now because they are in power,” but they will aggressively suppress any Ukrainian movement, Andrukhovych reasoned. “Andrukhovych vvazhaie, shcho krymu i donbasu treba viddilytys'ia vid Ukrainy,” *TSN* (July 23, 2010) <https://tsn.ua/ukrayina/andruhovych-vvazhaye-scho-krimu-i-donbasu-treba-viddilytysya-vid-ukrayini.html> [accessed March 18, 2017]

Pravyi Sektor's obloquy caused a scandal in Ukrainian life, with many public figures defending Andrukhovych from the "neo-Stalinist" attack.⁵⁶ The writer and the militia have also locked horns over the question of Ukraine's foreign policy, with *Pravyi Sektor* favoring isolation, self-reliance, iron discipline, and siege mentality, and Andrukhovych supporting as much integration as possible into the structures of the West. In April 2014, the latter criticized *Pravyi Sektor* on national television for its opposition to Ukrainian membership in the EU and, more puzzlingly for Andrukhovych, NATO.⁵⁷ Where Dontsov would have stood on these issues is anyone's guess: he would almost certainly have disliked Andrukhovych's postmodernist prose, but, given his lifelong enthusiasm for Western alliances against Moscow, it is difficult to imagine him opposing a sovereign, independent Ukraine joining NATO, or even the EU, despite its professed liberal, democratic, and humanitarian values. But latter-day Dontsovists are going over to the "euroskeptic" position, citing the West's alleged indifference to Ukraine's plight, and the perceived evils of Western decadence, cosmopolitanism, globalism, and liberalism.

By and large, Ukrainians have rebuked the overtures of the Dontsovists. Given the circumstances, Ukrainian society and politics have exhibited remarkable restraint. Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that one can take Dontsov "à la carte"—given the eclecticism of his beliefs and allegiances across his lifespan. It is possible to keep what one finds useful or praiseworthy, and ignore the rest. This is what virtually all of Dontsov's twenty-first-century proponents do. His legacy, which is as protean as his belief system was in life, can be made to serve many different agendas. Toward Europe—away from Moscow: this much is agreed. But which "Europe" is the destination, which "Russia" the obstacle?

⁵⁶ "Intelihentsiia pro naizd 'Pravoho sektora' na Andukhovycha," *Ukrains'ka Pravda* ((January 5, 2015). <http://life.pravda.com.ua/society/2015/01/5/187062/> [accessed March 17, 2017]

⁵⁷ Telekanal ICTV (April 10, 2014) <https://www.facebook.com/ICTVchannel/videos/651293941586660/> [accessed March 19, 2017]

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Nash holos' (Our Voice),

Nazustrich (Rendezvous)

Nova Rada (New Council)

Pratsia (Work)

Rabochaia zhizn' (Workers' Life)

Rozbudova natsii (Nation Building)

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