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and His  
Community

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# Ivan Franko and His Community

YAROSLAV HRYTSAK

**Translated by**

MARTA OLYNYK



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# Acknowledgments

This book took many years to write. During that time there emerged a sort of competition between who or what would finish first: either I the book, or it me. In the end a compromise became necessary: instead of Franko's entire biography, the reader would receive only half—a history of his younger years. But even this could not have been achieved without the help of many people and institutions.

The very long list of their names is in the original version of this book, which I wrote in Ukrainian. It was published in Ukraine in 2006 by Krytyka Press with the support from the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute. Here I would like to thank the persons who helped me with the translation into English. First of all, I express my gratitude to Frank Sysyn, director of the Peter Jacyk Centre for Ukrainian Historical Research (PJC) at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta. Without his help and steadfast encouragement this translation would likely never have seen the light of day. I am particularly grateful that it has been published as a volume in the PJC's monograph series. I also thank the Ukrainian Studies Fund, Inc., and its benefactors for supporting this publication.

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# A Note on Transliteration

In the main body of the text, personal names and locations are rendered according to a slightly simplified system, following the traditions of English-language common usage, such as rendering the initial *Ia*, *Iu*, and *Ie* as *Ya*, *Yu*, and *Ye* and rendering the *-ii* and *-yi* endings as *-y*. In instances other than place and personal names, as well as in the bibliography and notes, the transliteration from the Cyrillic follows the Library of Congress system (with diacritics and ligatures omitted). In addition, the soft sign is omitted in the body of the text but retained in the notes and bibliography, where it is rendered with a prime.



# Abbreviations of Frequently Cited Sources

ZT: Ivan Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv u p'iatdesiaty tomakh*. Edited by Ie. P. Kyrlyuk et al. Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1976–86. References to this edition are marked by square brackets enclosing the volume and page(s), e.g., [ZT 19:192]. If a volume consists of several books, the book number will be separated by slash from the volume number, e.g., [ZT 44/1:508–9].

BN WZS: Biblioteka Narodowa w Warszawie, Wydział Zbiorów Specjalnych.

Chaikovs'kyi, *Spohady*: Chaikovs'kyi, Andrii. *Spohady. Lysty. Doslidzhennia*, vol. 3. Lviv: Vyd-vo L'vivs'koho universytetu; NAN Ukrainy; Instytut ukraïnoznavstva im. I. Kryp'iakevycha NAN Ukrainy; Nauk. fundatsiia A. Chaikovs'koho, 2002.

DALO: Derzhavnyi arkhiv Lvivs'koi oblasti (State Archive of Lviv Oblast).

HHS: Informationsbüro: Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Informationsbüro des k.k. Ministeriums der Äusseren, 1960, 1982, 2174, 2262, 3306, 4559 / 70, 1877.

LNV: *Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk*. Lviv, 1898-1906.

*Materialy*: Vozniak, Mykhailo, ed. *Materialy dlia kul'turnoi i hromads'koi istorii Zakhidnoi Ukrainy*, vol. 1, *Lystuvannia I. Franka i M. Drahomanova*. Kyiv: Drukarnia Vseukrainskoi Akademii nauk, 1928. [=Vseukrainska Akademiia nauk. Komisiia Zakhidnoi Ukrainy. *Zbirnyk istorychno-filolohichnoho viddilu*.]

*Mozaika*: Ivan Franko, *Mozaika: Iz tvoriv, shcho ne vviishly do Zibrannia tvoriv u 50 tomakh*. Compiled by Z. T. Franko and M. H. Vasylenko. Lviv: Kameniar, 2001. References to this publication are marked in the text by citations of the given volume and page of the *Mozaika* within square brackets.

TsDAHO Ukrainy: Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads'kykh ob'iednan' Ukrainy (Central State Archive of Civic Associations of Ukraine).

TsDIAL: Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Istorychnyi Arkhiv Ukrainy (Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine), Lviv.

VR IL: Viddil rukopysnykh fondiv i tekstolohii, Instytut literatury im. T. H. Shevchenka Natsional'noi akademii nauk Ukrainy (Department of Manuscript Collections and Textology).

VR LNB: Viddil rukopysiv L'vivs'koi naukovoï biblioteky im. Vasylia Stefanyka NAN Ukrainy (Manuscript Division of the Vasyl Stefanyk Lviv Research Library).

ZNTSh: *Zapysky Naukovoho Tovarystva im. Shevchenka*.



# Introduction

The present volume is yet another book about nationalism. However, it differs greatly from other books about the topic, for it is biography by nature and microhistory by genre. Indeed, the genre of microhistory arose from biographies—the life stories of people (peasants, millers, prostitutes, monks, and others) about whom no one would have known, had later researchers not uncovered their life stories in the archives. Still, while the linking of biography and microhistory is not so unusual, the main protagonist of this volume is. Ivan Franko, the hero of this book, was a person of a different caliber. His literary, scientific, and journalistic contributions amount to about 4,000 works. Several of these have been introduced into the curriculum of Ukrainian schools and the canon of Ukrainian literature. They have had massive print runs, both in Ukrainian and in translation. He was famous in his lifetime and glorified after his death; it would be impossible for Ukrainians and their neighbors not to know about him. Figures like Franko deserve great histories like the biographies written about other great authors such as Shakespeare, Voltaire, and Dostoevsky.

Nevertheless, Franko's life can also be told in relation to research about common people. For comparison, we can turn to the hero of one of the most popular microhistories—the French peasant Martin Guerre, or rather the man who pretended to be him.<sup>1</sup> The real Guerre went to war, while for several years an accidental acquaintance of his inserted himself into Guerre's family. Surprisingly, Guerre's parents, relatives, and even his wife claimed not to see through the deception, and who knows how long it would have lasted had not the real Martin Guerre returned from the war.

Franko's life had similarities to the story of Martin Guerre. Franko was, perhaps, the first Ukrainian writer who gave his reader the impression that his heroes were contemporaries: they spoke the same language, discussed the same topics, and reacted in the same manner as Ukrainians or,

indeed, Poles, Russians, French, or Germans, of that time. But the world of Franko's heroes had little in common with the actual world contemporary to him. Indeed, critics of his time repeatedly wrote about this. One of them wrote, "The first thing that impresses every reader of his stories is a striking untruth: we hope to see the real world, but we see Franko's world; we hope to see real people, but we see purely Franko's people." In Franko's writings, wrote another, "there is something too fantastic, incommensurate with or even incredible in respect to, the circumstances of Galician life." (For more on this, see chapter 15, "Franko and His Readers.")

Despite what critics wrote, however, contemporary readers believed Franko, just as the false Martin Guerre's new relatives believed him. But while this faith held merely local significance for Guerre's contemporaries, Franko's readers saw in his biography and works a model for creating their own identity. To understand the causes of this mass self-suggestion, we must understand Franko's own story in detail; that is, in the kind of detail that one does not normally see in historical works, where the canvas of the past is often painted with broad brushstrokes.

Therefore, this book examines Franko's life against the background of very small communities: his family, native village, school comrades, the editorial boards of newspapers and journals for which he worked, illegal circles into which he introduced his own propaganda, and other associations. In other words, it attempts to show the interrelations between the individual and society in the creation of modern identities. Franko was born into a region that played a special role in nation-building at the turn of the twentieth century. His native Galicia—an Austrian border province and, over the course of Franko's life (1856–1916), the flashpoint for a fierce struggle between the Habsburgs and the Romanovs—was also the object of particular Ukrainian, Polish, Jewish, and Russian nationalist aspirations. No heavenly portents hinted at the outcome of this contest. Everything was unclear and depended to a great extent upon accidents, as one might expect when it comes to nation-building in borderlands. However, the future geopolitical order of Central and Eastern Europe seemed to depend on the resolution of this contest as it played out in the last third of the nineteenth century.

For anyone interested in the formation of identities in the borderland, biography is an ideal object of research. Franko was an undisputed leader among those who influenced the establishment of a modern Ukrainian identity, as this barely literate, agrarian society was transformed into a

literate, industrial one. The difference between these two societies, as Ernest Gellner—one of the most important theorists on nationalism—asserted, is absolutely central to an understanding of the present world.<sup>2</sup> According to Gellner, the appearance of nationalism and modern nations was tightly connected with the newly industrialized world; or, as Benedict Anderson has stated, not without irony, “industrialism was a piece of machinery that demanded the oil of nationalism to function.”<sup>3</sup> The history of Austrian Galicia in Franko’s time both confirms and undermines Arnold’s thesis about the connection between nationalism and modernity. It confirms it because until the mid-nineteenth century—the time of Franko’s birth and the beginnings of large-scale modernization—the number of people who thought of themselves as Ukrainians could be counted in the hundreds, if not merely in the dozens. By the time of his death the number had grown so large that it was acceptable to talk about the “Ukrainian conquest of Galicia.” Yet, the success of the Ukrainian nation-building project undermines Gellner’s formula, because in this region, only lightly touched by industrialization, nation-building should have been weak, or not occurred at all. However, it did occur—and it was quite strong.<sup>4</sup> Because Franko’s biography spans the time of these changes, the study of his life brings us to the very core of the debates about the circumstances of the appearance and development of modern nations.

It is important to note that this story takes us to the halfway point of Franko’s life, when he was thirty years old. This cutoff is motivated by several considerations. The first is rather technical: a microhistory is a painstaking type of investigation, requiring a lot of time. The writing of Franko’s whole biography in this genre would have meant several more years before the publication of this book, and the book itself would have been transformed into a *Grossbuch*, which might have frightened off readers.

The second consideration is academic in nature. One of the greatest temptations in historical writing is teleology—the reduction of diverse variants of the development of events to the single one that became reality. In this case, this would mean writing a biography of Franko exclusively as a national leader who intended to transform a peasant society into the modern Ukrainian nation. Indeed, he truly was this person in the last decades of his life; still, at least to the end of his second decade, he did not yet have the intention to write “for peasants and about peasants” and was not even certain about his own Ukrainian-ness. Even after he had undergone a national conversion, he adhered to the principle “not to curse or slander

any other ‘-isms’ for the sake of nationalism (see chapter 9, “A Journal, All We Need Is a Journal!”). Thus, writing about Franko as merely a Ukrainian nationalist would be only as true as Soviet writings about Franko, which portrayed him exclusively as the predecessor of a communist tendency in Ukrainian intellectual history. The young Franko managed to be a socialist, a feminist, and an atheist, as well as a proponent of free love (see chapters 8, “At the Forefront of the Socialist Movement”; 10, “Franko and His World Perception”; 12, “Franko and His Boryslav”; and 13, “Franko and His Women”), and he created his own formulation of Ukrainian-ness, while also reflecting on the Jewish question (see chapter 14, “Franko and His Jews”). Therefore, Franko cannot be understood by reducing his biography to the person he was in his final years. This biography takes a completely opposite approach: as much as possible, it is written as though Franko had suddenly disappeared in his thirtieth year, as if we did not know what would happen to him thereafter.

Finally, the third reason for choosing this endpoint: the appeal of Franko’s Ukrainian ideas is based not only upon his creative works, but also upon certain facets of his biography. In particular, his status as a young poet played an important role and justifies the limitation of our story to his younger years.

This consideration, however, begs the question: how long does a poet’s youth last? Of course, youth is not merely a biological idea, but also a social concept—its meaning changes along with societal changes. The nineteenth century brought forth the start of a vast demographic transition. From the time of Christ to that of Napoleon, the average life expectancy remained around twenty-five years, but over the next century it grew to forty-five years.<sup>5</sup> In the nineteenth century, a reader would be completely unsurprised to read in a novel about “an old woman of forty-five years”—in those times, people lived shorter lives, and old age came sooner. Franko at age twenty-eight was already considered an “old bachelor,” and with the approach of his fiftieth birthday, the younger generation viewed him as a person of advanced age. Researchers of poetic creativity consider that the youth of a poet in the nineteenth century concluded with the attainment of a stable livelihood—when his level of income allowed him to settle down, have a family and a home.<sup>6</sup> With this in mind, it is completely justifiable to conclude the story about the young Franko with his marriage in 1886.

This book is an academic monograph, but my goal has been to present a text that will appeal to a broader readership not limited to scholars.

To accomplish this, wherever possible, I have dispensed with academic jargon. Furthermore, all the scholarly apparatuses such as footnotes, indexes, and tables have been placed in the end section of the book. In the notes, the reader will also find more detailed argumentation of certain theses and specific subjects. Nonspecialists are not obliged to peruse this part unless the details of the research interest them.

A brief discussion about terms: throughout the book they are used in a strictly neutral sense, irrespective of—as far as possible—any ideological framework that might be associated with the term in public discussions. Let us begin, for example, with the word “nationalism,” a term heavily weighted ideologically. In this book it is used similarly to other “-isms”: socialism, liberalism, conservatism, feminism—that is, as one of a variety of ideologies and modern political movements. Each “-ism” has a tendency to be turned into an “-asm-” (as in “miasma”). Here, however, we are interested not so much in the evolution of the movements associated with the term with all of their vagaries, as we are in its essence. Following Gellner, I invoke nationalism as an ideology and a political movement, the main organizing principle behind the demand that political and ethnic borders should coincide.<sup>7</sup> This definition brings together all available types of nationalism—liberal, integral, state, nonstate, and so on—leaving to propagandists such adjectives as “militant,” “liberational,” “bloody,” and the like.

Another concept used here is “traditional society.” Generally speaking, “tradition” covers the whole cultural inheritance that one generation passes on to another. Its existence is the ultimate condition for the functioning of every society. Hence, each society is, to a certain degree, traditional. In this book, however, “traditional society” refers only to the type of society in which tradition is passed from an older to a younger generation directly, through direct personal contact and oral transmission.<sup>8</sup> This definition allows us to avoid unjustified simplifications, such as the frequent broad identification of traditional society with a particular stratum (for example, the peasantry) or with particular concrete material or spiritual manifestations of traditional culture (such as clothing, songs, and the like). According to this proposed definition, it is not only an illiterate peasant who could be traditional, but also a skilled artisan or a nobleman, or a married priest of the Orthodox Church, as long as he has acquired professional knowledge not through a school, gymnasium, or university, but through the teachings of his father or an experienced master, following the principle “do it as I do.”<sup>9</sup> By this same logic, traditions can appear and

disappear, and be transformed according to new changes and, as long as the means of transmission of knowledge does not change, such a world remains “traditional.”

In the juxtaposition of “traditional” and “modern,” the main problem lies not with the first term, but with the second. The term “modern” is highly ambivalent. It has both a temporal meaning (modern as something that took place not long ago) and an ideological one (modern as the superior way to organize social life).<sup>10</sup> Most often the two meanings are combined—as, for example, by the proponents of modernization theories. They reduce modernity to a list of concrete criteria, such as the level of urbanization and industrialization of a society, education, social and geographical mobility, the level of political structuring, and so on. Problems emerge, however, when one applies this categorical apparatus to concrete historical investigations. Firstly, in the past there have always been periods that could be read, according to some of these criteria, as more “modern” than later ones (see chapter 2, “The Riddles of His Birth”). Secondly, there are important reasons not to consider these criteria universal. They reflect the concrete, real conditions of particular countries—generally speaking white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant countries—where modernization brought the most tangible and rapid results. It is not clear how to apply these criteria to societies with cultural and political environments that differ from those of the countries in which the hallmarks of modernization first appeared.<sup>11</sup>

The way out of this impasse is to move away from an emphasis on objective criteria to what is in fact a subjective perception of the phenomenon called change. If the temporal meaning of the term “modern” is significantly older than the modern world (its appearance dates at least to the sixth century CE), then the positive connotation of the term is relatively recent. From its very first appearances, this word was used overwhelmingly in a pejorative sense, to denote something recognizably worse than, and certainly not ideal in comparison to, the “good old days.” The scientific and industrial revolutions of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries fundamentally changed its meaning. During that period, it became clear that while the poetry of Homer and Virgil remained unsurpassed, the modern discoveries of Copernicus and Newton surpassed the knowledge of Archimedes and Ptolemy.<sup>12</sup> Hence, a modern society can be defined in the broadest sense as not simply a society undergoing rapid changes, but as a society that is conscious of these changes,<sup>13</sup> and (this is most important) a society that views them positively. This definition allows us to explain how it is

possible for strong, modern political and intellectual movements to appear in traditional societies, which were under the pressure of transformation. The force of these movements reflected the desire for change, which, in the minds of their leaders and followers, would bring improvement in living conditions. The more backward the society was, the more loudly their battle cries sounded, and the higher they raised their flag. Equally, the proposed definition helps us to understand modernization processes as the sum of more or less autonomous components that were not necessarily interrelated. In particular, I consistently distinguish between “modernization” and “modernity” in this volume: modernity means new political, cultural, and intellectual currents, while modernization denotes social and economic development. Corresponding to this distinction, this book understands Galicia as a historical region, where there was a great deal of modernity but little modernization. By analogy, we could say that at the other end of those Ukrainian lands, in industrial Donbas of the turn of the twentieth century, there was plenty of modernization but only a little modernity.<sup>14</sup>

One could go a step further and present the “traditional–modern society” binary opposition not necessarily as a dichotomy, but as a certain symbiosis, or even as a synthesis. The modern world is best imagined as a palimpsest, where the traditional structures appear distinctly beneath the surface of modern phenomena. This book proposes a perspective that is not so popular in the social sciences and humanities, but is justified in the case of many countries of Central and Eastern Europe—the very recognition that alongside modern political structures, social and economic transformations, and new cultural practices, old (“traditional”) religious and cultural differences play a very important role. Moreover, there exists a certain “path dependency” between old and new structures, with the understanding that the former limit the number of possible scenarios for the latter’s development, or make some of them more likely than others. Nationalism and national identity, credibly, came historically out of a Christian tradition.<sup>15</sup> Still, the question remains: did they spread with the same force in the Western and Eastern Christian worlds? This book’s material leads its author to answer, most likely, in the negative. This thesis remains a working hypothesis, not supported by sufficient argumentation, but it helps us to understand important episodes of Franko’s biography.

Identification with one group or another means setting borders—borders to which this group of identities is attributed. Almost always, these borders are imagined—not in the sense that they do not really exist, but in

that the only real means of their existence is imagination. Correspondingly, they are not prescribed once and forever, but instead are constructed, changed, and dependent on circumstances. To be Ukrainian in the nineteenth century did not necessarily signify the same set of values as it did in the twentieth century. The absolute majority of Franko's compatriots during his youth called themselves Ruthenians (*Rusyns*; *rusyny* in Ukrainian), and it was in no way predetermined that Ruthenians would turn into Ukrainians. Such a transformation was the goal of only one cultural and sociopolitical group—the so-called Ukrainophiles. Hence, in this book I use three different terms to refer to three different groups: Ruthenians, Ukrainophiles, and Ukrainians. The relationship between these three can be explained briefly as follows: “Ukrainians” were what Ukrainophiles thought Ruthenians had to become. Analogously, one might distinguish between Jews and Israelis or Masurians and Poles. In each case, the Jews had to become Israelis, and the Masurians had to become Poles in order to accord with the intentions of the corresponding contemporary Jewish and Polish nationalists.

Identities, more often than not, signify a projection of imagined groups onto a certain historical space. The borders upon which this imagining took place were the object of desire of various national and imperial projects. As a result, the majority of regional names and national fatherlands that are employed in this book—Rus, Russia, Poland, Ukraine—were not neutral geographic concepts, and it is not possible to establish them *a priori*. Rather, they are the result of the situational interaction of various actors, and only through this interaction is it possible to define them. Such an approach is becoming widespread in the most recent investigations of the history of national movements in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>16</sup> The author agrees with this approach and strives to employ it with a few significant amendments. First, researchers of nationalism are often accused (and justifiably so) of having a narrow investigative framework: they fail to place national identities within a broader spectrum of all possible forms of group identification—professional, gender, ideological, religious, and the like.<sup>17</sup> Franko's biography is a convincing example of the falsity of this narrow focus. In the historical theater of Central and Eastern Europe, nationalism was not the only drama. Franko's identity was the result, first of all, of the interaction of various modern political ideologies, among which nationalism was an important one, but not the only one. Thus, the first amendment to this approach adds the requirement for a maximal possible widening of the circle of actors involved.

A second amendment is that the drama itself developed to a great extent on an old stage with old decorations. Therefore, the number of actors that could have influenced Franko's choice cannot be limited to modern ones—bureaucrats, socialists, liberals, conservatives, nationalists, and the like. At least until the First World War, traditional society provided the decorations and the actors. It is important to see how the inclusion of traditional actors (in the first case, peasants and Jews) in the world of modern politics influenced the change of the very field and the rules of play.

The third amendment relates to the very means of investigating this drama. Most importantly, especially after the so-called linguistic turn in historical scholarship, one must analyze the scenario itself—in other words, one must render a discursive analysis. The value of such analysis cannot be denied. Investigations that begin and end with this type of analysis are, however, problematic. Though they are interesting, they create the impression of going through revolving doors but still ending up back where one started.<sup>18</sup> The scenario or script is not the whole of the drama. The very play of the actors and their interaction with the viewers are also important. Franko was precisely one of those authors who actively created new discourses with his texts. However, analysis of the social reception of his works shows that even the most provocative and widely discussed texts had influence only within a small circle of people. Therefore, to ascertain the causes of Franko's popularity—and its limits—we are required to move beyond the discursive fields and to analyze the structures of the life of people who did not have a voice in these discussions, either through illiteracy or indifference.

In any case, the writing of a biography requires one to consider a variety of contexts, and therefore anticipates interdisciplinarity. This book was written at the intersection of history, literature, sociology, and ethnography. Of all these disciplines, I can claim a degree of expertise only in history. In the others, I have been, and remain, a dilettante. The experienced reader will easily tease out the sum of these techniques and methodologies, whether applied with expertise or as a dilettante. Here, I will dwell only on the one that had the most influence upon the general design of the investigation: the theory of fields, advanced by the French social scientist Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu introduces the concept of a field of play (*jeu*), the rules of which are not completely clear or codified. The main thing in this play are the stakes (*enjeux*), which mostly arise during competition among the players. The players agree that the game is worth playing and invest

their energies in it. Trump cards also exist (economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital, for instance), the value and hierarchy of which can change in the process of the game itself. In an empirical study, one must determine what the field of the game is, where its boundaries lie, and what types of capital are involved. It is most difficult to determine the borders of the field itself, since they themselves are both the object and the stakes of the game. Game participants—economic firms, fashion designers, writers—constantly strive to distinguish themselves from their closest competitors and to establish their own monopoly over a certain section of the field.<sup>19</sup>

Bourdieu proposes the metaphor and images of a card game (bets, trump cards). In the case of mass political movements, I think it more relevant to compare them with a game in which there are more players, as well as fans, many of whom, although not playing, consider the course of events essentially important for themselves. Soccer is such a game. In developing this metaphor, one could think of the main intrigue of the book as follows: with the downfall of the old regime on the European continent in the nineteenth century, a great tournament began among various ethnic, religious, social, and other groups for the right to enter the twentieth century. Events unfolded in such a way that in Franko's time Galicia became the field where one of the semifinal matches was held. In order to win, one of the outsiders—the Ukrainophile intelligentsia—attempted to master the rules and techniques of the game, to accumulate social and symbolic capital, and to transform the passive inhabitants of their province into a mass group of supporters. All these efforts could have been in vain, however, if the team did not have a good forward, one who could score goals. This history is a story about how Franko became that forward—thanks to circumstances that require separate explanation and are impossible to understand without comprehending the logic of the game itself.

Finally, I will briefly describe the state of another field in which this book aspires to position itself: Franko Studies. The study of the life and creative work of Ivan Franko has a long history and established traditions. The first studies of Franko appeared during his lifetime.<sup>20</sup> The richness of Franko's legacy, combined with relatively well-preserved archives and enduring research traditions, have created a unique situation, one about which the biographers of not every well-known person can boast: in the current state of research, the life of Franko can be noted down all the way to its daily details.

The paradox is that, despite such detailed knowledge, there is still no satisfactory academic biography of Franko. In part, this can be explained by political circumstances. Even during his lifetime, and still more after his death, Franko became the object of struggles between various political currents, each of which strove to establish a monopolistic right to him as its ideological progenitor. Therefore, Franko's life and activities were often described in accordance with ideological schemes that allowed for the deliberate silencing or distortion of certain facts. The most distinguished in this regard was Soviet scholarship, which, in the apt words of Yevhen Sverstiuk, wrote biographies with an apparent obligation to show their heroes' "usefulness for state service."<sup>21</sup> This tendency has remained alive, even after the fall of communism, when Franko Studies has been formally liberated from political pressure and nothing limits researchers' freedom, at least, in principle.

Another obstacle is the general attitude that the pursuit of new facts excludes broad conclusions. This was such a noticeable phenomenon that society paid attention to it and began—mostly in interwar Galician newspapers—a campaign against historians who write about “what” and not about “why.”<sup>22</sup> In the overall hierarchy of scholarly values, I place the discovery of new ways of thinking about already known facts above the gathering of new facts. Among the works on Ivan Franko that take this approach, this book is not the first and, of course, will not be the last. Over the past decade, several first-class studies have been published, which are opening the field for new interpretations of his life and creative work. Some of these have appeared outside of Franko Studies, but any serious biography of Ivan Franko must also take into account these studies' results and conclusions. After their publication, to write about Franko has become, if not easier, at least much more interesting than it was at the beginning of the 1990s.<sup>23</sup>

This biography of Franko is also the culmination of my almost twenty years of research. In 1990, I published a small book as a first attempt at a new biography of Franko.<sup>24</sup> Over the twenty-eight years that have since passed, our knowledge about Franko has significantly broadened. However, this has only made it more possible to clearly realize how much we still do not know or understand. Therefore, my credo remains in harmony with the Latin proverb with which I concluded the introduction to that earlier work: “I did what I could; let whoever can do better.”



**PART 1**  
**Franko and His Times**



## Chapter 1

# Austrian Galicia: Movement without Changes, Changes without Movement

There are places on the world map where a person loses out immediately just by virtue of being born there. In the nineteenth century, Austrian Galicia seemed to be one of those places. The first priority for a Galician who desired wealth and fame, or simply a peaceful and reasonably comfortable life for himself and his family, was to leave. If the Galician forefathers of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud—to use just these two examples—had remained forever in this land, the world would scarcely have heard about their brilliant heirs.<sup>1</sup>

Galicia was one of those Eastern European lands where neither a large expanse of territory<sup>2</sup> nor natural resources were transformed into social wealth. The largest territory in the Austrian part of the Habsburg monarchy was also the most disadvantaged: in 1880 only 9.2 percent of its industrial enterprises were located on 26.1 percent of its territory, with 26.9 percent of its population.<sup>3</sup> In the late nineteenth century only 8 out of 1,000 people earned a yearly income of 600 gulden or more (compared to 28 people in Bohemia and 99 in Lower Austria).<sup>4</sup> The majority of Galicia's population (nearly 80 percent) earned a living from extensive and low-yield farming, arguably one of the highest percentages in all of Europe. Galicia also lagged in terms of the two most important indicators of civilizational development: mortality (36.4 percent in 1882) and illiteracy (76.8 percent in 1880); this dubious renown was shared with neighboring Bukovyna and the Balkan lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire).<sup>5</sup>

In 1888 the Polish economist and industrialist Stanisław Szczepanowski published a book whose title, *Galician Misery in Figures*, served as Galicia's

calling card throughout Europe. He calculated that the average Galician earned one-quarter of what a European did but consumed one-half.<sup>6</sup> Besides “Galician misery,” other expressions also gained currency: “Galician elections,” a symbol of political corruption and governmental abuses; “Ternopil-style morality” (Ternopil being a large Galician town),<sup>7</sup> a euphemism for fraud; and “Galician count,” a synonym for an impostor. The expression *ein typischer Galizianer* (a typical Galician) was perhaps the most grievous insult that a Western European Jew could fling at an Eastern European Jew: it was believed that Galician Jews were dirty, poorly educated, and overbearing.<sup>8</sup> In the eyes of Vienna and the educated German-speaking public, Galicia was “semi-Asiatic,” a “land of bears,” and an “Austrian Siberia.”<sup>9</sup>

Yet, Galicia was a symbol of backwardness not just for the West but also for the East. Ukrainian socialists in the Russian Empire railed at “Galician barbarism, or, in other words, the civilization that was formed in the homes of Polish footmen and in priests’ kitchens.”<sup>10</sup> A Pole in Vilnius or Warsaw viewed his Galician fellow nationals—“Galileuszy”—as backward compared to the Poles who lived in Russia or Prussia, and thus deserving of contempt.<sup>11</sup> The intellectual guru of Warsaw Positivism, Aleksander Świątochowski, wrote: “This Galicia of ours is a kind of fatal cliff in the ocean of civilization, against which all its ships smash and on which only birds of prey build their nests.”<sup>12</sup>

In the eyes of critics from the West and the East, the embodiment of Galicia’s civilizational backwardness was each of the main local socioethnic groups: land-poor and for the most part illiterate Ruthenian-Ukrainian and Polish peasants; equally impoverished and religiously steadfast Galician Jews; Eastern- and Western-rite clergy (Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic, respectively); the petty gentry; and wealthy Polish landowners. Responsibility for the dire state of the province was placed mainly on the latter. The lion’s share of economic power and, from the latter third of the nineteenth century, political power, was concentrated in their hands to such an extent that Galicia was called the great “grange of the Polish nobility.” In the late 1880s the total area of land in the possession of one great landowner equaled approximately one hundred small farmsteads, and his vote in elections to the parliaments—both the territorial one (*Galicyjsky sejm*) and the imperial parliament (*Reichsrat*)—was worth 180 peasant votes.<sup>13</sup> Vienna sought to undercut the domination of the Polish aristocracy from the very moment that Galicia was annexed to the Habsburg monarchy in 1772. Initially, it abolished the peasants’ personal dependence and

then, in 1848, the *corvée*—that is, the right of landowners to freely benefit from peasants’ work. However, the aristocracy’s other privileges remained in force. The year 1885 saw the formal abolition of the monopoly on manufacturing and selling spirits, the main source of income for landowners and of moral and financial degradation for the rest of Galicians. However, informally this privilege remained in effect until 1910, and the monopoly rights of a landowner to appoint a priest to a parish (right of presentation), possess arms, and hunt and fish remained inviolable until the end of the Habsburg Empire (1918).<sup>14</sup> Politically, Galician landowners were divided into two parties—Western Galician conservatives (*stańczycy*) and Eastern Galician plainsmen (*podolaci*). Malicious tongues claimed that the “plainsmen” were the same as the conservatives, only stupider. The *podolaci* were less amenable to compromises on the rural and Ruthenian questions. For their political slogan, they adopted the words of Kovbasiuk, a Ruthenian peasant delegate to the Galician parliament: “Let it be as it was in the past.”<sup>15</sup>

In the age of dynamic socioeconomic and political modernization, the Galician way of life appeared exceptionally anachronistic. It was believed that Austrian Galicia had lost touch with its epoch.<sup>16</sup> It is no surprise that researchers consider it the epitome of a traditional agrarian society.<sup>17</sup> However, it has escaped the attention of many historians that “misery” was not an exclusively Galician feature. Rather, it reflected the state of the entire proto-industrial society of Eastern and Central Europe<sup>18</sup> and, in the broader understanding, of the entire European periphery together with the Balkans, the southern parts of the Apennine and Iberian peninsulas, and Scandinavia. The question of why Austrian Galicia and not Russian-ruled Polissia or Hungarian-ruled Carpathian Ruthenia (present-day Ukraine’s Zakarpattia region) came to embody civilizational backwardness requires a separate study.<sup>19</sup> It may be inferred that no other historical region experienced such a dramatic and intensive collision between the forces of modernization and tradition; Galicia’s reputation thus became the result of the modernizers’ profound exasperation with the vitality of the local traditional world.

Several directions and “small islands” of modernization may be mapped out. The first and earliest one was the so-called “modernization through bureaucratization,” in which the main driving force of change was not a banker or an entrepreneur but rather a state functionary.<sup>20</sup> This type of modernization left a vivid mark on Lviv, the capital city and, by definition, a place where administrative bodies and officialdom were concentrated.

Thanks to its status as the capital of the largest Austrian territory, Lviv accumulated a significant portion of state taxes and state investments. The introduction in 1870 of municipal self-government created an opportunity to invest these funds in the development of the city's infrastructure. If, as a criterion of modernity, maximum usage of this infrastructure is applied to the daily needs of urban residents, then in the final decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century Lviv was truly a modern city, perhaps the only modern metropolis in the lands of the former *Rzeczpospolita*.<sup>21</sup>

One example of industrialization (albeit a very peculiar one with respect to Galician conditions) was the mining industry in Subcarpathia (*Prykarpattia*). Thanks to this industry, in the early part of the twentieth century Galicia became the third largest oil extraction center in the world.<sup>22</sup> Apart from those "small islands" of modernization, Austrian Galicia was slowly but surely becoming exposed to the pressure of changes that were affecting the way of life of all social strata and people of all confessions. The advent of railways led to the mass importation of goods from the central and industrially developed provinces. These goods were of better quality and, what is most important, cheaper than local products. This led, among other things, to the appearance of previously unseen furniture, fashionable clothing, and new food products (e.g., rice, tea, and coffee) in the homes of landowners and bureaucrats as well as of the families of priests, peasants, and even Jews. Consumerist moods were intensified by the gradual but continuous rise in the education level of the local population; needs were growing not only in the quantitative dimension but also the qualitative one—that is, they were becoming more diversified. In the final decades of the nineteenth century these factors also included the mass labor emigration of peasants, primarily to North America. Many of them sent their wages home, which signified the appearance of free money in natural peasant households; others came back home enriched by new habits, needs, and a new world perception.<sup>23</sup>

Taking place together with the importation of goods and money was the introduction of new ideas and new words: nihilism, materialism, assimilation, socialism, nationalism, liberalism, antisemitism, and decadence.<sup>24</sup> These ideas had ample room in which to become enrooted, thanks to the emergence in the latter third of the nineteenth century of a well-developed public space with its numerous civic institutions, cultural centers, publishing houses, libraries, and reading rooms located in cities as well as in villages.<sup>25</sup>

The growth of public space was the result of political reforms that Austria's military defeats in Italy (1859) and Prussia (1866) had compelled the imperial center to adopt in order to restore its authority. Vienna was forced to expand its citizens' rights. The logic of changes that were introduced in the Russian Empire after its defeat in the Crimean War was similar. However, in Russia the rise of national and revolutionary movements forced the government to scale back its liberal reforms, while in the Habsburg monarchy this reform process never ceased. The landmark changes here were the transformation of the centralized Austrian monarchy into the dual Austria-Hungary (1867), the granting of political autonomy to the territories (1869), and the introduction of general enfranchisement (1905). The political and economic dominance of the landed aristocracy was tottering under the pressure of socialist and nationalist movements. In the final decades of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century, Galicia was witness to the birth of mass politics complete with political parties, street demonstrations, and acute electoral struggle.<sup>26</sup>

The scale of changes is most noticeable in terms of demographic development, which in the nineteenth century was the *sine qua non* of socio-economic transformation. The population of Galicia under Habsburg rule was constantly growing: from 3.3 million in 1785 to 7.9 million in 1910. However, the quantitative turning point occurred in the mid-nineteenth century: whereas between 1785 and 1851 the population grew by 39 percent, between 1851 and 1910 this indicator had already reached 72 percent.<sup>27</sup> This growth was primarily the result of the gradual retreat into the past of Malthusian mechanisms of control over the size of the population: epidemics and famines. The last great period of natural catastrophes—the so-called “difficult years” (the 1840s and 1850s)—which were marked by poor harvests and a cholera epidemic,<sup>28</sup> may be considered a kind of watershed in the history of this land. Although there was still disease and hunger in subsequent years, these events no longer had such painful consequences.<sup>29</sup> The very structure of reproducing the population was changing as a result of the switch from high to low indicators of population replenishment (births and deaths). The main source of growth was becoming the reduction in mortality, thanks to improved sanitary conditions and nutrition and the spread of education, changes that are usually called civilizational.<sup>30</sup>

The demographic boom, combined with the spread of consumerist moods, was leading to inevitable changes in agriculture. The disproportion between the population and its needs, on the one hand, and the possibility

of satisfying them, on the other, was chipping away at the old method of extensive farming, forcing it to give way to intensive methods. Historians prefer the term “post-traditional” to describe this new type of rural society, in which tradition coexisted with changes—sometimes competitively, sometimes harmoniously.<sup>31</sup>

One can include the main strata of Galician society during the final decades of the nineteenth century in the camp of “tradition” only with certain reservations, for both the Christian village and the Jewish shtetl were becoming increasingly subject to modernizing influences. It is tempting to accept the theory that the Galicia of the mid-nineteenth century and the Galicia at the turn of the century were two different societies.<sup>32</sup> To many Galicians, the old world appeared to be tottering. In the 1870s and 1880s texts appeared whose authors were writing—some with trepidation, others with joy—about the prospect of the disappearance, within one or two generations, of the main social groups of Galician society: local landowners, Ruthenian peasants, and Galician Jews.<sup>33</sup> Even if these predictions were not correct, they still say much about the state of that society. Torn from their customary ways, masses of Galicians were being forced to master new social roles.

### **Galicia as a Source of Geopolitical Conflict**

Galicians were seeking answers to difficult questions, and geopolitical circumstances were turning those quests into fateful ones for the population of all of Eastern Europe. In the relations between the Austrian / Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires, Galicia acquired particular importance, primarily thanks to its triple borderland status: political, ethnic, and religious. From the perspective of political history, in various periods the lands of Galicia were the borderlands of a number of great states.<sup>34</sup> During the early Middle Ages they formed the western borderland of Kyivan Rus, the northern borderland of the Kingdom of Hungary, and (probably) the eastern borderland of Great Moravia. From the fourteenth century until 1772, Galicia—the “Ruthenian land”—was under Polish crown rule. The borderland status of the Galician lands was interrupted twice: the first time, when it was the heart of the Principality of Galicia during the eleventh to twelfth centuries, and later, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia, which arose out of the unified western and southern borderlands of Kyivan Rus. The official Austrian name of the

land, “Königreich Galizien und Lodomerien,” came from the Latin version of the name of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia. At the peak of its power the rule of the Galician-Volhynian princes reached south to the Black Sea, and for some time they even controlled Kyiv. Local princes intermarried with the Polish and Hungarian kings. Therefore, when the Galician dynasty died out in 1340, Galicia became the object of wars between the former and the latter for the right to rule over it. The victors were the Polish kings.

But the fact that for a short time Galicia belonged to the Hungarian crown of St. Stephen allowed the Habsburgs, as the heirs to this crown, to demand the annexation of Galicia to its domains in 1772. The western part of the Austrian “Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria” comprised Little Poland, which was the nucleus of the Kingdom of Poland but never formally a part of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia. The discrepancy between historical right and the newly established borders was also complicated by the fact that until 1917 Volhynia, the other part of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia (the mysterious “Lodomeria” in the official title of this land) was under the rule of the Russian emperors after the partitions of the *Rzeczpospolita*.

For a certain period of time, the fate of the newly annexed lands was uncertain. On the eve of the first partition of Poland (1772), there was a possibility that the country would come under the rule of the Russian Empire. In 1767, Lviv was occupied by Russian troops, and from 1769 there was a Russian garrison permanently stationed in the city. The Russian empress Catherine II opposed Vienna’s claims to these lands, believing that because of her title of “autocrat of all Rus lands,” she had no less right to them than Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, who initially showed no particular interest in the legacy of the *Rzeczpospolita*. The interests of the Holy Roman Empire, as the Habsburg monarchy was known at the time, were aimed at the west and the south: the German lands, Italy, and the Balkans. Maria Theresa annexed the future Galicia in the hope that it would be possible to bargain with Frederick II, the king of Prussia, and exchange it for Silesia, which was forfeited in the early part of the eighteenth century. This did not happen. Throughout the entire nineteenth century, however, Habsburg rule over Galicia carried the stigma of temporariness: whenever an international crisis erupted, the specter of Russian reannexation would appear.

The wars with revolutionary France led to a rapprochement among the three monarchies—Austria, Russia, and Prussia—that had participated

in the partition of the Rzeczpospolita. During the “Spring of Nations” in 1848–1849, when an anti-Habsburg revolution exploded in Hungary, the Russian tsar Nicholas I provided assistance to the young Franz Josef, and the dispatched troops crossed Galicia. In the second half of the nineteenth century such a situation—the passage of troops of one ally through the territory of another—could not be imagined: even military maneuvers in the adjacent Russian gubernias were taken as a manifestation of hostile intentions. Subsequently, the Habsburgs and the Romanovs managed to normalize their mutual relations, but rather within the framework of a “cold peace” that was characterized by mutual distrust and suspicion.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Galicia was the second—after the Balkans—source of tensions between Vienna and St. Petersburg. Its problematic geopolitical status was a reverberation of events that had taken place in the Russian Empire. There, the failure of the Polish uprising of 1863–1864 and the wave of anti-Polish repressions stemming from the revolt forced local Polish patriots to move the center of their activities to Austrian Galicia. The relations between the Polish educated classes and Vienna then underwent a clear-cut evolution from conflict to compromise. After a number of anti-Habsburg uprisings took place during the Napoleonic Wars—in 1846 and in the revolution of 1848—in the 1860s the Galician Polish elites declared their loyalty to the Austrian emperor.

The point of reconciliation was the designation of Galicia as an autonomous territory in 1867. Under the conditions of the supremacy of the Polish aristocracy, Galician autonomy automatically meant Polish autonomy. Hereafter, the Poles comprised the majority in the local administrative apparatus, including the highest rungs, and the post of minister of Galicia without portfolio was created in Vienna. In addition, the new Constitution of 1867 guaranteed equal rights to all the officially recognized nations in the empire, in particular the right to use one’s native language in schools, state institutions, and public life. In an effort to encourage the empire’s subjects to engage in civic activity, the authors of the charter also granted them broad personal freedoms. In these new circumstances, the Polish national movement looked upon Galicia as its “national Piedmont,” a territory where, according to the analogy with Italy, the unification of all ethnic Polish lands into a single national state was to commence.<sup>35</sup>

The Ukrainian movement in the Russian Empire imitated these same models. The Russian government perceived Ukrainian nationalism as a “Polish intrigue.” As a result, in 1863 and 1876 it issued two special *ukases*

that reduced to a minimum the sphere of the public use of the Ukrainian language. These ukases arrested Ukrainian nation building in the Russian Empire for many years; at the same time, they were the reason the center of national life was moved to the “Ukrainian Piedmont” of Austrian Galicia.<sup>36</sup>

The period of autonomy in the history of Galicia (1867–1914) was marked by the founding of Polish and Ukrainian political and cultural organizations, the rise of mass publications in the national language—the burgeoning of everything that was banned or restricted in the Russian Empire. In addition, Galicia’s proximity to the Russian territories transformed it into a convenient location for transactions in funds, arms, and the press for Russian revolutionaries. The Russian authorities viewed the events unfolding in Galicia as the malicious nurturing of hostile political movements. Vienna was equally suspicious of the local Russophile movement, in which it perceived Russian perfidy. Tension in the relations between the two empires peaked in the prewar decades. In the atmosphere of mutual suspicion and distrust, St. Petersburg treated even such an innocent matter as the opening of a Ukrainian university in Lviv as a *casus belli*. It is no wonder, then, that with the onset of the First World War the Russian command chose Galicia as its first target of attack.<sup>37</sup>

The Austro-Russian conflict was exacerbated by the hostility between the local Poles and Ruthenians. Two essential distinctions separated the Ruthenian camp from the Polish one. First of all, the Ruthenians did not have their own aristocracy; therefore, their political influence could not even come close to that wielded by the Galician Poles. Suffice it to say that until the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy, not a single Ruthenian attained a high position in the local administration. Second, in contrast to the Polish elites, educated Ruthenians suffered from a national identity crisis. They were divided into Ukrainophile, Russophile, and Polonophile orientations; the competition among them was an essential part of the history of the national renaissance of the Galician Ruthenians in 1830 to 1914.<sup>38</sup> The ultimate victor in this confrontation was the Ukrainian movement. On the eve of the First World War, its political opponents from the Polish national camp were talking about the “Ukrainian conquest” of Galicia and predicting for the Galician Poles the fate of the English in Ireland and the Germans in the Czech lands and Silesia.<sup>39</sup> Consequently, the end of the First World War and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire marked the beginning of the Polish–Ukrainian War (1918–1919). In 1920, Galicia became one of the main theaters of the Polish–Soviet War, during which

the Ukrainian Galician Socialist Republic was established. The Paris Peace Settlement of 1923 decided the fate of this land when it placed it under the control of the restored Polish state.<sup>40</sup>

The example of Galicia as the source of conflicts between opposing imperialisms and nationalisms may serve as an illustration of the enduring historical tendency that related equally to both the eastern borderlands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the western borderlands of the Russian Empire and, in a broader sense, to the entire Eurasian space. The geographical particularities of Eurasia—immense territories without clear-cut internal divisions—led to constant debates and confrontation with regard to political and ethnic borders. It has been said that there are few regions in the world where the creation of empires, states, and nations is marked so strongly by ambivalence as here.<sup>41</sup>

### **Galicia as an Ethnic and Civilizational Borderland**

Austrian Galicia was an artificial creation of the Habsburgs, rooted neither in history nor geography. It was not an island or even a peninsula separated from the rest of the world by oceans. That which could be called natural borders—the Vistula, Buh, Prut, and Zbruch rivers—comprised only a small part of its borders. To the south, it was separated from the Pannonian Plain by the Carpathian Mountains—the southern border of Kyivan Rus and of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia, and later of the Polish Kingdom and the Rzeczpospolita—beyond which stretched the lands of the Crown of St. Stephen. However, these picturesque but low mountains could not serve as a reliable line of defense against invaders. From prehistoric times until the two World Wars, numerous large armies had crossed them. In more peaceful times, traders and smugglers transported their goods over the Carpathian ridges, as well as migrant workers and peasants fleeing hunger.

Historians speak of the existence on the western border of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia of a belt of unpopulated forestland that served as a natural and stable ethnic boundary between the Western and Eastern Slavs, the later Poles and Ukrainians.<sup>42</sup> The irony is that this line of forests—or at least what remained of it in the nineteenth century—transected the middle of Austrian Galicia. In any case, in the past this forest line could not prevent the mass migration of Poles, Germans, and Jews from the West.

The population of this territory consisted of two larger groups, Poles and Ruthenians (roughly 40–45 percent each), and a Jewish minority

(nearly 10–12 percent: see table 1).<sup>43</sup> In the eastern part, Ruthenians (later Ukrainians) comprised a clear majority—65 percent—while the Polish population reached nearly 20 percent and the Jews nearly 10 percent. Ethnic distinctions coincided with social ones. In Eastern Galicia landowners were Poles almost without exception, peasants were mostly Ruthenians, and Jews were the intermediaries between the former and the latter: tavern keepers, traders, and leaseholders. This triangle was supplemented by the figure of a German or German-speaking bureaucrat, who was usually an ethnic Czech.<sup>44</sup> There were also settlements of German colonists scattered throughout Galicia, and Lviv was home to a small Armenian minority that by the nineteenth century had almost completely assimilated into the Polish community.

Of course, the concurrence of ethnic and social distinctions was not absolute. If all of Galicia is considered, not just its eastern part, then peasants comprised the majority of the Polish population. However, they could be regarded as Poles only conditionally: they called themselves “Masurians,” and during the Polish uprising of 1846 they took the side of the Habsburg rulers, helping to arrest, and often execute, Polish rebels. There were also many Poles among such urban population groups as tradesmen, merchants, workers, members of the free professions, and bureaucrats. Apart from the peasantry, the Ruthenians included a sizeable stratum comprised of the Greek Catholic clergy. For a lengthy period of time this was the only educated group, which is why the Ruthenians were called a nation of “peasants and priests.” This situation began to change in the final decades of the nineteenth century with the appearance of a secular intelligentsia. Burghers formed a small proportion of the Ruthenian population. The fairly sizable petty gentry was a distinctive legacy of the *Rzeczpospolita*, and in Eastern Galicia many of its members were of Ruthenian background.

The Jewish community quickly became differentiated under the impact of the reforms of the 1860s, which abolished the old feudal restrictions and prohibitions concerning Jews. Most Jews belonged to urban poor, even if they were traders or craftsmen. The upper crust consisted of the families of Orthodox rabbis and Hasidic *tzadiks*. The wealthier and educated Jews tested out new roles as landowners, entrepreneurs, and members of the free professions. A considerable number of them assimilated into the local German or Polish and, less often, Ruthenian milieus.<sup>45</sup>

Usually, the population was more homogeneous in villages and in the western part of Galicia than in cities and in the eastern part. The most

densely settled and diverse part was the territory stretching along the continental trade route from the west to the east through Cracow, Przemyśl, and Lviv, all the way to the Austro-Russian border. In medieval and early modern times, this route was the axis around which turned the entire European economic network; during Austrian rule, its Galician branch was transforming into a main trading link connecting the large cities of the Habsburg and Romanov monarchies.<sup>46</sup> Along it huge waves of migrants trekked to Galicia from the west and east. Areas along both sides of this route developed thanks to local human resources. For that reason, the population there was more homogeneous.<sup>47</sup>

There was a much larger Jewish presence in Eastern Galicia: in 1881 Jews comprised 13.4 percent of the population, compared to 8 percent in Western Galicia. In addition, Western Galician Jews were concentrated in counties bordering on the eastern part of Galicia, nearly all of them living in cities, while the Jews of Eastern Galicia were settled in more or less equal proportions in all counties, many living in villages. Another characteristic feature was the predominantly Jewish population in cities in the eastern part of Galicia, for example, Kolomyia or the border city of Brody.<sup>48</sup> The cities and districts of Subcarpathia were the main areas colonized by Germans (the so-called Carpathian Germans). As concerns the autochthonous population, there was a “Mazur colonization of Rus,” that is, Eastern Galicia [ZT 44/1:401–3],<sup>49</sup> but there was no Ruthenian colonization of Western Galicia: official statistics indicate the existence in 1881 of several western counties where there lived not a single Ruthenian-speaking Galician and no more than ten Greek Catholics. Meanwhile, in the eastern part, there was not a single county where the number of Polish-speaking Galicians or Roman Catholics was less than a thousand.<sup>50</sup>

Galicia, especially its eastern part, was likened to the Tower of Babel. Until the last third of the nineteenth century the official language was German, knowledge of which was a stepping-stone to a career. In addition, it was considered the language of “high culture,” the most suitable one for communication among educated people. In 1869 the official language of the territory became Polish, which began increasingly to penetrate the spheres where German had reigned supreme before. Bureaucrats were required to know a Slavic language in order to communicate with the local population. Therefore, a substantial number of Habsburg functionaries were Czechs, who found it easier to understand the local Poles and Ruthenians. As a result, Galicia “was covered with Czechs, like ants.”<sup>51</sup>

Knowledge of French or English was a sign of good manners. With the aid of the French language, particularly in the first decades of Austrian rule, the Polish educated strata shielded themselves from Germanization,<sup>52</sup> while local aristocrats resorted to English whenever they wanted to emphasize their social superiority not only to the German bureaucrat but also to the Polish burgher or petty nobleman. According to the calculations of the Lviv journalist Jan Lam (1838–1886), in addition to the four main languages—German and the three territorial languages (Ruthenian-Ukrainian, Polish, and Yiddish)—Galicians also used linguistic borrowings from twelve other languages: Latin, Romanian, Hungarian, Armenian, French, Czech, Old Church Slavonic, Russian, Italian, English, and even Turkish and Arabic.<sup>53</sup> The local Ruthenian intelligentsia used Russian words whenever there was a need to compensate for the lack of abstract and modern terms in the underdeveloped Ruthenian literary language.<sup>54</sup> This only added to the general confusion. In the 1850s, the son of the famous Ruthenian poet Mykola Ustyianovych asked his father: “Tell me, Dad. What are we really? We think in German, we speak Polish, but how do we write?—in Russian!”<sup>55</sup>

One would think that Galician villages, with their homogeneous Ruthenian-Ukrainian or Polish populations, should have been free of this linguistic mish-mash. However, foreign words were even filtering into the countryside, thanks primarily to soldiers returning from military service who boasted to their fellow villagers about their “tsymbalizatsia” (that is, civilized nature), recounting how they had been summoned to the “befel” (Ger. *Befehl*—order), issued money for “klianigkaity” (Ger. *Kleinigkeit*—trifle), how they had a “roshtok” (Ger. *Rashtag*—day off), how they performed “shalvakh” (Ger. *Schildwache*—sentry duty), and how one “pazdiernik” (Pol.—October) they were served “flaish” with “knokhy” (Ger. *Fleisch mit Knochen*—meat with bones).<sup>56</sup>

Researchers of Galicia as a cultural borderland mostly focus on its linguistic and ethnic wealth. However, they overlook the fact that it was also—and perhaps most of all—a civilizational borderland, if by civilizational limits we mean the divisions among the world’s largest religions. Even in medieval times, the border between Poland and Rus played a special role in the divided Europe of that time: this was a border not only between neighboring states but also between Western and Eastern Christianity. In medieval Europe, there were few territories with this kind of structure.<sup>57</sup> The border inscribed these lands in larger religious spaces. One space united Galicia, as well as the neighboring Polish, Czech, and Hungarian

lands, with Catholic Europe. Another space led it into the world of Eastern Christianity, whose extreme limits after the fall of the Byzantine Empire moved dynamically eastward and northward together with the territorial expanse of the Grand Duchy of Moscow and the Russian Empire. A feeling of belonging to a huge religious space influenced the identity of the local population. It offered grounds for the population to think about itself in categories that were greater than regional, national, or even imperial identities.

Another consequence of the civilizational borderland was the difference in character and pace of modernization among the various ethnoreligious groups, a factor that merits a separate discussion. Historians of nationalism agree on how important book publishing and the emergence of readers' markets were for the formation of modern identities. The paucity of book production was long a characteristic feature of the Eastern Christian world. The selection of reading matter of an educated Eastern Christian in the sixteenth century was practically the same as three centuries earlier. With its insignificant range, it reproduced the library of an average monastery, sharply contrasting with the rich book production of the Western Christian world.<sup>58</sup> A comparison of the two Christian worlds on the threshold of modern nation building shows that the differences between them were more substantial than a simple disparity in numbers: whereas by the beginning of the seventeenth century nearly 200 million copies of various books had been printed in the West, in the Muscovite tsardom under the most optimal circumstances this indicator could not have exceeded 40,000 to 60,000 copies.<sup>59</sup> In the nineteenth century, the print production situation changed fundamentally. Particularly noteworthy is the dynamic growth of the book and journal market in the Russian Empire during the rule of Alexander II (1855–1881). But even in 1880, Russian book production had not reached the scale that German book publishing had reached before 1848, and in 1870 there were more bookstores in the Netherlands than in the Russian Empire.<sup>60</sup> According to statistics on the number of periodicals per capita in the Russian Empire in 1881, the Russians lagged behind local Swedes, Finns, Germans, and Poles (these statistics did not include Ukrainian and Belarusians, who, because of censorship restrictions, did not have their own national publications, although their educated strata read in Russian).

A considerable part of the responsibility for the backwardness in the publishing industry may be attributed to the Russian government,

particularly its harsh censorship policy. However, even in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, where censorship was milder and there were more political freedoms, the publishing activities of the Eastern Christian Ruthenians, Romanians, and Serbs lagged behind the Western Christian Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Croatians, and Slovenes (this dichotomy was disrupted in the case of the Slovaks, who were closer to the first group<sup>61</sup>; see table 4).

A hindering factor in the development of book printing and a readers' market was the population's low level of literacy. Again, among the Eastern Christian peoples, the literacy level was equally low both in the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires. In both countries they clearly lagged behind the Protestants, Jews, and Roman Catholics<sup>62</sup> (see tables 2 and 3). In Galicia the number of illiterate people increased going from west to east; the highest level of illiteracy was noted among the Ruthenians. The general tendency was that the larger the proportion of Ruthenians in a certain locale, the higher the level of illiteracy; in certain eastern counties it reached 90 percent.<sup>63</sup>

Differences between Western and Eastern Galicia and between the Polish and Ruthenian populations were also noticeable in the pace of demographic changes. In general, Galician Ruthenians joined the great demographic transformation at a later date; according to many indicators relevant to the traditional approach to population recreation (an extraordinarily low level of unmarried people among the adult population, very high birth and mortality rates), they were closer to the populations of the Balkans, Romania, and the Ukrainian gubernias of the Russian Empire than to Galician Poles.<sup>64</sup>

It is comparatively easy to reveal the "tangible" differences between the Eastern and Western Christian populations on the statistics level. However, it is difficult to explain and conceptualize them.<sup>65</sup> Yet these statistics clearly show the kinds of difficulties that Ruthenian-Ukrainian and other Eastern Christian national patriots encountered during the creation of a modern nation out of poorly educated peasants. Some scholars have confirmed a difference between the Ruthenian and non-Ruthenian population on a level that is no less "tangible" than education or mortality—mentality (this term fits very well here: at the very least, half of all Galician Ruthenians were illiterate and lived in the world of the oral tradition). Based on his twenty-year-long observations, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, wrote the following at the beginning of the twentieth century:

Although it may be difficult to believe this, the mentality of Easterners in general and Ruthenians in particular is “to follow the current.” This may be one of the qualities or one of the shortcomings of the race, still too weakly developed and primitive to have its own racial conceptions, practically innate ideas or mentalities, completely individual in their context, entirely different from all others and so widespread among the entire people that among thousands you will not find an individual capable of rising above these ideas; but nevertheless, as I imagine it, this is one of the chief characteristics of peoples that have been formed and developed by the civilizations of the East. There is something passive present in all the forms of these civilizations. Even in their activity the peoples of the East act as a single body, and separate individuals are almost never capable of thinking or acting in a way that is different from that body.<sup>66</sup>

Sheptytsky’s words assume even greater importance because they may be qualified as “a witness’ testimony against himself”: first of all, the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church treated his flock with sincere sympathy, and second, he traced the Ruthenians’ mentality from the ritual practices of the very church that he headed. The thesis about the existence of a separate “Eastern Christian cultural community” is shared by many historians of Eastern Europe. In the nineteenth century, this thesis was most conspicuous among the East Slavic (the later Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian) peasants. Their traditional culture was genetically connected with Eastern Christian eschatology. In many respects, it was foreign or even hostile to the modern culture of those East Slavic elites that were experiencing the impact of Westernization.<sup>67</sup> On the mass level, it was manifested in the vitality of the concept of Rus in the imagination of the millions of inhabitants of Central and Eastern Europe—a hazy definition of an East Slavic community whose members used Old Church Slavonic in their church practice, conversed in mutually comprehensible dialects, had a rudimentary historical memory of their common origins, and were conscious of their difference from Western Christians and Jews. Separate national identities began to emerge out of this large space only gradually, submitting to the centripetal influences of important cultural centers, such as Kyiv, Lviv, or Vilnius.<sup>68</sup>

There were several different variants of national identities corresponding to linguistic-cultural similarities and differences: the creation of a single East Slavic nation; the victory of assimilatory projects reinforced by the might of the state (Russian or Polish) apparatus; the consolidation

of separate national identities for the larger ethnic groups (Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Russians); or the emergence of mixed identities (for example, a common “Ruthenian” identity for Ukrainians and Belarusians).

On the territory of the immense polyethnic borderlands that comprised the eastern provinces of Austria-Hungary and the western provinces of the Russian Empire, the formation of one nation entailed the destruction of others. This is corroborated, in particular, by the historical experience of the formation of the modern Ukrainian nation, which was simultaneously destroying both the Russian and the Polish national projects.<sup>69</sup> Most researchers overlook the fact that the crucial prerequisite for the formation of modern nations in this region was the destruction of old sacred communities, such as “holy Rus.” As an anonymous Ukrainian socialist wrote in 1881, “Besides the three tribes—the Great Russians, Little Russians, Belarusians—there exists a fourth: the all-Ruthenians, something cheerless, a dense stratum that has covered the people’s Rus, the national Rus, the tribal Rus.”<sup>70</sup>

Like many other borderland regions, Galicia had the special privilege of playing a great role in the articulation of new identities.<sup>71</sup> In opting for one variant or another, it was not a question simply of language or historical memory, the main elements of national identity. The chances for victory of each of the national projects were determined not least of all by the social program that it proposed to the Ruthenian peasantry, the most numerous stratum of the potential nation, in accordance with those new conditions that were formed under the influence of modernizing pressure on the traditional society.

In the final analysis, success would be achieved by the individual who succeeded in overcoming the cultural abyss that separated the mostly semi-literate Eastern Christian population from the secularized and Westernized elite. This was a challenge for those Ruthenian patriots who, in contrast to seekers of an easier and more secure life, did not emigrate but remained in that land—people like Ivan Franko.



## Chapter 2

# The Riddles of His Birth

Practically every biography of Ivan Franko begins with the fact that he was born into a Ukrainian peasant family on 27 August 1856 in the village of Nahuievychi, in the Sambir district (renamed Drohobych County in 1867).<sup>1</sup> Most of the components of the above statement are subject to various interpretations. It is not that Franko's birth is veiled in secrecy: it is simply that between the date of his birth (1856) and the appearance of his first biographies (the beginning of the twentieth century) lies an abyss between so-called traditional and modern societies.<sup>2</sup> These two societies each have their own cultural codes, and it is sometimes nearly impossible to express traditional concepts by means of contemporary nomenclature: much is lost in translation.

The difference between these two worlds is well illustrated by the Galician-Ruthenian saying, "In the village the stove is the doctor, and the pig is an astronomer." Franko commented on it thus: "The proverb is based on an anecdote about an astronomer who, while spending the night in a peasant's home, saw the latter healing himself by lying with his stomach against the hot stove; and after predicting from the stars that the weather would be nice during the night, ordered his bed to be made outside, although the peasant warned him that 'my pigs are forecasting rain,' and indeed, he was surprised by rain."<sup>3</sup>

If Franko, in the role of a "peasant," had to reply to the "astronomer" about the time and place of his birth, his reply could be approximately the following: "I was born in Sloboda (or on Viitivska Hora),<sup>4</sup> on the summer [feast] of [St.] John, right after the tense years." Such a reply would make sense and would convey some very important highlights of Franko's biography. In order to understand them, one must temporarily reject the astronomer's perspective and switch to the viewpoint of the rural inhabitant of Galician Subcarpathia in 1856.

## Between the Village and the City

The “city-village” dichotomy is fundamental to modernization theories. Urban development is treated as the quintessence of the modernizing process, and conversely, the success of the modernizing project is assessed according to how far urbanization has advanced.<sup>5</sup> This opposition between the city and the countryside had little relevance when and where Franko was born. This may be illustrated by the example of such a criterion as population size. In the mid-nineteenth century, this criterion, as the basis for classifying one populated area or another as a city, ranged from 2,000 people in Germany, Austria, France, and Ireland to 20,000 in the Netherlands. The general trend was such that in countries with a traditionally higher level of urbanization this indicator was higher. Until the mid-1850s, agrarian Eastern Europe—just like northern Sweden, Portugal in southwestern Europe, and Serbia in the Balkans—had the lowest level of urbanization, and therefore this criterion was lower there.<sup>6</sup>

Population size was a crucial but inadequate precondition for treating a populated area as a city. For example, near Nahuievychi, the town of Boryslav, which became one of the largest industrial centers of Galicia in the second half of the nineteenth century, with a population of around 10,000–12,000, had the hallmarks of a city, but according to the official nomenclature it was still considered a “village.”<sup>7</sup>

Prior to the twentieth century, urbanization cannot be represented as a continuous, ascending movement according to the formula “Up and up and up; On and on and on.” It had its highs and lows, which comprised cycles of demographic change and economic development. Extraeconomic factors, such as wars, epidemics, and administrative reforms, also played a role.<sup>8</sup> A particular feature of Eastern European urbanization in the nineteenth century was its weak link with industrialization. Cities developed or emerged, first and foremost, as administrative and trading centers, and rarely as industrial ones. On the other hand, even when peasants were lured to the city by industrial development, they were in no hurry to assimilate into the urban milieu, and thus it was not so much the case of cities “urbanizing” peasants as peasants “ruralizing” cities.<sup>9</sup>

Austrian Galicia was noted for its level of industrialization, which was low even by Central and Eastern European standards. Earlier, some administrative (county) centers did not have municipal rights and privileges, but were simply market settlements, and they were considered cities

only because a county court or some other administrative body was located there. Another marker of a city was the numerical strength of the Jewish community: Jews mostly earned a living not from agriculture but from trading and business, and if Jews comprised one-third of the residents of a populated area, then it was considered a city.<sup>10</sup>

However, Galician cities were generally distinguished by their high level of “ruralization.” In 1880, the number of rural inhabitants of Drohobych, a city located near Nahuievychi, who were engaged in agriculture stood at 15 percent; in neighboring Stryi 25 percent; and in Sambir as high as 40 percent. Therefore, when speaking about a city, one must specify which part of it is meant: the part that contained stone buildings and a city center paved with sidewalks, or the completely rural-looking suburbs with plots of land and straw-thatched houses.<sup>11</sup>

A consideration of these circumstances provides a better understanding of Nahuievychi’s various turning points. At the time of Franko’s birth his village was relatively large: in 1850 it had 2,238 residents, almost twice the population of the closest large villages of Popeli (1,307) and Tustanovychi (1,102).<sup>12</sup> In other words, it resembled a city at least in terms of the criterion of numerical strength. The village consisted of three parts: Nyzhni Nahuievychi (1,240 people), Verkhni Nahuievychi (912), and the small hamlet of Sloboda (86), where Franko was actually born. In the seventeenth century, Verkhni Nahuievychi was granted the Magdeburg Law, which was given to cities. It had a reeve—an office that was held for life by a nobleman, just as in large cities. The name of one of the sections of the village—*Bazar*—indicates that there had been permanent marketplaces in this area. Other names—*Valy* and *Vorota*—indicate that access to Nahuievychi had once been protected by fortifications. Documents and various local legends, some of which were recorded by Ivan Franko, also attest to the fact that there was once a fortified castle there. Most likely, Franko’s house was located near the castle, traces of which had survived to Franko’s day: in the 1870s his stepfather dug up quite a few bricks at the site of the former fortification wall.<sup>13</sup>

In the case of Nahuievychi, several important city-building factors were at work. The first was communication. A city’s mission is to connect the population of a certain territory with the surrounding world in order to provide nearby residents with an opportunity to take advantage of all the benefits afforded by the economic specialization of their region.<sup>14</sup> Nahuievychi stood on a beaten track that was part of an old trade route

along which the local salt—the main cargo of medieval times—was transported. The village was situated practically in between two historic cities—sixteen kilometers from Drohobych and twenty-four kilometers from Sambir. This is precisely the standard distance between two medieval cities: one day's journey. Peasants from the surrounding villages could make a trip into a city and return home in a day, while burghers or merchants could reach another city by nightfall.<sup>15</sup>

One of the oldest saltworks in all of Subcarpathia was located in Nahuievychi. It may have existed in the times of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia. As an urbanizing factor, saltworks either intensified industrial-trading activity in ancient towns or led to the founding of new cities. In the case of Nahuievychi, they created a logical chain: freedom of industrial activity was not contemplated beyond the city, and the city was outside Magdeburg Law. Historians believe that Nahuievychi ultimately did not become a city because of opposition from some residents, who objected to the extension of municipal (Magdeburg) rights to the entire village because this would signify the imposition on them of the *corvée* and other obligations with regard to the reeve. Thus, the authorities were satisfied by the creation of pseudo-Magdeburg Law.<sup>16</sup> By the time the Rzeczpospolita's Ruthenian lands were annexed to the Habsburg monarchy, the local salt industry was in decline, and by 1818 the official excavation of salt-producing sites was completely halted. However, local peasants continued to boil salt illegally for their own needs and to sell it until the Second World War.<sup>17</sup>

At the very moment that the salt-producing industry was going into decline, another type of industry began developing in Nahuievychi: oil extraction. The oil industry became a powerful city-building factor everywhere, and Austrian Galicia was transformed into one of the largest centers of oil extraction in the world.<sup>18</sup> Nahuievychi was known for its oil fields, and by the end of the eighteenth century it had become a center of oil extraction. According to some accounts, a local peasant with the surname of Baitala (first name unknown) discovered a method for distilling oil. However, until the mid-nineteenth century the oil that was extracted and processed here did not command a ready market.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, local oil extraction never turned into large-scale production, and Nahuievychi did not become a city. When the economic situation changed and oil extraction became an extremely lucrative industry, other surrounding villages, like Boryslav, Tustanovychi, and Skhidnytsia, overtook Nahuievychi. Attempts

in the 1890s to launch oil extraction in Nahuievychi encountered opposition from the local peasants, who were alarmed by the fate that had befallen the residents of Boryslav: almost everyone lost their lands and became either beggars or oil workers.<sup>20</sup>

In the case of Nahuievychi, neither of the above-mentioned urbanizing factors—geographical advantage or local industries—ever came to fruition. At the time of Franko's birth, memories of Nahuievychi's semiurban status had faded. A geographical description from 1858 lists information about Galicia's most important cities and villages, but Nahuievychi is not even mentioned.<sup>21</sup> The fact that Nahuievychi never became a city was an accident, not the result of "natural" development. What may be regarded as such is the fact that in the 1850s, when Franko was born, a new and unprecedented cycle of urbanization had begun in Galicia and everywhere else in Europe. Proceeding at various rates, it took nearly a whole century—until the mid-1950s—for urbanization to reach the same level in Western and Eastern Europe. In 1910 urban residents of Austrian Galicia comprised 19.8 percent of the population, which corresponded more or less to the urbanization level of most Western countries before the 1850s. One can speak of noteworthy changes only toward the end of the nineteenth century, and even then they concerned such large cities as Lviv and Cracow.<sup>22</sup> Most Galician cities were townlets, which some historians tend to regard as a separate historicocultural type: "This kind of Galician town was still semirural, submerged—and this is important—in the local landscape.... That type of local community could not arise without places of public assembly that are offered by a city, but also without contact with the land, its landscape, the local color of the landscape, from which a large and even medium-sized city cuts off its inhabitant."<sup>23</sup>

In Austrian Galicia, the differences between the city and the village did not automatically mean distinctions between modernity and tradition. To a certain extent this concerned even the capital city of Lviv, where during Franko's youth a significant proportion of the population (42.8 percent in 1880)<sup>24</sup> could neither read nor write—that is, it lived in the world of oral tradition, one of the hallmarks of a traditional society.<sup>25</sup> A peasant by birth could move to the city, yet remain within the bounds of the traditional world without radically changing his lifestyle and way of thinking. This hampered social modernization, because the traditional society's resistance to the challenges of the modern world had to be broken not only in villages but also in cities. On the other hand, it changed the character

of the modernizing changes, refocusing them from objective processes (of industrialization, almost nonexistent in Galicia, and of urbanization, which was very belated there) to subjective processes: the transformation of mental structures that could be experienced without even leaving the village by virtue of people joining reading rooms, cooperatives, and other rural organizations.

### The Son of Peasants?

Ivan Franko was born in a village, but this fact did not make him a peasant.<sup>26</sup> Besides peasants, at least seven other social strata were found in Galician villages: landowners, petty gentry, artisans, Jews, German colonists, state bureaucrats, and priests.<sup>27</sup> The social diversity of the rural world was thoroughly reflected in the folklore that the young Franko collected in Nahuievychi and surrounding areas. Among the depicted characters are members of the nobility (lord, petty noble), officialdom (assignee, reeve, scribe), members of the free professions (lawyer, physician), as well as artisans (blacksmith, shoemaker, painter, miller), priests, Jews, gypsies, rural bandits (*opryshky*: brigands), soldiers, and beggars.<sup>28</sup>

Ivan Franko's father was a blacksmith. Mass consciousness clearly differentiated between a blacksmith and a tiller of the soil. "He who has no plow is not a tiller. He who has no hammer is not a blacksmith," as folk wisdom had it. Another topic that was reflected in proverbs about blacksmiths was their greater financial security. Within a community there could be masters of all trades, who, in a pinch, could perform blacksmithing duties ("And a blacksmith, and a shoemaker, a tailor, and a piper"). But there were specific types of blacksmithing in which no one could supplant the blacksmith—for example, shoeing horses. Only a blacksmith who had completed a special trade school had the right to shoe a horse. ("An ignoramus that shoes horses spoils them.")<sup>29</sup> Franko portrayed his father in many of his works: in one, he mentions that Yakiv—or to be more exact, the principal hero who was endowed with his character traits—had the right to shoe horses [ZT 19:192]. In another work he writes that he "served for three years in Drohobych with Moroz, a famous blacksmith and longtime guild master" [ZT 22:231].

Thanks to the father's trade, the Franko family was well-to-do.<sup>30</sup> Their property consisted of twenty-four *morgs* (one morg equaled approximately one acre), while the largest land holdings in Nahuievychi rarely reached

twenty morgs [ZT 44/1:79–80]. The family had several hired servants. The dimensions and appearance of Franko’s house indicated the family’s affluent status:<sup>31</sup> all those who visited Franko later recalled that it was a large building owned by a wealthy man.<sup>32</sup>

The Franko house was situated in the hamlet of Sloboda, which was founded in 1779 right next to Nahuievychi.<sup>33</sup> The Franko family moved to Sloboda from the neighboring village of Ozymyna in 1824, after buying a house and outbuildings from a local man.<sup>34</sup> Ivan Franko believed that his father’s side of the family was descended from Ruthenianized German colonists [ZT 31:29], and for that reason he had a “little bit of German” in him [ZT 48:370]. This conviction was shared by many of his friends.<sup>35</sup> The recollections of Franko’s German background did not fade after his death. Well-wishers associated his German heritage with such traits as free-thinking, punctuality, and his methodical nature, while his detractors pointed out his superior attitude to other Ukrainians and their culture (“That descendant of a German emigrant does not like the Ruthenian race”; he “is not an ordinary Rusyn but a ‘höhere deutsche Kultur!’”).<sup>36</sup> In one story, Franko writes that his father’s great-grandfather was a pure-blooded German, who was brought to Galicia in the early years of Austrian rule [ZT 19:193]. If this detail is accepted as confirmation of his German background, then it is very likely that Franko was mistaken at least with regard to the date.<sup>37</sup> Roman Horak, the scrupulous researcher of Franko’s genealogy, has confirmed that by the time the Habsburgs began to rule Galicia, Franko’s family had already been living there for a long time and considered itself Ruthenian. Birth records for the village of Ozymyna attest to the fact that Teodor (Fed) Franko, Franko’s great-grandfather, baptized all his children in a Greek Catholic church, not in a Roman Catholic one, as befitted a German colonist. The Franko family supplied a steady stream of godfathers and godmothers, a clear indication that the members of this family were not cut off from their fellow villagers by religious or cultural barriers.<sup>38</sup>

The Franko surname points to the nonnative origins of his family.<sup>39</sup> The etymology of the Franko surname is not Slavic: it derives from the Latin *Francus* < *Franciscus*, the Roman name for one of the Germanic tribes, which later evolved into “Frantz / Frank,”<sup>40</sup> while the name itself, as often happens, formed the basis of the surname.<sup>41</sup> All the Frankos throughout history (including El Caudillo, as General Francisco Franco of Spain called himself) came from the Roman Catholic space.<sup>42</sup> In Galicia this name was especially common among so-called *latynnyky*—that is, Roman Catholics

who had assimilated into the local Ruthenian milieu without abandoning their faith. In adopting the Ruthenian language, they generally did not assume Ruthenian names. Therefore, there were rarely Mykhailos or Ivans among them, but many Frankos, Wojtechs, Cazimirs, and Wladyslaws.<sup>43</sup>

German colonization of Galicia began no earlier than the thirteenth century and continued until the Second World War. Before 1772, the main centers of the German language in Galicia were Lviv and rural Subcarpathia. German colonists usually settled in Galicia in compact groups and lived in considerable isolation from the inhabitants of neighboring villages, creating amid the non-German majority small islands that differed from it not only in terms of language and religion but also in customs. While the German settlers were known as good, hardworking farmers, they were also viewed by their Ruthenian neighbors as lacking in “normal” human traits, such as gaiety, generosity, and hospitality. They called themselves “farmers” or “colonists,” but considered the word “peasant” a derogatory term that they applied to Ruthenians and Poles.

At times, mutual alienation led to outbursts of violence. For example, in the vicinity of Drohobych in the 1880s, some German colonists from Neuendorf, armed with cudgels, beat a group of Ruthenian peasants who were going to their houses to sing Christmas carols. However, if the families of the colonists settled among Ruthenian or Polish families, they quickly assimilated, married locals, and adopted their language and customs.<sup>44</sup> So it is not surprising that the Frankos, who comprised a clear minority in Nahuievychi (as they had earlier in Ozymyna) lost all their signs of foreignness, except for their surname. In general, the “medieval” waves of colonization assimilated easily, while the Germans who arrived in Galicia after 1772 often could not assimilate into the Greek Catholic or Roman Catholic milieu because they were Protestants. In addition, they already had a developed network of cultural societies, schools, agricultural associations, and publications—everything that helped them to maintain their German identity.<sup>45</sup>

In any case, the example of Franko’s surname contradicts premature conclusions about the purely Ukrainian (Ruthenian) and peasant origins of his family.<sup>46</sup> It was a rural, not peasant, Ruthenian family, but mostly likely not of indigenous background, the product of long-standing assimilation into the Eastern Christian milieu.

The maternal side of Franko’s family was not of peasant origin either. It was descended from the Kulchytskys (Kulczyckis), a large, ancient noble family that had produced Yurii Kulchytsky (Jerzy Kulczycki), the hero of

the 1683 Siege of Vienna and the founder of one of the first—but not the very first—cafés in Europe.<sup>47</sup> We know much less about Franko's matrilineal family line than about the patrilineal one. Franko's grandfather died before the birth of his grandson. Franko's grandmother was Ludwika Kulczycka from Yasenytsia Silna, a wealthy, widowed noblewoman with six children.<sup>48</sup> The chances of being born into a noble, nonpeasant, family in Galicia were quite high. The Polish Commonwealth was renowned for its excessively high number of nobles, whose proportion of the population hovered between 5 and 10 percent, reaching 16 percent before the partitions (this indicator rarely exceeded 1 or 2 percent in any country). The majority—approximately 75 percent in Austrian Galicia in the mid-nineteenth century—were petty noblemen with little property.<sup>49</sup> The petty nobility was particularly numerous in the Carpathian foothills region, where there were nearly 700 *zahorody*—separate settlements of petty noblemen within the bounds of villages. The main trends in the evolution of this social stratum were economic decline and gradual lowering of class status. Education was frequently an instrument: noble fathers, desiring to ensure a livelihood for their children, provided them with an education, thus paving the way for them to acquire new professions.

However, decline did not signify complete disappearance. As recently as the 1930s, the numerical strength of the Galician nobility stood at nearly half a million people.<sup>50</sup> The local nobility was generally an indigenous one, attested by the surnames of noble families, which were most often linked to the villages where these families resided: Berezhnytsky / Bereźnicki (from Berezhnytsia), Vysochansky / Wysoczański (from Vysotske), Zubrytsky / Zubrycki (from Zubrytsia), Ilnytsky / Ilnicki (from Ilnyk), Korchynsky / Korczyński (from Korchyn), Krushelnytsky / Kruszelnicki (from Krushelnytsia), Chaikovsky / Czajkowski (from Chaikovychi), and so on. Franko's mother's family, the Kulchytskys (Pol. Kulczycki), came from the village of Kulchytsi in the Sambir district. Besides Yurii Kulchytsky, this village was the birthplace of the Ukrainian Cossack hetman, Petro Konashevych-Sahaidachny.<sup>51</sup>

The petty nobility is known by a variety of names: *malozemel'na* (Ukr., owning little land); *chodackowa* (the “sandal-nobility,” from the Pol. *chodak* (Ukr. *khodak*), the moccasin-style footwear that was frequently worn by poor noblemen); *okoliczna* (local nobility); *zagonowa* (hide nobility); *zagrodowa* (noble smallholders); *zahuminkova* (Ukr., from the word *zahuminok*, meaning “a place beyond the threshing floor”); and *zaściankowa* (neighborhood

nobility). Its origins were diverse. Some petty noblemen were the descendants of once-wealthy but now impoverished local (Ruthenian) noble families, while others belonged to the petty Catholic nobility, which, together with the Polish *Drang nach Osten*, had settled in Subcarpathia. Some noble families were descended from peasants who had been granted noble status by Ruthenian and Lithuanian princes and Polish kings for particular services. Others simply purchased this status for themselves or obtained it by legal or nefarious means.<sup>52</sup> The petty nobility enjoyed de jure certain privileges, as well as a nobiliary title that was equivalent to the magnates' ("A nobleman on a farm is the equal of a palatine"). The members of the petty nobility were de facto the clients of wealthy magnates, at whose hands they often endured oppression and abuse. A nobiliary title did not automatically signify wealth: in terms of the size of their properties, the local rural nobility did not differ significantly from the peasantry. In Nahuievychi, there was a proverb about the nobility: "A nobleman says: 'I have three full barns: one contains poppies, the same in the second, and in the third one a mouse got tired out before it found the seed'" [ZT 26:183].

However, the nobility cultivated the idea that it was distinct from the ordinary peasantry, tracing its origins to the biblical Japheth and those of the peasantry to Ham. At one time this distinction was reflected in terms of the legal status: noblemen did not perform the *corvée* for a landowner or other obligations. After the abolition of serfdom in 1848, the nobility maintained its otherness through its customs, clothing, and manners at home or in public—even in language: noblemen used Polish words or foreign words borrowed via the Polish language.<sup>53</sup> In Yasenytsia Silna, people recounted the story of a beggar woman named Bachynska (Pol. Baczyńska), who was a widowed noblewoman: she went around begging, covered in rags and tatters. But she did not forgo her noble arrogance. She would enter someone's house, but unlike any other woman, who would say a few words with humility, she would sit down on the bench. And woe betide the housewife who said to her: "What's going on, Mrs. Bachynska?" Well, well, she would give such a tongue-lashing to the housewife that the latter would become totally befuddled. "You, so-and-so! Don't you know who I am? Although I'm dressed in rags, I am a gracious lady!" And never give her, like to another woman, a piece of bread or something—she'll throw it back in your face. But as soon as you place a small dish of some warm food in front of her or put some flour or some kind of grain in her bag, only then will she chat a bit and then leave [ZT 26:183].

The difference between the rural nobility and the peasants was particularly revealed in the former's attitude of superiority, or occasionally hostility, to the ordinary peasants. In 1863, the sandal-nobility in Yasenytsia Silna was perturbed by the news of another Polish uprising in the Russian Empire. "Hang on a bit [said one of the Yasenytsia noblemen]. It will not be that quick: the old days will return, once again we will be harnessing peasants for the plowing, peasants and their wives will be harrowing." According to a poem that was making the rounds of the village, the nobility was threatening to take revenge against the peasants for the "Mazurian massacre" of 1846. The last verse of this poem declared: "We will soon be stringing you up by your necks from hooks, and we will light a small lamp for your soul" [ZT 26:182].

It is surprising that Ludwika Kulczycka decided to marry her twenty-year-old daughter Maria to Yakiv Franko, a widowed peasant, who was fifty-three years old. Owing to the difference in their ages and social status, this marriage looked like an obvious "misalliance." As concerns the marriage conduct of the rural nobility, there are two markedly different views. On the basis of his own reminiscences and collected ethnographic materials, Ivan Franko asserted that "there is no division between the nobility and the peasants in matters pertaining to life: peasants marry noblewomen, noblemen (less frequently) marry peasant women" [ZT 26:181]. The opposite view is held by contemporary researchers of the petty nobility: the nobiliary tradition, they claim, strictly forbade marriages with peasant men and women. Such marriages were regarded as a huge disgrace for a nobleman or noblewoman.<sup>54</sup>

The truth lies somewhere in the middle. In general, nobles sought to enter into marriages with each other, and since strict observance of this rule would inevitably require marriages between close relatives, exceptions were permitted but were strictly regulated. This scheme of things is clearly illustrated by the entries recorded in the parish register of Yasenytsia Silna between 1785 and 1855—that is, up to the year in which the marriage between Yakiv Franko and Maria Kulchytska took place. Complete information about the statuses of fiancés and fiancées is listed in 216 entries for these years. In 183 cases these were marriages between peasants; nineteen others were between noblemen and noblewomen. There are only three entries (1830, 1831, and 1845) that record marriages between members of noble and nonnoble families. Out of three noble-peasant marriages, one case concerns the marriage between a nobleman and the daughter of the

village reeve; there is no data on the status of the families of the two other peasant women. It may be assumed that there were more cases like this because sometimes the records did not indicate the social status of at least one side. This is precisely the case regarding Yakiv's marriage to Maria: the social status of the fiancée is indicated by the word "noblewoman," yet there is nothing recorded about Yakiv Franko.<sup>55</sup>

The members of the sandal-nobility could marry outside their group, but only with families whose status they considered equal to their own. Equality was not measured in terms of wealth or privileges: among those whose status the nobility considered proximate to its own were people who, thanks to their capabilities, had somehow risen above others. Yakiv Franko was a rich blacksmith, who was known and respected throughout the county; therefore, he was "equal" to the nobility.<sup>56</sup> Obviously, there were enough grounds for Ludwika Kulczycka to select him as her son-in-law.

From the collective portrait of the Ruthenian nobility, researchers single out such traits as staunch individualism, stubbornness, independence, and resistance to external influences.<sup>57</sup> These traits are evident in Franko's character. Those who knew him recalled his spiritual aristocratism, confidence, courage, and sense of self. He seemed to say: "Step aside, here I come." In their opinion, these were the traits of a person that had never experienced the *corvée*.<sup>58</sup> Franko inherited these traits from his mother. In one of his poems dedicated to her, he wrote that he got his proud soul from her [ZT 2:167].

Many decades after Franko left his birthplace and became famous, members of the local nobility regarded him as "one of them," a nobleman. They felt group pride in his successes and refused to acknowledge him as a "rural poet": "It was the devil who shoved all that stuff into that red head. Eh, if old [Ludwika—Y. H.] would rise up and hear!"<sup>59</sup> There is one more piece of incontrovertible proof of his nonrural origins. After the death of his father (1865) and his mother (1874), the orphaned Ivan, a gifted student, obtained quite a substantial scholarship from the Glowinski Fund,<sup>60</sup> which was awarded to children of the petty nobility; it would never have been given to Franko had he been a peasant.

Franko scholars argue about the nationality of his mother's family. Some claim that the family was Polish, while others note its Ukrainian ("Ruthenian") character.<sup>61</sup> A more detailed study of the history of the Kulczycki / Kulchytsky family militates against easy conclusions. The only thing that may be stated with certainty is that the identity of this family

was situational—that is, it depended on circumstances. The members of the Kulchytsky family who remained in the village assimilated into the local Ruthenian milieu. They spoke Ruthenian, sang Ruthenian songs (Franko states this clearly in his reminiscences about his mother), read Ruthenian-Ukrainian publications, became (like Ivan Hvozdetzky, his grandmother's brother) Greek Catholic priests, and the like. The other members of this family identified themselves with the “old” Rzeczpospolita to such an extent that they joined the Polish rebels, like Franko's uncle, Ivan Kulczycki, who died in 1863 at the age of twenty-one, during the Polish uprising against Russia.<sup>62</sup> Other members of the family adopted elements of Polish culture, but without political consequences. Aunt Koszycka, a distant relative of Franko's mother, with whom he lived when he was studying in Drohobych, attended Mass at a Greek Catholic church and a Roman Catholic church, sang Polish and Ruthenian songs, but argued with her husband only in Polish [ZT 21:171–72, 185].

Between the time serfdom was abolished and the First World War, members of the petty nobility filled the ranks of various political and national movements in the Austrian and Russian empires. A certain number identified themselves with Ukrainians. For example, in 1907 the Society of the Ruthenian Nobility in Galicia was founded in Sambir. Its goal was to improve the educational and economic situation of the hide nobility in the region. However, few nobles identified with the Ukrainian nation: the Ukrainian national movement struck them as too “democratic” (peasant), whereas they considered themselves the aristocracy.

Be that as it may, the idea that “Ivan Franko sprang blood and bone, with his ideas and ideals, out of the Ukrainian element” has little in common with real facts. Franko's identity, both social as well as national (“peasant” and “Ukrainian”), was not a product of his surroundings, but of his deliberate choice, which he made after he left Nahuievychi.

## Date and Name

The entry in the register recording Franko's birth indicates the date of 27 August 1856. To his school friend Karl Bandrivsky, Franko admitted that in fact he was born two days earlier. He was baptized on 27 August, and this was the date recorded by the priest. It was this date that crept into later official documents and biographies. The confusion around the different dates of his birth is not unusual for a traditional society: until the very end of its

existence (roughly the conclusion of the Second World War), the majority of people born in the countryside could only give their approximate age. They did not know the exact day they were born, and often not even the year. This was the case with Franko's father: Yakiv Franko's personal documents list as many as three different birth years—1798, 1802, and 1810. The explanation must be sought in one of the basic elements of the archaic world perception—the supremacy of the concept of cyclical time over linear time. The standard of that period was not the clock or wall calendars, but natural indicators (the sun, stars, change of season, the rooster's crow) or the order of church feast days and fasts. The church calendar was important for marking the time of a person's birth: in the countryside, people celebrated not birthdays but name days, the feast day of one's patron saint. Thus, the date of Franko's baptism is marked as his date of birth.

But this is not the only problem for Franko biographers. In the late 1870s and early 1880s, Franko wrote a series of autobiographical stories in which he depicted himself as a small village boy named Myron [*ZT* 15: 65–71; 22:35–52]. As is evident from these stories, in the family Franko was called Myron, not Ivan. The custom of giving two names to a child was not uncommon; it had existed in the Eastern Christian tradition since the adoption of Christianity. The names of two different saints were supposed to provide the child with double the protection. However, although the feast day of Myron the Martyr—17 August / 30 August (O.S. / N.S.)—falls very close to the date of Franko's baptism, the entry in the registry of births in Nahuievychi states that Franko was baptized as Ivan, and does not record a second name.<sup>63</sup>

Part of the problem lies in the fact that, according to local tradition, the name Myron was not unusual but not very common. The registry of births in Nahuievychi prior to 1864—that is, the time until which the registry was preserved—contains a notation about only one child that was baptized as Myron: this was the name given in 1844 to the illegitimate son of one Eva Myskyn. In addition, although the choice of this name may have been the result of an understanding between the parents and the priest (who, after receiving a bribe, could have given the illegitimate child a “normal” name, or the reverse: he may have bestowed a rarely used name on a legitimate child if he had quarreled with the parents or not received the expected payment from them),<sup>64</sup> this example illustrates the general rule: a name “marked” a newborn child and indicated its status. The names of the most important Christian saints were given to legitimate children, while illegitimate

children were named after lesser known saints. Myron the Martyr was not one of the better known saints, and was thus “designated” for illegitimate children.<sup>65</sup>

How could Franko have acquired this name? There would have been nothing surprising about this had he been an illegitimate child.<sup>66</sup> After all, at the time of Franko’s birth pre- and extramarital relations in Galicia were not uncommon. They were forbidden by the church and severely censured by the community, but human nature took its course.<sup>67</sup> Estimates made on the basis of birth registers covering the period from the mid-1840s to the early 1870s show that every tenth to fifteenth child in Nahuievychi was illegitimate. This indicator was significantly higher in large cities: in Lviv’s Greek Catholic parishes it hovered between 15 and 45 percent of all children born in this period (see table 7).<sup>68</sup> The idea of Ivan Franko’s possible illegitimacy is also suggested by the substantial age difference between his parents—an entire generation: Yakiv Franko was one year older than his deceased father-in-law. There could be various motives behind the practice of marrying off young girls to considerably older husbands, but one of the more frequently encountered was a girl’s premarital “despoilment.” When Ivan Franko was already a famous writer and social activist, rumors began to circulate in Lviv that he was the illegitimate son of an Orthodox Jew. As proof, gossips pointed to his Judaeophilism and his bright red hair.<sup>69</sup>

Despite the circumstance that the idea of Franko’s illegitimacy is bolstered by a few arguments, it should be rejected for several reasons. The first one is biological: Franko was born one year after his parents’ marriage, which took place in 1855. After him his two brothers were born, and both of them had the same bright red hair. Second, Franko’s reminiscences attest that his father showed him great love and tenderness; that would hardly be the case if Ivan were illegitimate. But even if there were no arguments against his illegitimacy, this supposition must still be rejected because of the presumption of innocence: there is no direct and convincing proof of this idea. The most likely explanation comes from the family’s own account: Ivan Franko was named Myron in order to protect him from an early death. Yakiv’s first wife and his daughter—the only child of his first marriage—both died. When his first son was born late in his life, he was very frightened of losing him. So the family resorted to a trick that was widespread among Eastern Christians in an attempt to “cheat death”: at home, the son was called by a different name than the one recorded in the church register in the belief that when death came to take away the child, it would not be