The trap of colonialism…
The Ukrainians of Eastern Galicia - colonised or colonisers?

Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek, Adam Świątek

ABSTRACT

The article presents the problem of colonial and postcolonial discourse in relation to Eastern Galicia. It discusses the forms of cultural domination existing throughout history in the region and draws attention to their conscious "playing" by successive rulers of this territory, consequently leading to the formation of memory conflicts.

KEYWORDS: postcolonial studies, Galicia, cultural memory, cultural landscape, politics of memory, Ukrainians

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> The moment anyone thinks that one history can be established is the moment one falls victim to one's own ideology. One should, therefore, take into account and consider the difference that stretches between our interpretations and analysis, and events beyond our reach. With this knowledge, we can compare different memories without worrying about them getting confused.
>
> Reinhard Koselleck[1]

The collapse of the Soviet Union had far-reaching consequences for historical sciences and the whole culture of remembrance in the former Soviet bloc. Nowhere, however, had the contradictions and tensions between individual and official memory been revealed to such an extent as in Ukraine. It has, in fact, become a classic example of a country torn apart with regard to the culture of remembrance[2],

1 Cited in: R. Traba, *Przeszłość w teraźniejszości. Polskie spory o historię na początku XXI wieku*, Poznań 2009, p. 91.
2 In particular see: A. Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*. 2ed., New Haven, Conn. 2009, p. 207-233 (Chapter 10: *Imagining Ukrainians: One Ukraine or Many?*).

and yet more distinct when compared to other former Soviet republics. Since independence, the Ukrainian State has based its need to establish a sovereign entity on historical justice and Ukrainians' eternal desire for their own state.[3] The support for and extension of the Ukrainian national historical narrative has become an important direction in the development of the nation.

The Constitution of Ukraine reads (chapter 1, art. 11): "The State shall promote the consolidation and development of the Ukrainiannation, its historical consciousness, traditions, and culture".[4] Contemporary Ukraine, as a post-communist state, remains torn between its traditional Soviet identity and a new, Ukrainian one (which, incidentally, is extremely varied and ambiguous), between the «superior», «more prestigious» language and culture of the empire and the resurgent language and culture of its «inferior», mostly rural ancestors[5]. For decades, Ukrainian citizens have been so successfully persuaded about the bloodthirstiness of the «Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism», associated primarily with Western Ukraine and the «Banderists» that currently only 13% of the country's residents find holding nationalistic views a positive characteristic for a possible candidate in the elections, while 67% consider it a serious flaw (others have no opinion on the matter).[6] This is why the nature of the contemporary culture of remembrance in the country is often referred to as not only post-communist, but rather post-colonial.[7]

Eastern Galicia has found itself in the epicentre of these new dilemmas, and, in this new reality, was to once again play the role of the «Ukrainian Piedmont». However, its ambiguous past has proved to be quite controversial material for forming the official memory – the memory of the country and the entire nation.

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3 Я. Ісаєвич, *Проблема походження українського народу: історіографічний і політичний аспект*, "Україна: культурна спадщина, національна свідомість, державність. Збірник наукових праці", 2 (1995).

4 Quoted after Constitution of Ukraine, http://www.president.gov.ua/en/content/chapter01.html (last access 14.07.2011)

5 M. Riabczuk, *Od Małorosji do Ukrainy*, introduction by. B. Berdychowska, translated by. O. Hnatiuk, K. Kotyńska, Kraków 2002, p. 172.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 172.

7 W. Pawluczuk, *Ukraina. Polityka i mistyka*, Kraków 1998, p. 51.

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Postcolonial Discourse and the History of Eastern Galicia

In that part of Europe, the postcolonial discourse has only emerged as a new trend in the humanities in the last two decades. Edward Said has become the main initiator in the development of postcolonial critique. His work – Orientalism – has become the starting point for all studies of this type. He has become an inspiration not only for individual researchers, but also for creating forums for exchanging ideas. It is worth mentioning that several publications on the subject of postcolonial discourse have recently been issued in Poland. In the introduction to one of them, Władysław Bolecki has characterised postcolonialism as follows:

> [postcolonialism] (...) is nothing more than (...) a description of national, cultural, religious and moral stereotypes functioning within the language of Western civilization (including literature) regarding non-European cultures. (...) Postcolonial studies of colonial discourse seek to demonstrate that such images of e.g. Asians and Africans in the Western civilization are not actual descriptions of their culture, but a projection of negative images of these cultures held by the colonists.[8]

This quote demonstrates that it is the literature describing the "Orient" that is actually the main colonial and postcolonial "battleground", and not the facts from the past. It is the literature that reflects the attitudes of representatives of one culture towards another.

From a historical point of view, however, we should not be confined to the content of literary works produced by colonial countries and countries that once were colonies. Simultaneously, we should also pay attention to: the language used by the community (loanwords, native language being infiltrated and eventually completely replaced by another language), the collective memory (a kind of struggle for memory takes place, particularly evident through the implementation of a specific historical policy and the authenticity of its contents in regard to the actual historical experience of the community); and finally physical traces present in both culture and landscape (literature, historiography, architecture, art). To examine colonialism, one must consider all areas of public life in a given country, community or region.

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8 W. Bolecki, *Myśli różne o postkolonializmie. Wstęp do tekstów nie napisanych*, "Teksty Drugie", 4 (2007), p. 10.

Said considered the term "Orient" to define the third world, or in any case, countries exotic to colonists. In the past half-century, postcolonial discourse has allowed the once-oppressed countries and peoples to speak with their own voices and name their oppressors. This not only provided opportunities to act out, but also to achieve a sort of "revenge". The postcolonial discourse, by engaging in current politics, ceased to be merely a research category. This is why the term "Orient" has been extended to other countries – not just the third (exotic) world, but also the second, emerging from the collapsing empires in Europe and elsewhere. This, however, raises the question of whether we can speak of postcolonialism in such cases? Grażyna Borkowska issues the following warning:

> Broadening the concept of postcolonialism to cover every cultural discourse of power seems to me to be an illogical misuse of the term, detracting from the significance of Said's findings. This concept was reserved by the researcher for cultural relations in which one of the parties was condemned to accept someone else's discourse because – owing to its exotic nature or its remoteness from the acknowledged cultural centres – it had no representation of its own.[9]

Meanwhile, the inclusion of other countries of the second world, especially Poland, in the colonial discourse has been postulated by a number of researchers, led by Clare Cavanagh.[10] The role of colonial empires was played, in their view, by the partitioning countries, and then, by the Third Reich, and eventually, the Soviet Union. Ewa Thompson, the author of *Imperial Knowledge,* was the first, or at least the most famous scientist, to thoroughly examine Soviet "colonialism" in relation to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.[11] It is a thorough study of attitudes and practices present in the policies and literary works of the representatives of the Russian and later Soviet empire, not only in relation to Poland, but to the entire former communist bloc. Similar views on Ukraine are expressed by Mykola Riabchuk, a famous Ukrainian journalist and writer.[12]

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9 G. Borkowska, *Polskie doświadczenie kolonialne*, "Teksty Drugie", 4 (2007), p. 16, ex. 1.

10 C. Cavanagh, *Postkolonialna Polska. Biała plama na mapie współczesnej teorii*, "Teksty Drugie", 2/3 (2003), p. 61.

11 E. M. Thompson, *Trubadurzy Imperium. Literatura rosyjska i kolonializm*, translated by A. Sierszulska, Kraków 2000.

12 M. Riabczuk, *Od Małorosji*; Idem, *Dwie Ukrainy*, transl. by M. Dyhas, K. Kotyńska, I. Werestiuk, W. Witwicki, Wrocław 2004.

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Soviet imperial policy in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia can be seen as a manifestation of late colonialism; the only problem is in the use of the proper name for this process – is there indeed a need to describe the imperial policy of the Soviet Union as colonialism? After all, Soviet repressions against the incapacitated nations of Central and Eastern Europe were much more drastic than British or French colonial practices in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The problem of using the correct terminology to describe the processes of dependency between rulers and subjects would appear to be the key to the whole discourse. It would be easy to fall into a kind of "colonialism trap", where every form of domination of one over another is defined as colonial policy.

It is worth mentioning that not only has the Soviet Union's attitude towards its neighbours begun to be treated as a manifestation of colonial policy; some researchers have delved much deeper into the past. The nineteenth-century empires, such as Tsarist Russia, Germany, and Austria have been depicted as countries pursuing colonial policies in Europe. Clare Cavanagh has written that "The greater part of the last two centuries was spent by Poland, therefore, in bondage to one or other power. It would be difficult to find more impressive postcolonial references".[13] Simultaneously, some researchers postulated that Poland must be viewed not only as a victim but also as a coloniser, which "oppressed", among others, the "Ruthenian people" living on Ukrainian land. The French historian Daniel Beauvois has become an icon of this view of history; his main area of study is the Polish nobility in the Podolia, Volhynia and Kyiv region in the nineteenth century.[14] This explains the popularity of Beauvois, on the one hand, in Ukrainian historiography, and on the other, among the group of Polish researchers who want to fight the "myth of Kresy (Eastern Borderlands)", which, not unreasonably, constitutes one of the pillars of Polish historiography. An article published by Bogusław Bakuła is particularly worth mentioning as it deals with the presence of "Kresy" in several centuries' worth of Polish cultural output.[15]

Therefore, researchers from both countries have, in the past decade, tried to integrate their visions of national histories into colonial and postcolonial

13 C. Cavanagh, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

14 D. Beauvois, *Trójkąt ukraiński. Szlachta, carat i lud na Wołyniu, Podolu i Kijowszczyźnie 1793-1914*, transl. by K. Rutkowski, Lublin 2005

15 B. Bakuła, *Kolonialne i postkolonialne aspekty polskiego dyskursu kresoznawczego (zarys problematyki)*, "Teksty Drugie", 6 (2006), pp. 11-32.

discourse. But a question arises about the use of terms applicable to other periods and areas of the globe to describe historical processes taking place in Europe. Is the introduction of post-colonial discourse the Central European historiography in relation to its communist past in fact a way of acting out historical grievances, which, in order to amplify their emotional charge, are described by a term with a clearly negative connotation? Finally, we should ask a basic question about the timeliness of postcolonial discourse – whether or not its occurrence is consistent with the political interests of its major proponents? And this is not about the left-right divide, since the representatives of both these political movements often resort to tools from the workshop of the scholar of colonialism, and the only difference between them is the question of who was the coloniser and who was the colonised. The readiness to demonstrate one's own past as a history of persecuted people, nations, states, groups, minorities (etc.) has its purposes, including the political one. This "secret" of post-colonial discourse has been brilliantly laid out by Michalina Golinczak:

> This might not please researchers, but postcolonial criticism is not a literary analysis of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, even the most insightful and critical one, or an exploration of colonial tropes in the 19th-century novels of Jane Austen, but a large-scale political project. Its ultimate goal is not an analysis for its own sake, but real social change. (...) Post-colonialism can and should be a weapon. Let us add, however, that the struggle only begins with a pen and paper, although its goals are far from abstract.[16]

Therefore, researchers in postcolonialism are no longer intellectuals describing the world, but the ones changing it, and their initially "innocent" concepts can be a confirmation or justification for specific actions of a political nature. This should serve as a warning that researchers must maintain the necessary restraint in the use of tools from the workshop of colonial criticism in the description of cultural reality of the once "oppressed" countries and peoples of Europe.

The history of Ukraine within its present borders fits the postcolonial discourse, since "the Ukrainian nation" did not have their own country for centuries. First, Ruthenia fell victim to Mongol invasions, and then to

16 M. Golinczak, *Postkolonializm: przed użyciem wstrząsnąć!*, "Recykling idei" 10 (2008); link to: http://katalog.czasopism.pl/index.php/Recykling_Idei_-_Michalina_Golinczak%2C_POSTKOLONIALIZM:_PRZED_U%C5%BBYCIEM_WSTRZ%C4%84SN%C4%84%C4%86!, retrieved: 15 II 2010.

Lithuanian ones. Then it became part of the First Polish Republic, and after its partitions it fell under the authority of the Russian Empire, and then the Soviet Union. This allows researchers to show the fate of Ukrainians as the history of an "eternally oppressed people", which is also facilitated by the fact that its elites often changed their identity to that of the territory's dominant political option. In addition, this system is supported by the fact that it was the Ukrainian common people that had, for centuries, maintained the Ukrainian culture. Thus, the Ukrainian "nation" has not only been oppressed because of its nationality, but also due to its social position in the feudal reality before and during the nineteenth century.

The history of Red Ruthenia, however, does not fit fully into the vision of an oppressed Ukraine, as it is a region that can hardly be called eternally oppressed, and also, from the ethnic point of view, is not exclusively Ukrainian. The constant change of rulers, the multi-ethnicity of this typical border region, and, finally, a much better economic, political and cultural situation than that of the lands on the Dnieper, cause a number of problems in making a clear distinction between the colonisers and the colonised, the "bad" and the "good", or the "foreign" and the "native". It is worth asking whether Red Ruthenia should be included in the discourse on a region subjected to colonialism at all, or perhaps it should be treated as a typical border area, colonised by people from other, neighbouring areas.

And then another question arises: who was the coloniser – Poles, Austrians, Germans, Russians, and perhaps even...Ukrainians themselves? After all, its contemporary appearance does not resemble its multicultural nature, so characteristic throughout the centuries. Various forms of political dependency and the question of who provided the dominant culture in the area are not the only issues worth reflecting on. One should also consider specific cultural artefacts, which may indicate whether phenomena specific to imperial colonialism in Third World countries were also present in this part of Europe. This does not relate only to literature, but to the entire social life. The issue of who dominated whom is reflected not only in literature and memoirs, but also in monuments, street names and even cemeteries. It is not the purpose of this overview to prove that Red Ruthenia was a region that experienced colonialism, but to present those aspects of history that reveal manifestations of cultural domination between different national and ethnic groups in Galicia – at the time when "the rest of the world" experienced colonialism.

On the other hand, a look at the processes currently taking place in the region may offer a valuable perspective. What we are witnessing right now is the creation of a Ukrainian myth of Galicia (Halychyna). Contemporary local intellectuals discover, adopt, reinterpret or recreate the past reality, trying, at all costs, to distance themselves from the legacy of the previous Soviet system. It is not our task to point out the "oppressors", but to draw attention to the problems of the past and their current implications. For only dialogue and a raised awareness of each party to the conflict can facilitate the creation of conditions for peaceful coexistence in the region – not only for the various ethnic and national groups, but also for the different memories.

GALIZIEN, GALICJA OR HALYCHYNA?

Newspaper advertisement:

> I will exchange a rich history and culture for a different geographical location[17]

According to Edward Said, colonialism, resulting from imperialism, occurred as a phenomenon in the nineteenth century. As a result, the European powers began to subdue other territories in the world in order to reap the benefits and settle the colonies. In fact, colonialism cannot exist without imperialism as the two concepts are closely linked, stem from one another, and are complementary. It is therefore difficult to perceive the First Polish Republic as a country pursuing a colonial policy in the Ruthenian lands, as was attempted by the abovementioned Daniel Beauvois. This noble nation consisted of both Polish and Ruthenian landowners, on equal terms, and, despite competition in various areas, including religion, representatives of both cultures participated equally in the exercise of power. After the incorporation of the Ukrainian lands into the Crown in 1569, there were many non-Catholic Sejm deputies, especially Orthodox.[18] It is also worth noting that Halychian boyars, after the incorporation of Red Ruthenia into the state ruled by Casimir the Great – which in its nature by no means

17 Cited in: O. Hnatiuk, *Galicja w Europie Środkowej*, "Borussia", 31 (2003), p. 56.
18 M. Kallas, *Historia ustroju Polski*, Warszawa 2006, p. 139.

resembled the Spanish conquests in America – were given rights equal to those of the Polish nobility. Moreover, and most importantly, the Polish Kingdom in the fourteenth century was by no means an empire, and the developmental gap between Poland and Halych Ruthenia was not as wide as in case of, for example, England and India. Aleksander Fiut wrote:

> It is difficult, however, to call the Commonwealth an Empire! And is the term "colonisation" at all adequate? Perhaps it is justified to speak of a kind of "velvet" colonisation, but only within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and certainly not in the lands of Ukraine, which for centuries have flowed with blood. It is impossible to overlook the fact that for many Lithuanians, Jagiełło, to this day, is a symbol of national betrayal, and the Union of Lublin is synonymous with the loss of state sovereignty. Or that what Polish historians see as peasant revolts disintegrating the Commonwealth from within, is considered by Ukrainian historians as the first signs of the awakening of national consciousness and the pursuit of political self-determination.[19]

It is this awakening of national consciousness that is another reason why we should abandon thinking of colonialism when considering the early modern period in Poland. Speaking of nationality in that period is limited to the concept of political nation, which included representatives of the privileged classes regardless of their ethnic origin. Two landlords, one living outside Krakow and the other near Halych, were both N a t i o n e P o l o n u s, even though they spoke different languages and were of different religions. Stanisław Orzechowski of Przemyśl, a Greek Catholic priest and writer living in the Renaissance and fully conscious of his political choices, is the best example of the above. He often emphasised his roots by signing his works with such pseudonyms as "Roxolanus" or "Rutenus". In one of his letters to Giovanni Francesco Commendone he stressed that, as Stanisław Ossowski would put it, Ruthenia was his private fatherland.[20] At the same time, all of his political work was devoted to his political (acc. to Stanisław Ossowski – ideological) fatherland – the Commonwealth. The ethnic identity differed from the national one. The concept of the nation as a community not resulting from political, legal or ethnic reasons has only become valid since the Age of Enlightenment, and especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the modern nation-building

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19 A. Fiut, *Polonizacja? Kolonizacja?*, "Teksty Drugie", 6 (2003), p. 154.
20 S. Orzechowski, *Wybór pism*, Wrocław 1972, p. XIII, p. 620. In the original: "Roxolania patria est mihi, ad flumen Tyram, Dnestrum vocant accolae (...)".

processes took place in Europe.[21] Prior to this period, the majority of the population, especially the peasants, remained indifferent to the national consciousness. People who did not perform public functions tended to associate their identities with their attachment to a religion or their local community. In the latter case, this phenomenon was present in rural areas until the late nineteenth century. This has been recently shown, on the example of East Galician towns, by Jadwiga Hoff. She wrote about the peaceful coexistence of representatives of different cultures, religions and ethnic groups in the urban communities until the spread of national ideologies, which occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century.[22] Due to the above, it is difficult to speak of colonial practices by representatives of one ethnic group, representing the "centre", in relation to another, peripheral group, as such divisions simply did not exist. The structure of feudal society prevailed, and although "the Polish element" was undoubtedly the stronger, it was balanced not only by Ruthenians, but also by Polish peasants slowly becoming aware of their national identity. Describing the Polish–Ruthenian relationship in the Ruthenian Voivodeship as colonial is a highly controversial interpretation.

The fate of Galicia after being taken over by the Austrian monarchy during the partitions of 1772 and 1795 was quite different. First of all, the land captured by foreign troops became a prize, and administrative authority was assumed by officials from a foreign culture. The absolutism prevailing in the Habsburg state was a political and legal structure that differed very much from the rights enjoyed by the privileged class in the Commonwealth The nobility, once the political nation, in the new reality had no influence on governance. The clergy also found itself in a much worse situation than before. The reforms of Joseph II resulted in the closure of many monasteries, confiscation of part of the Church's treasure, and the binding of the Church to the state administration. Simultaneously, the Germanization of the local population began with the introduction of German in schools and offices.[23] This rapid change of nationality took its toll on the members of the Galician elite. The Galician Sejm (Stany Galicyjskie), due to its limited prerogatives, was not at all helpful in accepting the new reality.

21 In particular see: T. Kizwalter, *O nowoczesności narodu. Przypadek Polski*, Warszawa 1999.
22 J. Hoff, *Mieszkańcy małych miast Galicji Wschodniej w okresie autonomicznym*, Rzeszów 2005, p. 139.
23 Z. Fras, *Galicja*, Wrocław 2000, p. 28.

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The influx of Austrian civil servants to Galicia seems to be the most important factor in relation to colonial discourse. It was they who introduced new administrative arrangements in the country. They also provided us with sources of information regarding their attitude towards the new province incorporated into the Empire. Several years ago, Maria Kłańska undertook a thorough analysis of diaries, letters and other types of publications containing descriptions of Galicia. They paint a negative picture of the attitude of Austrians towards the inhabitants of the new province of the Empire, regarded as "Half Asia", to use the words of the famous writer Karl Emil Franzos.

Austrians often saw themselves as those carrying the torch of education to the uncivilised inhabitants of this part of Europe.[24] Austrian writers often portrayed Galicia and all Slavic lands as barbaricum threatening the Western civilisation. Examples of the above attitude can be found in the works of, among others, Zerboni di Sposetti.[25] On the other hand, the Austrian partition was portrayed as an exotic land. Maria Kłańska wrote:

> To gain popularity, the authors left out or downplayed elements that tied Galicia to other European countries, and emphasised 'Asian', oriental elements, which could thrill readers and keep them in suspense when reading an otherwise average publication.[26]

This perspective resulted in the creation of negative stereotypes of the inhabitants of Galicia. In the eyes of the Habsburg officials, Poles were a nation of nobility, who oppressed peasants, and Ruthenians were a nation of Orthodox priests and haidamaks. The Jews, who constituted a significant percentage of small-town communities, were not portrayed much better, either. The authors often used sensational anecdotes and presented them in their works as authentic stories. They were also eager to demonstrate the poverty, vices and cruelty of the Galician population.

Although the Austrian officials initially did not see the difference between Poles and Ruthenians, from the Spring of Nations on, they began to support Ruthenian national demands aimed at weakening Polish political actions. This resulted in the conviction that Stadion had invented the

24 M. Kłańska, *Z daleka od Wiednia. Galicja w oczach pisarzy niemieckojęzycznych*, Kraków 1991, p. 19.
25 *Ibid.*, p. 48.
26 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Ruthenians in 1848.[27] Poles, conscious of their nationality and believing in the rebirth of the Commonwealth in its former borders, would not accept the separation of the neighbouring nation, and then – the right of Ukrainians to create their own state formed from lands once belonging to the Commonwealth.

On the one hand, one might venture the statement that Galicia experienced a problem of "colonised colonisers", with Austria being the coloniser, Poles the colonised colonisers and Ruthenians the colonised. But another configuration is also possible – Austria as the coloniser and Poles and Ruthenians as two colonised "native tribes". Then we are dealing with a "triangle system" in which Austria is seemingly not involved, but in fact exploits the Polish-Ruthenian conflict for its own purposes. A researcher of Spanish colonisation in America will automatically recall the example of Hernan Cortes, who used the Central American tribes against the hated Aztecs. This analogy is obviously too far-fetched, but some political processes occur regardless of era and local realities. The year 1848 and then later, the Great War, became examples of the famous divide et impera at work.

The year 1918 brought a new reality – Poles and Ukrainians began a struggle for the creation of their own states in Galician lands, and the war that broke out between the two nations became the basis for the creation of identity-building myths for both nations in the twentieth century: the myth of the Lwów Eaglets (Orlęta Lwowskie) and the myths of the Sich Riflemen (Sichovi Stril'tsi) and the Ukrainian Galician Army (Ukrayins'ka Halyts'ka Armiya). Interestingly, the war for the control of Eastern Galicia did not resemble either colonial war or any other war of this period, fought by two nations or two civilisations. During ceasefires, the soldiers of both sides met, fraternised and took photos.[28] You cannot expect neighbours living in the same building to want to kill each other all of a sudden. The situation changed after the arrival of Polish troops from outside Eastern Galicia, who were less sensitive to the neighbourly relations that had been shaped there for centuries. As Robert Traba rightly notes, the "defence of Lwów" has become one of the central foundation myths of the Second Polish Republic.[29] On the other

27 Z. Fras, *op. cit.*, p. 149-151.
28 See e.g. J. Gella, *Ruski miesiąc 1/XI – 22/XI 1918. Ilustrowany opis walk listopadowych we Lwowie*, Lwów [1919], photo on the insert next to p. 129.
29 R. Traba, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

hand, the need to fight for this city that has been undeniably and reliably considered Polish started the practice of "identifying Lwów as not only a borderland city, but also as a Polish borderland fortress".[30] The war for the control of Eastern Galicia was the culmination of the process of transformation of Lwów from a multicultural metropolis to a city at the crossroads of the   contradictory aspirations of the two nations inhabiting it. The escalation of two nationalisms, developed mainly by Polish and Ukrainian nationalist circles from the end of the nineteenth century (strikes at the University of Lwów, the killing of the governor of Galicia. Andrzej Potocki, and other, public or private, excesses are worth mentioning here) led in 1918 to the opportunity for a clear demonstration of power.

Therefore, the cult of heroism of the "Lwów Eaglets" and the simultaneous exclusion from public discourse of "ungrateful Ukrainians" resulted in them distancing themselves from the state they lived in from 1918. The introduction of the "language of the victorious side" is evidenced by the use of such phrases as Eastern Lesser Poland (Małopolska Wschodnia), or the way 1918-1919 events were portrayed in the history textbooks, media or literature. The work of Józef Belina Chołodecki, for example, published a few years after the war, contains not only pride in the victory but also contempt for the defeated:

> 22 November was a happy, cheerful day for Lwów. 'Lwów is ours!' resounding throughout all corners of the city and its suburbs, and thousands, many thousands poured out onto the streets, still stained with innocent blood of the murdered victims of the Ukrainian savages.[31]

There were many such publications. Ukrainians were also portrayed in this manner by Polish newspapers. The Cemetery of the Lwów Eaglets, designed in 1921, commemorated only one, victorious, side of the conflict. The "Ukrainian defenders" of L'viv were buried in a much more modest tomb in the Janowski Cementery (now Yanivs'kyi Tsvyntar). It is worth emphasising that the monumental "memorial" commemorating the

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30 J. Kolbuszewski, *Kresy*, Wrocław 1999, pp. 104-105.
31 J. Białynia Chołodecki, *Boje o Lwów*, in: *W obronie Lwowa i wschodnich kresów*, Lwów 1926, p. 41

Ukrainians, matching the Polish one, was only constructed in the 1990s.[32] During the Second Republic it was not possible to commemorate, in such a monumental manner, the sacrifice made by the opposite (losing) side of the conflict, and during the Soviet era all elements of Ukrainian history which might be an inspiration for an independent policy towards the USSR were eradicated. This part of the Lychakiv Cemetery has for almost a century now been a place where the politics of memory is being played out. What is commemorated and how depended and still depends on the dominant side in this territory. In Soviet times, both Polish (e.g. through the devastation of the Cemetery of the Defenders of Lwów), and Ukrainian (by not allowing the commemoration of the soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician Army) memories were erased. However, the struggle for the "right" version of history goes on. It is confirmed by the fact that despite the official opening of the Cemetery of Eaglets by Polish and Ukrainian presidents in 2005, the gateway to the cemetery is closed to this day (one needs to enter through the main gate of the Lychakiv Cemetery and pass through the Memorial of Ukrainian Galician Army, first) and the restoration of two ancient statues of lions in front of the entrance was not allowed, as it would mean accepting that those buried in the cemetery were fighting "for L'viv" and not "against L'viv". For the same reason, the former name – Cemetery of the Defenders of L'viv – has also not been accepted.

The Ukrainian-Polish disputes regarding the sword carved on the tomb commemorating the 5 defenders from Persenkivka and over the gate of the pantheon of glory are particularly interesting. It is often mistakenly (or intentionally) identified as Szczerbiec, the symbol of Bolesław Chrobry's Kyiv expedition of 1018. In reality though, most military cemeteries, which "are the result of ideological bias, of thinking about the fate of community in terms of statehood",[33] and this is the case with the Cemetery of Eaglets, refer to chivalric tradition, hence the presence of melee weapons. This sword is identified as Szczerbiec neither by the interwar cemetery guide[34], nor by

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32 During the Soviet period it was impossible to build cemeteries for those who fought for independence of Ukraine in 1918-1920 and 1943-1951. See B. Czerkies, *Mogiły wojenne na cmentarzach Galicji Wschodniej w XX w.*, in: O. Czerner, I. Juszkiewicz (ed.), *Sztuka cmentarna. Dokumenty*, Wrocław 1995, p. 178.

33 J. Kolbuszewski, *Cmentarze*, Wrocław 1996, s. 292-293.

34 *Przewodnik po Cmentarzu Obrońców Lwowa*, Lwów 1939, available at http://www.lwow.com.pl/orleta/orleta39.html, odczyt: 22. 03. 2010.

contemporary specialist literature.[35] A new symbolic layer was given (or added) to an element which previously had a different meaning. The above interpretation, which is basically an anachronism, still finds supporters on both sides of the border, exciting conflict. For example, in June 2009, various Polish media have reacted sharply, when the deputies of the L'viv Oblast Council threatened to remove this "Szczerbiec" from the cemetery, which was meant as retaliation for the destruction of a UPA monument built, without appropriate permits, on Chryszczata in the Bieszczady Mountains. Portraying this sword as "Szczerbiec" allows the interpretation of the presence of the Polish state in L'viv as a kind of imperialism. In this way, the deputies of the council deliberately attempted to demonstrate the fate of this part of Ukraine as the fate of a region "colonised" by Poles. However, this interpretation has been accepted uncritically by Polish society, mainly due to the Polish media directly quoting the Ukrainian side.[36] On the other hand, "Szczerbiec" suits some circles in Poland, as it truly reflects the imperial idea of Old Poland.[37]

The Cemetery of Eaglets in the Second Polish Republic is not, in fact, an example of the colonial policy of pre-war Poland, but rather of the inability of Polish authorities to resolve the pre-war ethnic tensions that eventually led to fratricidal war. The antagonisms then formed were not only a consequence of the Ukrainians adopting radical methods of political struggle, including terror, but also of the attitudes of Polish society, the prevailing stereotype of Ukrainians, as well as of the policy of the state towards the largest minority in the country. Such attitudes fuelled Ukrainian nationalism, aggressive in its nature, before and during the Second World

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35 S. S. Nicieja, *Cmentarz Obrońców Lwowa*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1990, p. 95, 195.

36 Cf: *Bulwersująca groźba rady Lwowa wobec Polski*, [on:] http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,1356,title,Bulwersujaca-grozba-rady-Lwowa-wobec-Polski,wid,11249347,wiadomosc.html?ticaid=19da9; *Pomnik UPA na Chryszczatej kontra Cmentarz Orląt* , [on:] http://www.rp.pl/artykul/40,324182_Pomnik_UPA_kontra_Cmentarz_Orlat_.html; *Ukraina: Pomnik UPA w Bieszczadach kontra Cmentarz Orląt*, [on:] http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/Wiadomosci/1,81048,6749584,Ukraina__Pomnik_UPA_w_Bieszczadach_kontra_Cmentarz.html; *Szczerbiec niezgody?*, [on:] http://www.polskieradio.pl/historia/tags/artykul103462_szczerbiec_niezgody.html; *Lwów: Polski symbol na Cmentarzu Orląt zostanie usunięty?*, [on:] http://www.wiadomosci24.pl/artykul/lwow_polski_symbol_na_cmentarzu_orlat_zostanie_usuniety_101232.html, retrieved: 22.03.2010.

37 The symbolic meaning of "Szczerbiec" is particularly used by nationalist circles. This sword is present in the logos of political parties and organisations, as well as in the vignettes of their press organs.

War. The above is well illustrated by the recollections of Zenon Wróblewski, a SS-Galizien soldier, interviewed by Oksana Towariańska:

> *- What were your relations with your Polish peers like?*
> - With our peers, well, you know, we fought - we were fighting every other day or even every day [laughs]. So, perhaps we didn't feel it yet, I can't say that we already were, you know, nationalists or something like that...He was insulting me, or I was insulting him, so the insult had to be returned. We fought, you know, quite often. And we felt it. We heard older people talking. They were coming to us or we went somewhere and overheard it, that the Poles were the invaders. And that's why we got into fights, even with students...
> *- Can you tell us what caused these conflicts?*
> - Many, many things. The language for example. "You walk down the street, talking in Ukrainian". I am not saying that it was on every street and every day - God forbid! So you walk, and he hears you talking in Ukrainian, right? So he turns around and shouts "You moron!"... So you turn around [laughs] – and hit him. He hits you back, you hit him again. So that how it was, you know. And also it was a matter of principle – our school, next to it, a Polish one. To get to their school they had to pass by ours. So we would go out and start to, you know, push them. But that was when we were boys. But it wasn't very conscious, you know, that you have to beat him up because he's Polish. Yes, but they, one day for example I don't remember, it was [19]36 or [19]37, the whole school, but they were Polish students. (...) And they were strong nationalists, and they wanted to, as Zhirinovsky now says "Russia for the Russians" and they said "Poland for the Poles". And they had this organisation – "Falanga". And they marched through the streets and shouted in Polish "Falanga strikes, Falanga, watches, Falanga removes the Jews from Poland". [...] so they marched and robbed Ukrainian and Jewish shops on their way. (...) Yes, the Poles liked to demonstrate that they had the authority".[38]

Massacres of civilians during the Second World War were an escalation of the long-standing conflict which in war conditions could erupt freely.[39] Ukrainian nationalist concepts, using such slogans as Greater Ukraine, exclusively Ukrainian, were therefore not only an echo of German Nazism and Italian Fascism, but also of the Polish chauvinism of the pre-war period, though of course not limited to them. The ethnic cleansing carried out by Ukrainian nationalists on Polish civilians in Eastern Galicia and

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38 О. Товарянська, *Усні історії колишніх вояків дивізії «Галичина». Інтерв'ю з Зеноном Івановичем Врублевським,* [in:] "Схід-Захід. Історико-культурологічний збірник", 11-12 (2008), pp. 308-330, *here,* p. 316..

39 See G. Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka 1942-1960. Działalność Organizacji Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów i Ukraińskiej Powstańczej Armii*, Warszawa 2006, Seria Wschodnia; Idem, *Od rzezi wołyńskiej do akcji „Wisła". Konflikt polsko-ukraiński 1943-1947*, Kraków 2011.

Wiktoria Kudela-Świątek, Adam Świątek

Volhynia should not be considered an example of post-colonial reaction, as it would mean the transfer of guilt from the perpetrators to the victims – represented by the same nation that discriminated against the Ukrainian population before the war. This would be justifying the crime, and that is unacceptable both from a historical and, above all, a moral point of view.

Pre-war Poland's policy towards Galicia, even if viewed as colonial, in no way matches the actions of the occupying German and Soviet authorities in the territory. With regard to Stepan Bandera's cooperation with German intelligence and the subsequent collaboration of Ukrainians with the army of the Third Reich (including in the SS-Galizien), the question arises whether Galicia, occupied by the Germans since 1941, was a "German colony" or an ally of Berlin? On the one hand, the newly created District of Galicia was incorporated into the General Government, whose role was to supply the economy of the Third Reich. Both Galician nations were used as a source of cheap labour for the German state. Hence the exploitation of so-called Ostarbeiters (ostarbaytery) – forced labourers sent to Germany.[40] On the other hand, the Ukrainians' position in this system was slightly better than that of the Poles. This was manifested in education (500 thousand Ukrainian children attended the schools of the General Government, and only 31 thousand Polish ones), food stamps, and finally the permission to run cultural institutions, have their own police force and create their own armed forces under the auspices of the Third Reich.[41] Ultimately, however, the Ukrainian dreams of Hitler giving them their own state did not come true.

The Soviet counteroffensive of 1944-1945 changed this reality completely. The occupation of Eastern Galicia by the Red Army meant its incorporation into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. The region was the westernmost part of the Soviet empire – both figuratively and literally. Galicia's past, with its Austrian and Polish heritage, the myth of the "Ukrainian Piedmont", but above all, political traditions (whether in the Diet of Galicia, the West-Ukrainian People's Republic, the activities of political parties in the Second Polish Republic, and finally the activities

40 Cf.: T. Пастушенко, *Будні українських остарбайтерів: боротьба за виживання*, on: http://www.history.org.ua/JournALL/journal/2005/6/12.pdf, lecture: 18. 03. 2010; T. Лапан, *Вербування і депортація населення з України до Німеччини та умови його праці і побуту у неволі (1939-1945 рр.)*, дис. канд. іст. наук, Львів 2005.
41 K. Grünberg, B. Sprengel, *Trudne sąsiedztwo. Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie w X-XX wieku*, Warszawa 2005, pp. 566-571.

of Ukrainian nationalists) made the region stand out significantly from the rest of the lands of the world's biggest country. A Sovietisation and "depolonization" of the region began immediately. First, the Polish population was deported and later replaced by Ukrainian peasants from eastern Ukraine and the Ukrainian and Lemko populations of the Podkarpacie Province. As Mykola Riabchuk writes in his excellent essay *Galicia between East and West*: "a political neutralisation of the reactionary element" was carried out through the exchange of populations. By the 1950s', the number of Russians in L'viv had increased from zero to 35%, the number of Ukrainians from 20 to 45% and the number of Poles decreased from 50% to almost zero.[42]

Simultaneously, a policy of erasing memory was initiated. The removal of all Polish traces – memorials, street names, monuments (especially the Cemetery of Lwów Eaglets) and the fight against the Roman Catholic Church became its main objectives. Ukrainians, however, suffered a similar fate. The incorporation of Halychyna into the rest of the Ukrainian lands, which for Ukrainian political activists from both sides of the Zbruch River was a dream come true, did not enable the preservation of Ukrainian culture, as depolonisation was not followed by "reukrainisation" but by sovietisation. All manifestations of Ukrainian national visions of identity and memory in the region were attacked. This applied to all areas of social life, and is exemplified by trials of Ukrainian independence activists and the struggle with the Greek-Catholic Church, which had a fundamental significance for the preservation of the Ukrainian national identity.

But the biggest loss for the East Galician towns was the destruction of their multicultural character. L'viv, for example, ceased to be a town of several nations and religions, and became a typical Soviet town with ugly apartment buildings and a historic Old Town.

The changes to the population and the political systems of the 1940s' and 1950s' which took place in Eastern Galicia could not be associated with any form of colonialism. Soviet authorities colonised Eastern Galicia with not only Russians but also Ukrainians, and the people persecuted in this system were by no means colonised, but expelled across the newly drawn border. It was not only the expelled Poles who were the victims here, but also the Ukrainians who replaced them. The latter were hardly

42 M. Riabczuk, *Dwie Ukrainy*, p. 172.

enthusiastic about being "rooted out" of the Podkarpacie Province. The similarities in memories of Polish and Ukrainian displaced people are well reflected in the articles of Halyna Bodnar and Alina Doboszewska in the "Krakowskie Pismo Kresowe" (Cracovian Kresy Journal).[43] In summary, colonisation did take place, but without the subjugation of the indigenous peoples, with the exception of Ukrainians, who were both colonised and colonisers.

Eastern Galicia was not only colonised with people, but also with a new world of values and the concept of "Soviet man". This project, however, did not succeed in the end because, as M. Riabchuk writes:

> newcomers from Eastern Ukraine have not fulfilled their tasks: instead of, as is customary in Kyiv, Kharkiv and Odessa undergoing Russification, these people, to a large extent, (re)ukrainised themselves; to paraphrase the title of Eugen Weber's famous book – 'Peasants into Ukrainians'.[44]

As it turned out, it was L'viv and Galicia that were the strongest centres of Ukrainian independent thought, and they affected the entire Soviet Ukraine in the second half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the Soviet authorities managed, to a large extent, to "colonise" the landscape of this area, the language of the people living here (with the possible exception of L'viv and Ternopil'), and, finally, everyday life, trends, fashion, media, etc. To this day, touring Western Ukraine, one can see the Great Patriotic War memorials; most books in bookstores are in Russian, as are such media as computer games, CDs, and movies; and, finally, it is still easier and cheaper to get from L'viv to Moscow than, for example, to Vienna or Warsaw. The lands of Eastern Galicia, like the rest of Ukraine, have consistently been within the orbit of influence of Russian or post-Soviet culture.

Memory that divides

The cultural dominance, and then the process of combating its remnants, is particularly reflected in the public memory and top-down measures aimed

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43 Cf H. Bodnar, „*Mała ojczyzna" w świadomości Ukraińców przesiedlonych z Polski po II wojnie światowej* and A. Doboszewska, *Pamięć przesiedlonych. Obraz Ukrainy i Ukraińców w świadomości mieszkańców wsi Jugów na Dolnym Śląsku*, "Krakowskie Pismo Kresowe", 2 (2010).
44 M. Riabczuk, *Dwie Ukrainy*, p. 172.

at its formation. In the case of the former Eastern Galicia, which is today's Western Ukraine, the research problem concerns not what is or should be the official version of the history of post-Soviet / post-colonial society, but rather its ambivalence. Memory divides not only Poles and Ukrainians from Western Ukraine or Ukrainians and Russians from Eastern Ukraine, but, most of all, Ukrainians themselves within their national community.

Even the most democratic country imposes its cultural patterns in order to "unify" the collective memory. That is why the symbols of the past are consciously shaped through the selection of appropriate moments and topics from the history of the country.[45] The symbols of modern Ukraine are, at first glance, the same as those adopted in 1917-1918 by the Ukrainian National Republic government: The Rurikid trident, the blue and yellow national flag and anthem "Shche ne vmerla Ukraina...". If we look closer at them, however, we see how much they split Ukrainian society. The mixture of Soviet and nationalist symbols with those associated with Little Russia from the Tsarist period promotes the diversity of ideological orientations in Ukrainian society.[46] The social memory of Ukrainians is in statu nascendi, as the ancient Romans would put it. Ukrainians are still searching for the roots of their identity and they simultaneously find them in totally contradictory historical traditions. You could argue that the Ukrainian state is in the same transition phase that other societies, such as Polish, reached in the early 1990s.[47]

The collapse of the Soviet empire and the proclamation of Ukrainian independence in 1991 mercilessly revealed the devastation left by communism. In fact, the first confrontations with the legacy of the Soviet past indicated a lack of unanimity and a multitude of dilemmas and visions for ways forward among the country's political elite.[48] Some activists in the national movement during this period were, according to Ola Hnatiuk, reluctant to revive this cultural diversity for fear of a "conflict of memories".[49] Thus, the desire for a unification of Ukrainian identity forced

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45 A. J. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence. Ukraine after Totalitarianism*, New York 1993, pp. 85-87.

46 E. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 237

47 О. Левкова*, (У)мови само-(за)буття,* on: : http://www.ji.lviv.ua/n40texts/levkova.htm, retrieved: 14.11. 2003.

48 B. Osadczuk, *Ukradziona pamięć*, in: *Pamięć. Wyzwanie dla nowoczesnej Europy*, red. R. Traba, Olsztyn 2008, p. 113.

49 O. Hnatiuk, *op.cit.*, p. 52.

the development of a common and coherent vision of the past of this young Central European country. The problem of restoring national dignity has become an important part of public discourse on this issue, and therefore the central positions in public space were occupied by national heritage and a martyrological view of the past. In response, a counter-discourse was created, represented by the advocates of preserving the dominance of Russian language and culture. This was not meant to support the previous system, but to negate the emerging new Ukrainian identity or identities in their Galician interpretation.[50]

Despite the fact that the process of nationalisation of the political and cultural space in Ukraine has been neither complete nor systematic, the issue of the formation of the nation has always been on the agenda of the country's authorities. Years of independence have created a discourse of «necessary memory», accepted by participants and commentators on Ukrainian socio-political life, which has resulted in the nationalisation of the school history curriculum. Ukrainian national symbols, political festivals and rituals, which reflect the version of national history approved by the politicians, have also undergone similar changes, but much less successful.[51]

However, a sense of common identity that would legitimise the existence of a young nation in its historical narrative has not, during the period of independent Ukraine, become the only, or at least, the dominant unifying idea. Neither Leonid Kravchuk, nor Leonid Kuchma during their presidential tenures managed to unify Ukrainian society, divided by the diversity of historical experiences. High hopes for ideological separation from the legacy of Soviet memory were placed on the Orange Revolution, but, as it turned out, in vain.[52]

The politics of memory carried out by the Ukrainian authorities under President Viktor Yushchenko in 2005-2010, despite all the inconsistencies, can actually be defined as an attempt to impose a Ukrainian historical narrative. This attempt was necessary for achieving legitimisation of the forces that came to power after the Orange Revolution. These methods were inefficient, and instead they caused a reaction among anti-Orange

50 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

51 С. Грачова, *Пам'ять, контрапам'ять і політика*, on http://krytyka.kiev.ua/articles/s.9_11_2006.html, retrieved: 25.02.2007.

52 М. Рябчук, *Культура пам'яті та політика забуття*, "Критика", 1-2 (2006), on: , on: http://krytyka.kiev.ua/articles/s.7_1-2_2006.html retrieved: 24.05.2007.

opposition activists, who, in turn, began to use history in ideological propaganda, appealing to the Eastern-Ukrainian experience of history.

With his coming to power, Viktor Yushchenko placed himself between two opposing forces. On the one hand, his Western-Ukrainian allies – the National Democrats – expected him to finally break free of the Soviet ideological legacy; on the other hand, he had to take care of his *image* in the eyes of those who had voted for a different candidate for President of Ukraine. It is quite common that when a politician wants to accommodate two diametrically opposite political groups, he ends up losing his popularity with both of them. The discontent of the National Democrats was mainly caused by the fact that President Yushchenko had not removed the cornerstone of Soviet historical narrative – the Great Patriotic War – from the canon of historical memory. However, such a move would be more than problematic, given the President's family and its experience of history. During the election campaign, Yushchenko repeatedly insisted that his father fought in the Red Army against the "fascist onslaught" and was sent, as a prisoner of war, to Auschwitz. After the elections, Ukrainians also heard this story in numerous presidential speeches, and therefore, for moral reasons, he could not remove Victory Day from the list of public holidays.[53]

A nation's memory is a battleground not only during a revolution, but also during a transition between political systems. The demolition of existing monuments and erection of new ones is just the most obvious and visible example of this process. It is also quite common for different communities to feel connected to one and the same memorial, which causes a number of contradictions and conflicts, for example, between the

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53 It was then that Viktor Yushchenko made a daring attempt to change the meaning of this holiday, by adding its modified version to the nationalised narrative of the history of the Ukrainian state. The Great Patriotic War, in his interpretation, is presented as a tragedy, and not a story of the victory of communist ideology. The topic of sacrifice, inseparably associated with the Ukrainian national historical narrative, facilitated the assimilation of the war into the official policy of historical memory. Even in the most radical, nationalist version, it was not a part of the Ukrainian nation that had fallen victim to the war but the nation as a whole, which, for historical reasons, found themselves on different sides of the barricades. The image of war as a national tragedy gave the president the hope to achieve his greatest dream – national reconciliation through the reconciliation of historical memory. In the President's speech to the people of Ukraine, delivered on 9 May 2006, Viktor Yushchenko added the constant fighting between the Red Army veterans and the UPA veterans to the series of grievances suffered by Ukrainians due to the war and urged both sides to reconciliation. The president repeated the gesture several times, but the reconciliation did not take place. See: В. Гриневич, *Расколотая память: Вторая мировая война в историческом сознании украинского общества,* "Неприкосновенный запас", 2/3 (2005), on: http://www.nz-online.ru/index.phtml?aid=35011401, retrieved: 12.11.2006.

Ukrainian Insurgent Army and Red Army veterans regarding World War II memorials. The following accounts provide evidence as to what extent the different memories of UPA and Red Army divide Ukrainian society:

> The Red Army and UPA veterans have long been divided by celebrations. Soviet veterans celebrate Victory Day on 9 May, UPA veterans on 14 October on the anniversary of the establishment of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. Sometimes these celebrations end in open clashes. In May 1997, for example, the Victory Day celebrations in L'viv ended with a brawl.

In 1992, prior to the celebrations of the anniversary of the establishment of UPA, a number of oblast councils submitted a petition to the Verkhovna Rada calling for the adoption of the concept of "War for National Liberation of 1920-1950". In response to this, the Organisation of Veterans of Ukraine expressed its protest against Banderization of Ukraine".[54]

It would seem that this conflict will persist as long as the oldest generations, the participants in the Second World War, live. But this is not the only condition. A much more important issue is the lack of condemnation for both devastating ideologies; ideologies that the Ukrainian population became the tools of during World War II. In Western Ukraine, the nationalist ideology was merged with a sense of patriotic duty. This phenomenon is typical of nations devoid of statehood. Hence, Ukrainian nationalism is not condemned, but rather permeates social life as something positive. Hence, not only are there a huge number of associations of former UPA soldiers in Western Ukraine, but there is also the introduction of the traditions of this political movement into politically neutral youth organizations. The social campaign titled "Youth remember Shukhevych", carried out by the ideologically neutral scouting organisation Plast, may serve as an example.[55]

GALICIAN PALIMPSEST

The collective memory of each community is not a fixed phenomenon, but is subject to change during the historical process. Classic associations on which the meaning of memorials is based, over the years cease to be

54 В. Гриневич, *op. cit.*
55 http://www.kresy.pl/wydarzenia?zobacz/ukrainscy-skauci-pamietaja-szuchewycza, retrieved: 21.03.2010.

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understood the way their creators intended. The illegibility of the content of these memorials is evident in the processes of removing monuments carried out on a large scale in Ukraine and throughout Eastern Europe after the fall of communism and, in many cases, replacing them with monuments to national heroes of earlier eras, or those persecuted by the communist system.[56] This is caused by a desire of the new authorities to imprint the meaning on the landscape in such a way that the memorial is viewed by the witnesses of the era in the «right» way. However, the newly formed cultural canon frustrates these objectives[57]. On the other hand, the various interpretations indicate different ways of applying various identities to such places and of making claims regarding their belonging, thus indicating the characteristic relationship between the place and the narrator / person passing on the tradition.[58]

Delphine Bechtel, reflecting on the phenomenon of Galicia, stressed that «it was an unexpected and surprising phenomenon for the West that at the centre of global efforts aimed at discovering Galicia as it was one hundred years ago, Galicia disappeared and was absorbed, and it was Galicia itself that was reborn from the ashes in Ukraine».[59] The fact that the history of Galicia was different – which was not spoken of aloud until the end of the 1980s – became the basis for a different version of Ukrainian identity – Galician and Ukrainian at the same time. It fitted as an alternative to both Soviet and post-Soviet and to Ukrainian identity, stemming from its historical presence within the Russian and then Soviet borders.[60] These efforts have transformed the cultural landscape of contemporary Halychyna into an ahistorical region. On the one hand, it is an area where

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56 A. Leinwand, *Z cokołów*, "Karta", 19 (1996), pp. 62-66.

57 We distinguish three types of changes to the national *lieux de memoire*. Firstly, some of them may be forgotten or repressed from memory. Historical persons, events or monuments which were once repeatedly referred to fall into a kind of "doze". Secondly, some forgotten "places of memory" re-acquire their meaning. This process can currently be observed in post-Soviet Ukraine, where the symbols of the UPA and the Cossack era have been reanimated. Thirdly, one can observe changes in the collective memory and in these lieux de memoire, which continuously had and still have a place in the collective memory of the nation. The meaning that a community associates with specific places of memory does not necessarily remain constant during the historical process. Such an event as World War II (in Soviet historiography the Great Patriotic War), is, in present-day Ukraine, recalled quite differently from, say, twenty years ago. It remained in people's consciousness as a "place of memory", but carries a completely different meaning with it. See T. Edensor, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

58 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

59 D. Bechtel, *Galizein, Galicja, Galitsye, Halatchyna*, "Borussia", 31 (2003), p. 97.

60 O. Hnatiuk, *op.cit.*, p. 61.

the confrontation of existing myths takes place (the myth of Polish Lwów Or Austrian Lemberg); on the other hand, it is an inspiration for the creation of new ones (the myth of the Ukrainian Piedmont or a Soviet metropolis).[61] Furthermore, it becomes a place that not only adopts and cultivates its own history, but refers to issues sensitive to Ukrainians, constantly aspiring to be a kind of essence of Ukraine. It manifests itself, inter alia, in funding the erection of monuments to the Great Famine (Holodomor), which was artificially induced in the Ukrainian SSR in the 1930s. Viktor Yushchenko, during his presidency, attempted to introduce this event into the official public discourse, with disregard for protestations from the Russian side. Thanks to his policies, this greatest tragedy in Europe before World War II could be closely examined; but also dozens of memorials dedicated to the victims of the Holodomor were built. Particularly interesting is the fact that such memorials were also built in Western Ukraine, which at the time belonged to the Second Polish Republic. It could not have experienced the famine of 1932-1933.[62] It is therefore another feature of the post-colonial reaction of the region. Memorials to the victims who died outside of this region are only a pretext to highlight the opposition of historical memory of Western Ukraine to the Soviet past of the rest of the territory of Ukraine.

The specificity of this Galician regionalism manifests itself in the fact that the animators of public life do not hesitate to use a variety of methods to create a new identity. In 2000, a L'viv-based art association, Dzyga, organised huge celebrations for Emperor Franz Joseph's 170th birthday.[63] But, at the same time, the Polish cultural heritage of the region is combated systematically. For example, places important to Poles are replaced with those that are believed to be important to Ukrainians. Such practice is typical of all "colonialisms", starting with the construction of the capital of New Mexico in Tenochtitlan. The Korniakt Palace located on the Market Square in L'viv, for example, also known as the Royal Residence because Jan III Sobieski resided there, currently serves as the Historical Museum, and its exhibition documents the political and military activities of Ukrainians since 1917, including those carried out by Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), UPA and SS Galizien. The opportunity to use this

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61 Я. Грицак, *Страсті за Львовом,* "Критика",7-8 (2002), p. 6.
62 W. Kudela-Świątek, *Pamięć i „miejsca pamięci" Hołodomoru. Krajobraz po bitwie*, "Nowa Ukraina", 1-2 (2008), pp. 102-118.
63 D. Bechtel, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

historic building, associated with the history of modern L'viv, and generally, the whole of the Commonwealth, was thus consciously lost. The former Union of Lublin mound in L'viv serves as another example. In Soviet times it was erased from the city guides, and in 1991, a plaque was mounted on top of it informing that it was the place Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi commanded the siege of L'viv from. There is no information about its original purpose to date.[64]

The poor condition of the mound is not the only symbol of the practice of erasing the city's multicultural heritage and the memory of its past. In a similar manner, the name Union of Lublin Street was changed after the war to Hutsul's'ka Street. The struggle for memory in relation to L'viv's main thoroughfares becomes even more interesting. For example, the former 29th November Street was replaced after the war by Engels Street, and now bears the name of the pre-war leader of the OUN, Yevhen Konovalets'. The street named after the Polish historian Ludwik Kubala, became Bekhterev Street after the war, after a famous Russian psychiatrist, and is today named after Roman Shukhevych, the UPA leader responsible for ethnic cleansing in Volhynia. The street in L'viv named after Leon Sapieha, who incidentally was one of the most conciliatory of Polish politicians towards the Ruthenian population during the Spring of Nations, is the most interesting example. After 1945, it was renamed after Joseph Stalin, then the name was changed to Mir (Peace) Street, and now it bears the name of Stepan Bandera.[65] The main street in Ternopil', named after Tarnowski – the founder of the city – before the war, was also renamed to honour the leader of the OUN. This was an absolutely unprecedented occurrence. A kind of re-evaluation took place – the memory of the leader of Ukrainian nationalists turned out to be more important to the Ternopil authorities than the founder of their own city. This indicates an identity crisis and a need to build a new history, for in most European cities, particular attention is paid to the founding legend; a founder myth has always fostered, and still fosters, integration within the urban environment. The founders of cities set the starting point for the description of their own heritage and the regional history. A similar phenomenon occurred in Stanislawów (Stanislaviv) - a name that was meant to commemorate Stanisław Rewera Potocki, the father of the city's founder, Andrzej. In 1962, on the 300th anniversary of

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64 P. Włodek, A. Kulewski, *Lwów. Przewodnik*, Pruszków 2006, p. 369.
65 Cf.: *Ibid.*, pp. 406-415; http://ulicelwowa.webpark.pl/, retrieved: 21.03.2010.

the city's founding, Stanislaviv was renamed Ivano-Frankivs'k, in honour of the poet Ivan Franko. Interestingly, the city's old name is still used by some of its inhabitants.

A similar process was, and still is, taking place with regard to monuments. "The construction of monuments is one of the compulsory elements of preservation of memorials in the collective consciousness as well as their visualisation, through their immortalisation in stone and bronze".[66] The author of these words, Vasyl' Rasevych, describing the old monuments in two cities that are currently within the borders of Ukraine, but formerly belonged to the Habsburg Empire – L'viv in Galicia and Chernivtsi in Bukovina – points to the two different traditions of their founding. In L'viv, which was a major centre of Polish national life in the Habsburg monarchy, monuments were erected to commemorate Poles – both prominent government officials (such as the monument to Agenor Gołuchowski) and outstanding cultural and political activists (e.g. the statue of Alexander Fredro, Franciszek Smolka, Kornel Ujejski or Adam Mickiewicz). After World War II, most of these monuments were destroyed or transferred to other cities in Poland.[67] Interestingly, several statues have not been removed: e.g. those of Bartosz Głowacki, Jan Kiliński and the most famous L'viv monument – Adam Mickiewicz – probably due to their undeniable architectural qualities, and also due to the alleged Pan-Slavism of the bard, in line with Soviet ideology. In the two latter cases, it was the "class origin" of the depicted heroes that allowed these monuments to survive in the new ideological system.[68] They have not been removed in independent Ukraine either, even though they are associated with a foreign culture. This indicates a kind of ambivalence in the adopted canon of values. Against this background, Chernivtsi makes for an interesting example, as its public space during the Austro-Hungarian period was "colonised" by monuments paying tribute to the state and the dynasty – something that clearly did not happen in L'viv:

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66 W. Rasewycz, *Polityka pamięci i pomniki: Lwów – Czerniowce*, on: http://www.zaxid.net/articlepl/3902, retrieved: 21.03.2010.

67 The monument to Fredro was located on the Market Square in Wrocław, and the one to Jan III Sobieski in Gdańsk. See.: http://www.lwow.com.pl/pomniki/pomniki.html, retrieved: 21.03.2010.

68 W. Rasewycz, *op. cit.*

a monument to "Austria", erected in 1875 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of Bukovina, a monument of Emperor Franz Joseph, unveiled in 1888 on the 40th anniversary of his reign. Bukovina has also found space to honour the great reformer, Emperor Joseph II. His bust was unveiled on 1 December 1903 in the garden of the German National House. (...)Residents of Chernivtsi erected not only a monument of Emperor Franz Joseph, but also the "Emperor's Rock" with a bas-relief depicting him. The monument of the Austrian Empress Elisabeth was unveiled in Chernivtsi on 15 October 1911.[69]

When, after World War I, Bukovina became part of Romania, the memory was reviewed and the monuments removed. Main squares in cities, like streets and monuments, have symbolic meaning. These popular meeting places are used by municipalities to sanctify the space with monuments of people from the canon of national or state memory. By building monuments at such locations, certain persons or historical events are promoted, thus giving society something to identify with and refer to. The old Sobieski square in Ternopil is the best example of the above. The largest pre-war monument of Józef Piłsudski was built there during the Second Republic. In 1944, it was ostensibly destroyed using chains and a Soviet tank.[70] In the 1960s it was replaced by a monument of the leader of the revolution, Vladimir Lenin, and for a number of years now, visitors have been able to admire a large monument depicting Prince Daniel of Galicia on horseback, which incidentally is very similar to the old monument of the Marshal. Each of the three people depicted on the monument was meant to embody or impose a certain idea. As we can see then, each state or national transformation brought with it an attempt to colonise not only the urban space but also the sphere of ideas. The placement of the monument of Piłsudski on a high pedestal was not only meant as a glorification of the Marshal, but also as an affirmation of the integrity of the south-eastern territory in the Second Republic, a territory that the Marshal not only created but was also an icon of. The monument to Lenin, just like the countless such monuments in the entire Soviet bloc, was a reminder of the implementation of the Bolshevik Revolution. And now, the same place is reused to combine the history of the Principality of Galicia–Volhynia with the currently existing state, as its descendant.

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69 *Ibid.*

70 S. Nicieja, *Moje Kresy. Tarnopol – stolica Podola*, on: http://www.nto.pl/apps/pbcs.dll/article-?AID=/20100220/REPORTAZ/304441116, retrieved: 21.03.2010.

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The struggle against "Polishness" is much more prevalent in this part of Ukraine than, for example, in central Ukraine. This is mainly due to a strong Polish presence in the past. The memory has been captured and the history colonised. And this still goes on today. The above attitude is best exemplified by the demands of L'viv councillors to create an index of "illegal Polish monuments in L'viv", which should lead to their eventual removal (this relates to, among others, the Huta Pieniacka monument, the sword at the Cemetery of Eaglets, and monuments at the Yanivskiy cemetery in L'viv and in other locations).[71]

ATTEMPT AT SUMMARY

On the one hand, Western Ukraine fulfils the criteria for a post-colonial country; on the other, by reacting with the implementation of its own historical policy, it itself becomes an entity that colonises space and collective memory and is thus acting against the histories of other national groups that once contributed to the multicultural social fabric of Eastern Galicia. Without a doubt, one cannot view this region as a land that has constantly been being subjected to colonisation from a number of sources – Polish, Austrian, German and, finally, Soviet. The coexistence of Red Ruthenia (and its elites) within the multinational Commonwealth was something entirely different from the incorporation of Eastern Galicia into Soviet empire under the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, and then later, after the counter-offensive of 1944. In the latter case, we are dealing with a particularly aggressive policy of conquest and a rather unusual colonisation. In the words of Ewa Thompson: "Russian nationalism is both aggressive and defensive, and in its aggressive mode it has transformed itself into an imperial appetite for colonial possession contiguous to ethnic Russia".[72] The Polish-Ukrainian war for Eastern Galicia, and then the cultivation of the state-founding myths, is something quite different to the Soviet expansion. Furthermore,

71 *W obronie polskich pomników*, on: http://www.kresy.pl/wydarzenia?zobacz/w-obronie--polskich-pomnikow, retrieved: 19.03.2010.
72 Quoted after: E. Thompson, *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Language and Colonialism*, London 2010, p. 1

the Ukrainians themselves pursue a policy of appropriating the memory, space and culture in the cities of Western Ukraine. This region does not have one version of the past; different nationalities, religions, cultures, and therefore different memories are intertwined in it. It was, and still is, extremely important not only for Ukrainians, but also for Poles. For both these nations, nineteenth-century L'viv was a centre of both political and cultural national life, and, at the same time, it belonged to the completely foreign Habsburg Empire.

There have been several attempts to impose one version of history, one memory and simultaneously blur or dominate foreign heritage in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This is the essence of European colonialism, which operates not only in the economic field, but also in the field of ideas. It is not literature that is the main measure of the degree of colonialism, it is memory – individual and collective – resulting from one's own experience and confronted with its centrally enforced version. This is where this colonisation of minds takes place. New monuments, street names, historical policies, or "new" historiography are only a visualisation of the process of reacting to an uncontested version of the past.

A reference to the words of Robert Traba seems to be in place here, even though he wrote about the German and Polish memories of World War II, so different in the context of the assessment and definition of historical phenomena and processes of this period. He insists that one should not evaluate the "level of collective memory, as each nation has the right to construct its own ideas about the past. The need to be sensitive to the experience of others is much more important".[73] It also reflects the difficult nature of the Polish-Ukrainian memory of Eastern Galicia / Eastern Lesser Poland / Western Ukraine, as it is hard to force each side to accept uncritically the other side's version of events. A Ukrainian historian, Oleksandr Hrytsenko, referring to his own biographical experience, wrote the following on this issue:

> I also have old books with illustrations separated with translucent paper and various other trinkets, like silver cigar holders, bronze candlesticks, all created by the grandfathers and great-grandfathers of those one-eyed and eight-armed monsters that eat raw meat, drink vodka instead of water, and who in 1939 destroyed Stanisławów and changed it to

73 R. Traba, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

Ivano-Frankivs'k[74]

The historian's task, therefore, is to sensitise communities to the ambiguity of the common historical experience. This seems much more important than looking for evidence of colonial practices by the parties alternately dominant in the geographical territory under examination. It should also be remembered that time did not stand still in Galicia after the end of the last world war. New generations have grown up in its Soviet cities, for which this cultural landscape has different magic and meaning.

Translated by Jarosław Wróblewski

Summary

The authors set themselves the task of drawing attention to the problems of the past and their contemporary implications on the example of the Ukrainian community that once lived or still lives in the area of modern Galicia. This article is, therefore, an attempt to demonstrate those aspects of the history of the region that reveal the manifestations of cultural domination between different ethnic and national groups – all at a time when "the rest of the world" experienced colonialism. For this purpose, the policies of ever-changing political authorities in the region under study are analysed. Subsequently, the authors present their own perspective on contemporary socio-political and socio-cultural processes taking place in the region. The methods of creating the Ukrainian myth of Galicia (Halychyna) and discovering, adopting, and re-interpreting the past reality used by the Galician intellectuals in order to create a coherent and unifying canon of collective memory of the Ukrainian nation based on the Galician version of national identity are also discussed.

74 O. Hrycenko, *Tekst wystąpienia konferencyjnego*, n.d. Cited in: O. Hnatiuk, *op. cit.*, p. 74.