

Yevhen Nakhlik

ORCID: 0000-0001-7701-9795

Ivan Franko Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine,
Ukraine

E-mail: yenakhlik@ukr.net

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The Poetry of Ivan Franko: Themes of Ukrainian National Unity, Statehood and Fight for Freedom

Abstract

This paper is based on the political, philosophical, and journalistic poetry of the Ukrainian writer, thinker, and public and political figure Ivan Franko (1856–1916), on top of the evolution of his views on the problems of national unity of eastern and western Ukrainians, the achievement of Ukrainian statehood, and the ways and means of the liberation struggle is highlighted. The poet and thinker expressed these views in poems of various genres (sonnet, epistle, manifesto, *duma*, dedication – *posviata*, apostrophe, “fairy tale,” obituary, *pomennyk*, “prologue,” “march,” etc.) and lyrical epics. In Franko’s early poetry, the future social and national liberation of Ukraine is linked to a universal and socialist perspectives, while the Ukrainian people play a messianic role in liberating peoples from the yoke of Russian tsarism. In the mature Franko, the messianic emphasis changes from universal to national. It is noteworthy that in Franko’s poetry of 1875–1905 the image of the national (native/our/our own) home appears regularly. At the beginning of the twentieth century, his poetry shows an awakening neo-romantic current. Franko’s state-building

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poetic discourse is characterized by prophesying freedom, relentless therapeutic exposure and scourging of the inert slave mentality of the oppressed nation. In his state-building pathos, Franko refers to the historical duchies, resorts to poetic allegory, and originally processes biblical (Old Testament) plots, images, and motifs, actualizing them and projecting them onto his contemporary Ukraine; he weighs the priorities between humanism and militant nationalism, and reflects on the rationale of numerous Ukrainian sacrifices in the bloody liberation struggle. Reflecting on the problem of power in history, the poet came to the conclusion that national will is measured by the degree of struggle to gain it (and the degree of its defense).

Key words

Ivan Franko's poetry, Ukrainian statehood, national liberation, neo-romanticism, biblical intertext

After a short Russophile period (1874 to first half of 1876), in 1876–1886, Ivan Franko solidarized and interacted mainly with radical socialists in Galicia who, like himself, were influenced by Mykhailo Drahomanov (Mykhailo Pavlyk, Anna Pavlyk, Ostap Terletskyi, early Ivan Belei, and others), but also maintained editorial and journalistic cooperation with the nationalists: Volodymyr Barvinskyi, Damian Hladylovykh, Omelian Partytskyi, and Kornil Ustianovych). As a result, he was caught between two groups. At the same time, Franko became closer to Polish socialists in Galicia (in 1878–1881 he published in the Lviv workers' newspaper *Praca*, in 1889, – in the Krakow *Ognisko* magazine, which gathered sympathizers of socialism and the national movement; in 1889–1891, he printed in the Lviv weekly, *Przyjaciel Ludu*, which was founded and edited by socialist and Freemason Bolesław Wysłouch, and in 1887–1897, he worked on the editorial team of the *Kurjer Lwowski* paper, which was then edited and published by Freemasons Henryk Rewakowicz and Wysłouch). In 1890–1899,

he was one of the leaders of the left-leaning Ruthenian-Ukrainian Radical Party, and late in December 1899, he became a member of the national (center-right) Ukrainian National Democratic Party. Accordingly, the development of Franko's poetic, journalistic, and philosophical work reveals a wide range of motives, from left to right, from short-lived Russophile to early universal, federalist, radical socialist, social revolutionary, and at the same time national-patriotic to advocating state-building, national independence and conservative views in the mature period of his public activity.

There are numerous differences between what Franko expressed in his poetic inspiration and the constraining formal requirements of verse size and what he said in journalistic and scholarly writing, which is better suited for clear and precise formulation of ideas. In his national and patriotic, pan-Ukrainian and state-building poetry, Franko is an inspired poet, an expressor of feelings, aspirations and dreams, unspecified futuristic visions, while in his political and philosophical journalism he is a sober analyst, a thoughtful theorist, a concrete pragmatist and a realist politician. Even if expressed more or less synchronously, Franko's emotionally driven views were not always in tune with the rational views of Franko the publicist. In this article, limited by the space, it is not possible to compare them all, so I will just consider the themes of Ukrainian national unity, statehood, and the liberation struggle in Franko's poetry (for his views on the appropriate and possible form of Ukrainian statehood in his journalism (cf. Nakhlik, 2019)). These themes in Franko's poetry can be traced in the work of many researchers of different times. This article contains a systematization of these poetic motifs in Franko and their modern comprehension in research.

The pan-Ukrainian theme can already be traced in Franko's early Ukrainophile sonnet *Kotliarevskiyi* (1873, printed in 1893), in which Franko, a Galician, linked his own and other Ukrainian writers' works to the poetic opening of the Poltava resident Ivan Kotliarevskiyi, author of the burlesque and parodic poem *Eneida*: "ohnyk, nym zasvichenyi, ... rozhorivs, shchob vsikh nas ohrivaty".¹

¹ Hereinafter, Franko's works are cited following these editions: Franko, 1876–1986; *Pokazhchik kupaiv*, 2009; Franko, 2008, 2010.

This and another sonnet, *Narodnyii pisni* (1873, printed in 1874), in which the young poet was inspired by the “living words” of the traditional folk songs, expressing the “spirit of the people,” reveal that at the Drohobych gymnasium, Franko was formed partly as a romantic folklore lover and a Ukrainian philosopher.

At the same time, the young Franko was no stranger to Russophile sentiments. In his early poem *Vskhid sontsia* (1875, published in 1876) national patriotism, internationalism and humanism are based on theocentric Christian principles. He poet calls out to the God of the “native land” – “Rus” (“*O, sylnyi predkiv nashykh Bozhe!*” [“Oh, the mighty God of our ancestors!”]), complaining, that “*bratnoi liubovy / Mezhi narodamy nema!*” [“There is no brotherly love between the nations!”], his young “soul” “*Vsiu zemliu, liudei by vsikh rada obniaty, ... / Brativ vsikh ziednaty soiuzamy zhody*” [“Would like to all embrace all the Earth, all people ... Unite all brothers with alliances of peace”]. His ideal was “*Liubov bratnia, shcho svit zbavyt, / Zhoda – doch nebes sviata!*” [“Brotherly love, which will save the world, / Peace – the sacred daughter of the heavens!”], and he was calling for national and international harmony based on Christian love of one’s neighbor: “*Na ruinach predkiv slavy ... / Bratnia zhodo, nam vytai*” [“Upon the ruins of ancestors’ glory ... / Welcome, brotherly concord”].

Instead, the political and philosophical message *Tovaryshcham iz tiurny* [To Comrades from Prison] (e.g., printed in 1878) was already a poetic presentation of the socialist ideal of a universal social order – *krainy sviatoi, / De braterstvo, i zhoda, i liubov*: “*Nasha tsil – liudske shchastia i volia*”, “*braterstvo velike, vsesvitnie*” [“the holy land, where there is fraternity, and concord, and love: ‘Our aim is human happiness and freedom’”]. In his social and revolutionary manifesto *Na sudi* [On Trial] (1880, published in 1887) the poet hopes to “*Zvalyty nash suspilnyi lad*” [“Abolish our social order”] with its antagonism between the rich, the lords and kings (*paniv, tsariv*), the oppressed “mute people” [*liudu nimoho*] and the “working hands” [*robuchykh ruk*]. And social revolutionaries want to do this “with truth, and labor, and science” [*pravdoiu, i pratseiu / i naukoiu*], but they admit that “bloody war will be necessary” [*viina / Kryvava znadobytisia*]. The aim of non-violent overthrow does not refer to a national enslaver, but to a social one. As a political thinker, a theorist of social development,

Franko was open to accepting different ways of progress, both peaceful (cultural) and violent, and did not limit himself to one or reject the other; depending on the circumstances, he was ready to recognize the expediency and legitimacy of an armed struggle for liberation (the poem *Berkut* [The Golden Eagle], 1883, printed in 1887), not to mention the fact that he considered war to be a final and just war to defend his country and homeland from a foreign invader, the “villain”. “*Supokii – sviateie dilo / V supokoinyii chasy, / Ta syl v chas viiny ta boiu / Ty zovesh do supokoiu – / Zdradnyk abo trus iesy*” [“Peace is a holy thing in times of peace, but if you call for mourning in times of war and battle, you are a traitor or a coward”] //... “*Ta koly v robuchu poru / V nashu khatu i komoru / Zakradaies lyhkodii, / Shchob zdobutok nash rozkrasty, / Shche i na nas kaidany vklasty, – / Chy i todi sviatyi spokoi?...*” [“But when a villain enters our house and barn in the working day, / To steal our spoils and put chains on us, / Is there still holy peace?”] (*Supokii* [Peace], 1883, printed in 1887).

In addressing the national question, Franko stood on socialist and federalist principles since 1878. Defending the primacy of the socialist idea over the national one, and thus the economic interests of the people over the linguistic and cultural ones, in his early satirical poem *Duma pro Maledykta Ploskoloba* [Thought on Maledykt Ploskolob] (written and published in 1878) ridiculed the Ambassador of the Galician Provincial Sejm and State Council in Vienna, Vasyl Kovalskyi, for what he considered to be a not very relevant demand that Galician “Rusyns” have the right to use paper with inscriptions in their native language and to use it in court proceedings.

In the symbolic and autobiographical poem *Kameniary* [The Stonemasons] (published in 1878), universal messianic accents are placed. Self-denying “stonemasons”, “not heroes” and “not bogatyrs,” selflessly work for “the people” as such; the ideal of the characters and the author related to them is “*dobro nove u svit*” [“new goodness in the world”], “*shchastia vsikh*” [“happiness for all”]. In accordance with the socialist-federalist beliefs Franko held at the time, his poem *Moia liubov* [My Love] (1880, printed in 1881) declares the unity of the national and universal: love for Ukraine is unthinkable without “holy love,” “*do vsikh, shczo lliut svij pit i krov / Do vsikh, kotrykh hnetut okovy*” [“for all who pour their sweat and blood, / For all who are oppressed

by fetters”], that is, all working and enslaved people on earth: “Ni, khto ne liubyt svikh brativ, / Yak sonce Bozhe, vsikh zarivno, / Toi shchiro poliubyt ne vmyv / Tebe, kokhanaia Vkraino!” [“No one who does not love all brothers, like the sun of God, all equally, has not been able to love you, my beloved country!”]. In the poem *Rozvyvaisia, lozo, bodro...* [Grow, vine, abundantly...] (1880, printed in 1882), the revival of Ukraine is presented as serving the progress of all mankind: “Zelenisia, ridne pole, / Ukrainska nyvo! / ... shchob svitu dobra sluzhba / Z tvoho plodu stala!” [“Be green, our native field, Ukrainian soil! / ... So that you can serve well / with your yield!”]. In the sonnet *Pisnia budushchyny* [The Future Song] (1880, printed in 1887) the national and international are intertwined in a kind of romantic way, similar to the endowment of Poland with a liberating historical mission in the works of Mickiewicz, Słowacki and Krasiński, with the difference that in Franko’s case, the messianic role in liberating peoples from the yoke of Russian autocracy belongs to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people: “... z pohordy pylu / Ty otriaseshsia i... Do naitiazhchoho boiu, / Ostatnioho, za pravdu i voliu mylu / Ty povedesh narody i prohnylu / Staru budovu rozvalysh soboiu. / I nad obnovenym, shchaslyvym svitom, / Nad zbratanyim, chystymi liudmy / Ty zatsvitesh novym, prechudnym tsvitom” [“... from the scorn of dust / You will shake yourself off and... to the hardest battle, / The last one, for truth and sweet freedom / You will lead the nations and the rotten / Old structure you will destroy. / And over the renewed, happy world, over the united, pure people, you will spring with a new blossom”]. Franko’s historiosophical prophecy was partially fulfilled in 1917–1921, and especially in 1991, and it is still being fulfilled today, when Ukraine has become an outpost of European nations against the new Russian-imperial military expansion.

In the poetic *Hadki na mezhi* [Thoughts on the baulk] (published in 1881) the freedom of Ukraine also is inseparable from a universal perspective, and socialist in its organization of labor: “Ya dumav pro liudske braterstvo nove, / ... chy v svit vono shvydko pryjde? / I bachyv ya v dumtsi ...: / Upravlena spilnym trudom, ta rillia / Narod hodovala shchaslyvyi, svobodnyi. / ... tse Ukraina, svobodna, nova!” [“I thought about a new human brotherhood, /... will it come soon into the world? / And I watched, thoughtfully... / Cultivated by joint labor,

that arable land / Fed a happy, free people. / This is Ukraine, free and new!"]. The poetic *Posviata Mikhailovi Petrovychu Drahomanovu* [*Dedication to Mykhailo Petrovych Drahomanov*] (written and printed in 1882), too, combines the universal ideals to which the young Galician radicals adhered to, following their Geneva-based emigrant mentor with the dreamed-of national ideal: “*Ta zh Ty vказav nam put ... do liudskosty skarbnnytsi, / Do postupu budovy dokladaty, – / Dobra sobi v dobri dlia vsikh shukaty*” [“But you have shown us the way... to the treasure of humanity, / to add to the progress of building it, / to seek the good for ourselves in the good of others”]. Addressing his teacher, Franko assured him that his Galician students, “sons,” “*vraz z Tobov bazhaiut... shchob Tebe iz vyhnannia, iz dali / Na volnyi my Vkraini povitaly!*” [“They wish together with you... that you would come from exile, from far away, / and be welcome to the free Ukraine!"]. By “free Ukraine,” we should understand, most likely, is the acquisition of social and national rights.

In his rhymed fantasy titled *Poiedynok* [*Duel*] (“*Klubamy vyvsia dym. Revly harmaty...*” [“The smoke tumbled. The cannons roared.”], written in 1883, printed in 1893), Myron (the lyrical “I” of the author) is facing “the holiest battle for humanity” (“*naisviatishoho za liudskist boiu*”).

Meanwhile, thanks to his cooperation in 1880–1886 with the Lviv national magazines *Dilo*, *Zoria*, *Pravda*, *Zerkalo*, and *Nove Zerkalo*, partial rapprochement with their editors (mentioned above), and ties with patriotic figures of the Kyiv *Hromada*, primarily Oleksandr Konyskyi and Volodymyr Antonovych, and in general, under the influence of the then Galician nationalist environment, the press, and various events (literary and musical Shevchenko evenings and other, folk meetings), Franko created a number of purely nationally accented poems in 1880–1884. The famous hymn *Ne pora, ne pora, ne pora...* [“*Tis not the time*”] (between 1880 and 1884, printed in 1887) imbued with the ideas of national self-sufficiency (“*Nam pora dlia Ukrainy zhyt*” [“It’s time for us to live for Ukraine”]), harmony and consolidation (“*ne pora / V ridnu khatu vnosyty rozdor!*” [“It’s not time to bring discord to our home!”], “*Pid Ukrainy yednaimos prapor*” [“Let’s unite under the flag of Ukraine”]), and at the same time sacrificial dedication and national freedom (*volia*): “*U zavzhatij, vazhkii*

borotbi / My poliazhem, shchob voliu, i shchastie, i chest, / Ridnyi kraiu, zdotuty tobi!” [“In a fierce, hard struggle, we will die to win freedom, happiness, and honor for you, our native land!”]. How should one understand this freedom of the “native land”? As a Ukrainian state? From Franko’s political and journalistic reflections of the time, we know that he did not equate the concept of national freedom with the concept of national statehood, but linked the two, according to the theory of federal socialism, to social and national rights and freedoms.

National and unifying accents are also placed in the early poem *Rozvyvaisia, ty, vysoky dube...* [Grow, ye tall oak...] (1883, printed in 1893): “*Pora, dity, dobra pohliadity / Dlia vlasnoi khaty, / Shchob hazdoiu, ne sluhoiu / Pered svitom staty!*” [“It’s time, children, to look out for your own home, to become a master, not a servant, before the world!”]. It voiced the idea of a unified state. The poet believes: “*Vstane slavna maty Ukraina, / shchaslyva i vilna, / Vid Kubani azh do Siana-richky / Odna, nerozdilna*” [“The glorious mother-Ukraine will rise, / happy and free, / from Kuban to the river San / One and indivisible”].

It is indicative of the change in emphasis in the poetic message in *Liakham* [To Poles] (1882, printed in 1887) compared to the poem *Napered!* [Forward!] composed in 1875 in the folk-Russophilic environment of the student “Academic Circle” and the editorial board of the *Druh* magazine (published there at the same time). That early ethnocentric poem had a clear anti-Mickiewicz and anti-Polish orientation, but it was unspecific about the author’s national identity: He opposes the “*liakhiv yarmu*” [“Liakh’s yoke”] to the unspecified “we” and “brothers”, while “Poland” is opposed to “Rus”. The poet called on his peers to fight a decisive struggle “*putem myru*” [“through peace”], “*nauky i pravdy*” [“science and truth”] against Polish rule “in Rus.” This inspired apostrophe by Franko to his young generation (“*yunykhl syl*”) of Galician Ruthenia was a polemical response to Mickiewicz’s famous *Oda do młodości* [Ode to Youth], inspired by the romantic pathos of the heroic creation of a new world. Instead, the message of *Liakham* refers to “Ukraine” as the land of a common state and free and prosperous coexistence between Ukrainians and Poles: “*Bulo kolys voli dovoli / Dlia nas i dla vas na Vkraini, / I khliba dovoli na*

poli, / Lysh zhyty b ta buty donyni ["There used to be enough freedom / for us and for you in Ukraine, / enough bread from the field, / so we could live and be to this day"]. In the new poem, other subjects of the historical tragedy between the Ukrainian and Polish peoples are implied as well: the neighboring imperial powers: because the Poles wanted to "*Nad bratom panamy ostays, / V yarmo yeho shyio pryhnuty*" ["remain masters over their brothers, / to bend their necks in a yoke"], "*Susidy obokh nas z toboiu / I tysnut, i drut, brate liashe*" ["Neighbors of both you and me / Oppress and tear apart, brother Pole"]. Taking into account the bitter lessons of history, the poet no longer encourages the Ukrainian peasants to destroy Poland, as in the poem *Napered! [Forward!]* ("*Ot dnes na Rusy Polshchy nit, / My dnes yu rozvalym!*" ["One day there will be no Poland in Rus, / and one day we will break it apart!"]), but addresses the Poles with a cautionary appeal: "*Brataimosia, liashe, ta shchyro / Hromadoiu, dilom i myrom, / Brataimos, yak z rivnymy rivni, / A ne yak pany i piddani!*" ["Let us fraternize, Pole, and sincerely, / In community, labor, and peace, / Let us fraternize as equals, / not as masters and subjects!"].

In the artistic and conventional imagery of the nation-centered poem *Sviatovechirnia kazka [Christmas Eve tale]* (1883, printed in 1884) the lyrical "I" focuses on the native "Rus-Ukraine", that he sees flying "*na krylakh kherubyma*" ["on the wings of a cherub"] as "*Kokhanuii ridniu*" ["the beloved homeland"] – "*ves ruskyi krai... / Shyrokyi: "Otse ridnia moia!! Otse moia dershava, ...: / Dnister, Dniro i Don, Beskydy i Kavkaz, / ... shvydko vlast chuzha propade z seho polia!"* ["the whole Ruthenian land, the wide. / 'This is my homeland! This is my country... / Dnister, Dnieper and Don, the Beskids and Caucasus, /... Soon will the alien power disappear from this land!"]. In these lines, the pan-Ukrainian theme is intertwined with the national liberation theme, and then the national consolidation motif is also heard: Rus-Ukraine leads the lyrical "I" "*v silskii khaty*" ["to the village cottages"] (to the peasants), "*do pastyryv naroda*" ["to the shepherds of the people"], "*V vikontsia yasnii popivski*" ["Into the bright windows of priests"] (to the clergy), "*v mista... mizh varstaty*" ["to the cities... Among workshops"] (to the workers), then "*v shkoly*" ["to the schools"] (to teachers), "*V palaty sudovi*" ["Into the courtrooms"] (to judges), "*V varstaty dukhovi*" ["Into the workshops of the spirit"]

(to the creative intelligentsia). The poem is Ukraine-centered not only in the national but also in the personal sense: Franko, whose characteristic was a universalism of thought and who repeatedly appealed to “humanity,” connects his existence with his native Ukraine, which, as he prophetically foresees, is the only one that will not ignore or forget him: “*Khoch vse pokyne, ya odna tebe ne kynu, – / Lysh ty liuby mene – svoiu Rus-Ukrainu!*” [“Even if everything abandons you, I will not, / just love me – your Rus-Ukraine!”].

In a poetic obituary *Na smert bl[azhenoi] p[amiati] Volodymyra Barvinskoho dnia 22 sichnia (3 liutoho) 1883 roku* [On the death of the blessed memory of Volodymyr Barvynskyi on January 22 (February 3), 1883], Franko praised the People’s Republican leader as “*ratnyka za ridnyi liud*” [“a warrior for the native people”], and a year later he composed a new respectful *pomennyk, Spomianim!* (*V pershi rokovyny smerty Volodymyra Barvinskoho*) [Remembering! On the First Anniversary of the Death of Volodymyr Barvynskyi], in which he again glorified the “Cossack Volodymyr”, “*shcho na storozhi / Rusy zhynuv*” [“who perished on the guard of Rus”]. The second verse emphasizes the national perspective as a priority for the nationalists: “*Pratsia lysh o vlasnii syli / Nam zbuduie voli dim*” [“Only working on our own strength / Will build our house of the free”].

The *pomennyk* titled *v xxiii-ti rokovyny smerti Tarasa Shevchenka* [On the 23rd anniversary of Taras Shevchenko’s death] (written and printed in 1884) is notable for its inspired prophecy of liberation from the Russian imperial yoke in favor of “*Staroi slavy i syly Ukrainy / Kotra ot-ot voskrese, vstane znov*” [“The old glory and strength of Ukraine, / which is about to rise again”], and the unification of the native country, which had been torn apart by neighboring states: “*Nebavom proiasnytsia svit nad namy! / Shchaslyvi, volni, my zo vsikh storin / Sviatoi Ukrainy hromadamy / Pidem k mohyli tvoii na poklin*” [“Soon dawn will shine upon us! / Happy and free, from all corners / of the holy Ukraine, in crowds / We will come to your tomb to honor you”].

The *pomennyk* titled *V dvadtsiat piati rokovyny smetri Tarasa Hr[yhorovycha] Shevchenka* [On the twenty-fifth anniversary of Taras Hryhrovych Shevchenko’s death], written on 13 March 1886, after Franko’s visit to Kyiv the previous year in the second half of March to early April (printed in 1886), is not so optimistic anymore. In the

Dnieper Ukraine, potential leaders of the people “*Bezsylliam vlasnym skuti, /... Tremtiat, zhduchy vorozhykh stril*” [“Are shackled by their own powerlessness,... / They tremble, waiting for enemy arrows”], and complain: “*Malo nas! / Kudy to rvatsia nam? I khto pide za namy?*” [“We are few! / Where should we go? / And who will follow?”]. “*A molodizh, nadiia Ukrainy*” [“And the youth, the hope of Ukraine”], is joining the all-Russian liberation movement “*pid praporom chuzhym i na chuzhomu poli!*” [“under an alien flag and in the alien land!”]. And “*tut... de pidkarpatski dity*” [“here,... where Subcarpathian children”] (mostly youth) “came to honor Shevchenko’s name”, they also declare: “*bidni my chyslom i rozumu maloho, – / A nyni b ne ditei, muzhiv tut treba mnoho!*” [“we are scarce in numbers and feeble in mind – / And today many men are needed, not children”]. Therefore, the apostrophe to “our martyred prophet” is imbued with a romantic motif of national grief and ends with moods of sorrow and hopeful questions: “*Slabi my, batku! Po Kavkaz vid Sianu / Slabi, rozbyti na atomiv drib! / ... Chy skoro bude svit po tij strashennii nochi?*” [“We are weak, father! / From the Caucasus from San {river} / Weak, broken into tiny atoms!”].

For Franko, as the author of the national-patriotic poem, *Proloh na pamiat 50-tykh rokovyn smerty Ivana Kotliarevskoho* [Prologue in memory of the 50th anniversary of the death of Ivan Kotliarevskiy] (published and printed in 1888), “*Kotliarevskiy, batko nash Ivan*” [“Kotliarevskiy, our father Ivan”] is “*Odyn z poslidnykh svidikiv toho, jak / Poslidni iskry volnoho zhyttia / Pomalu hasly, popelom vkryvalys*” [“One of the last witnesses of how / The last sparks of free life / Little by little, covered with ashes”], “*vin / Z velikoho pozharu Ukrainy / Naibilshu spas narodnu sviatist – slovo*” [“he / From the great fire of Ukraine / Salvaged the people’s greatest sanctity – the word...”], “*Sam syloiu svoieiu voli i pisni / Mynuvshynu Ukrainy zviazav / Z budushchynoiu stiahom zolotym*” [“Alone, by the power of his will and song / Connected the past of Ukraine / With the future, with a golden stitch”]. The poem emphasizes the enslavement of Ukraine by the Russian Empire, and its policy of violent Russification: “*Pid nevoli hnetom*” [“under the burden of slavery”] “*Pryhkodylos / Poboriuvat Eolovi vitry, / Shcho rizko vialy z pivnochi*” [“To fight the Aeolian winds, / Which blew strongly from the north”]. “*Charivnyk-moskal*” [“The Muscovite wizard”] “*Pryshov u khatu vdovy Ukrainy / I shvydko stav u nii riadyt po-svomu, / Yak pan.*”

Ne pomohla sprechka zhodna – / ‘Malchat, stara!’ – otse ioho vsi chary, / Po-zvirsky prosti i, yak zvir, mohuchi! / ... Nyni my / Pid vahotoiu toho slova stohnem, / A slovo nashe – zapakhushcha kvitka / Na vseslavianskii nyvi – topches v griaz, / Prosliduies, mov dykyi zvir u lisi [“Came to the house of the widow-Ukraine / And he quickly began to rule it in his own way, / Like a lord. Not a single argument helped: / ‘Shut up, old woman!’ – that’s all his charms, / Beastly simple and, like a beast, powerful! / ... Now we / Groan under the weight of that word, / And our word is a fragrant flower / In the all-Slavic field – trampled into the mud, / Running like a wild animal in the forest”]. However, in the final chords of the poem, the poet expresses his faith in the liberation of Ukraine from the Russian imperial yoke: “*Shche derevam nasyllia i samovoli, / I hnetu, i samodurstva, i temnoty / Ne suzhdeno do neba dorosty / I sontse nam navik zakryty! Blysne / Te sontse yasne, roziidusia khmary! / Upadut ti tverdnyi, shcho nam nyni / Tiurmoiu, i zalunaie nashe slovo, / Prekrasne i svizhe, na ves svit, nanovo!*” [“The trees of violence and arbitrariness, / And oppression, and tyranny, and darkness / Are not destined to grow in heaven / And block the sun from us forever! It will shine / The bright sun, the clouds will disperse! / Those present strongholds will fall / The prison, and our word will be heard, / Beautiful and fresh, for the whole world, anew!”].

One should note the appearance in Franko’s poetry of 1875–1905 (that is, actually for three decades) of the image of native/ou / own / own (meaning: national) home [or country cottage – *khata* – trans.]. In the early poem *Koliada (ruskym hospodaram)* [Christmas carol (for the Rus farmer)], dated December 24, 1875 (probably on Christmas Eve) (printed in 1876), “*Ruska zemlytsia*” [Rus land] is pictured as “our house”. In *Yak dvoie liubliatsia, a zhdut...* [When two people love each other, and are waiting...] (1883, printed in 1926) Franko, appealing to “my nation”, prophesized the coming of a time, “*Koly shchaslyvyi i mitsnyi, / Do pratsi stanesh na svii lan / I v svoii khati budesh pan*” [“When, happy and strong, / Will toil your own land, / And will be a master of your house.”].

The unanimous revision of the 1893 (first) edition of the allegorical poem, *Naimyt [Worker for hire]* (written and printed in 1876) also provides an example. In both editions, after outlining the social

antagonism of landlords and peasants (the worker for hire, a servant “*dlia dobra chuzhoho... Pit krovavyi llie, /... Potom truda svoho / Panam panovanie daie*” [“for the good of others... sweats blood, /... the result of his labor / He gives dominion to the lords”]), the poet proceeds to an allegory of the social and national enslavement of the Ukrainian people: “*Toi naimyt – nash narod, shcho potu llie potoky / Nad nyvoiu chuzhov*” [“That hireling is our people, who labors so painstakingly / a stranger to the field”].² Hence, in the first edition, the leitmotif of liberation is logically highlighted: “*Sviatoi volenki vin dovhi zhde stolitia, / ... v serci, khot i yak nedoleiu prybytim, / Nadiai vonosty zhyie*” [“He awaits the sacred freedom for long centuries, /... In his heart, even though it’s crushed by misfortune, / The hope for freedom lives”]. Addressing his native people, Franko prophesied in the original version: “*I volnyi vlasnyi lan / Ty znov oratimesh, shchasliv iz svoho trudu, / U shchastiu, yak u horiu, – velykan!*” [“And your own field / You’ll plow again, happy with your labor, / a giant in happiness as in sorrow!"]. These lines express the futuristic idea of people working on their own account in a free homeland. In the second edition, the author strengthened the prophetic liberation theme, emphasizing that “our people” will not only enjoy the fruits of their labor, but also rule over their land: “*I volnyi vlasnyi lan / Ty znov oratimesh, vlastyvets svoho trudu, / I v vlasnim kraii sam svij pan!*” [“And your own field / You’ll plow again, owner of your labor, / And your own master in your land”].

Over time, Franko became even more imbued with the idea of the rule of the Ukrainian people over their native land, as evidenced by the poem *Velyki rokovyny. Proloh, hovorenyi pered yuvileinoiu vystavoioi ‘Natalky Poltavky’ v pamiat stolitnykh vidrodyn ukrainsko-ruskoi narodnosti*” [Great Chronicles. Prologue, recited before the jubilee performance of ‘Natalka Poltavka’ in memory of the hundred-year rebirth of the Ukrainian-Rus nation] (written and printed in 1898): after the

2 Franko probably borrowed the image of the Galician people as workers for hire from an article by Drahomanov, which he had read, that warned: “While little by little... Galician patriots will work on literature,... foreign elements will continue to grow, and the Galician people will have to either ended up becoming hirelings in their own land, or will turn their hopes to a bloody revolution” (Drahomanov, 1874, p. 381).

loss of Cossack statehood, Ukrainians “*Znov... bazhaiut v ridnii khati / Rai zhotovyty sobi*” [“Again... want to make their native home / into a paradise for them”]. The image of “freedom” (as national liberty and power) “in their native home” is also rehabilitated in *Sichovy marsh [The Sich march]* (written and printed in 1905): “*V nashii khati nasha volia, / A vsim zaidam zas!*” [“We have our freedom in our home, / and no one else can come in”].

In *Velyki rokovyny*, Franko projects the messianic action on every compatriot, realizing that the fate of the nation depends not only on exceptional personalities, such as the one poetized in the poem: “*slavnyi, beztalannyi / Shchyrnyi batko nash Bohdan*” [“famed, unlucky / our earnest father, Bohdan” (Cossack hetman Bohdan B. Khmelnytskyi), but also from as many active and selfless fighters as possible: “*Do velykoho momentu / Bud hotovym kozhdyi z vas, – / Kozhdyi mozhe stat Bohdanom, / Yak nastane slushnyi chas*” /... *Kozhdyi dumai, shcho na tobi / Milioniv stan stoit, / Shcho za doliu milioniv / Musysh daty ty odvit*” [“Be ready for the big moment, / each of you – / Everyone can become a Bohdan, / when the time is right / Everyone know you have / a fortune of millions on your shoulders, / you must give an answer to”].

In general, in 1897–1906, Franko was seized by a new urge to create nationally accented poetry. In his national-philosophical poem *Yakby... [If...]* (1897, published in 1898), the poet interpreted the dreamed statehood of Ukraine in the context of national struggles (“rivalry”) from the Cossack era to his present day and through the lens of the New Testament themes as well as ones derived from the pillars of romanticism, such as suffering and atoning sacrifice (redemption), liberation struggle, in addition to the positivist foundation of work. The figurative semantics of the poem (*Vkraina, panuvannia, svoboda, volia, slava, borba*) suggests that it is a kind of reprise of the national anthem of the then-popular poet Pavlo Chubynskyi and composer Mykhailo Verbytskyi, “*Shche ne vmerla Ukraina, / Ni slava, ni volia... (“Zapanuiem i my brattia / U svoii storontsi”, “Dushu i tilo my polozhym / Za nashu svobodu*” [“Ukraine has not yet died, / neither glory nor freedom...” / We, brothers, will also reign / in our country”, “We will lay down our body and soul / for our freedom”)] – emphasis mine Ye. N.). Franko rejects the factor

of suffering and atonement cultivated in Polish and Ukrainian romanticism as a guarantee of future liberation as ineffective: “*Yakby samo velykeie strazhdannia / Mohlo tebe, Vkraino, vidkupyty, – / Bulo b tvoie velyke panuvannia, / Nikomu b ty ne musyla vstupyty*” [“If the great suffering itself / Could redeem you, Ukraine, / your dominion would be great, / and you would not have to yield to anyone”]. According to Franko’s historiosophical observation, the Ukrainian people, among other European nations, shed the most blood and tears in the liberation struggle, but did not get the desired freedom: “*Yakby mohuchist, shchastia i svoboda / Vidmirialys po miri krovi i sliz, / Prolytykh z sertsia i z ochei naroda, – / To khto b z toboiu supirnystvo znis?*” [“If power, happiness, and freedom / were measured by the amount of blood and tears / shed from the heart and eyes of the people, / who would rival you?”].

Five years later, in the *Proloh* (printed in 1903) to his unfinished poem *Lisova idyliia* [*Forest Idyll*], Franko would remark in the same spirit: “... *nikhto shche / Plachem svoiei doli ne vidper*” [“Nobody has yet / changed their fate by crying”]. This philosophical observation resonates with Mickiewicz’s sad remark “*na źale ten świat nie ma ucha!*” [“the world has a deaf ear for complaints!”] addressed to fellow emigrants in the epilogue to the poem *Pan Tadeusz*. In Franko’s translation of the epilogue of *Pro shcho tut dumat na paryzhskim bruku...* [What to think of on Parisian pavement...] (1913, printed in 1914): “... *na zhal sei svit ne maie vukha*” [“Unfortunately, this world has a deaf ear”]. Instead, the author of *Yakby...*, based on his own observations of the course of history, considers forceful struggle (“*Volia, slava, suyla / Vidmiriuiursia miroiu borby!*” [“Freedom, glory, strength / Measured by the measure of struggle!”]) and work on the “wide field” of “mother”-Ukraine to be effective ways of national liberation. Franko’s historiosophical conclusion that national freedom is measured by the struggle for its acquisition (and the measure of its protection) resonates with the teachings of the young Mickiewicz in his programmatic poem *Oda do młodości*: “*Gwałt niech się gwałtem odciska*” [“May there be violence for violence”] – and remains valid and instructive today.

In *Pokhoron* [*Funeral*] (printed in 1899) the existence of the Ukrainian people is understood in social and national liberation

aspects. Having started a “*khlopskie povstannia*” [“peasants’ rebellion”] “*za prava liudei, za voliu*” [“for the rights of people, for freedom”] – liberation from the yoke of “aristocrats” and “nobles” and in order to “*Zrobyty panom na svoiomu poli*” [“make {the native people} masters of their land”], the “leader” (*provodyr*) Myron, however, prefers to be defeated than to win, because he sees in the rebellious “avengers” (*mesnyky*) – albeit fighting “heroes” full of “holy fire” – “*idealu brak, vysokikh zmahan, viry*” [“a lack of ideals, of high aspirations, of faith”], and therefore he is not satisfied with “*pobida mas, / Brutalnykh syl, plebeistva i netiamy*” [“the victory of the masses, of brute forces, of plebeians and ignoramuses”], those who “*v dushy svoii buly i temni, i pidli, / Taki zh raby, yak upered buly*” [“were dark and mean in their souls, / slaves that they were before”]. Franko expresses a far-sighted prediction of the danger that in the event of a victory of the peasant anti-feudal and national liberation revolution, uncultured mob rule (ochlocracy) may emerge. At the end of the poem (in the Epilogue), the subject of the narrative’s disturbing reflections and action concerning “our people” not as a social community (*khlopy* – peasants) but as an ethnic one – “*plemia sonne, i boliashche, / i malovirne*” [“a tribe sleepy and sore, / and unbelieving”] come to the fore. In the final “deep thought”, the hero is most “tormented” by the problem of national self-preservation, self-sufficiency, and the dignity of “our people”, crippled by national apostasy: *I chom vidstupnykiv u nas tak mnoho? / I chom dlia nykh vidstupstvo ne strashne? / Chom ridnyi stiah ne tiahne ikh do svoho?* [“And why do we have so many apostates? / And why is apostasy not terrible for them? / Why doesn’t their native banner draw them to their own?”]. Why is not “*sluzhba vorohu, shcho z nas shche i kpyt*” [“serving the enemy who mocks us”] repulsive to them? Originally developed in “our time of great class and national antagonisms”, the “legend of the great sinner who turns to the righteous path thanks to the vision of his own funeral” (as the author says in the preface) testifies to Franko’s “conversion” to national priorities. Ukrainians should not be subordinate, but a full-fledged actor in history, an independent and at the same time a cultural political force – this is the ideological imperative of the poem.

The problem of the prudence of many national sacrifices in the bloody liberation war falls into Franko’s field of vision. *Pokhoron*

suggests that the deaths of the heroes who “*muchenytskyi prynialy vinets*” [“accepted the martyrdom crown”] will not be in vain: “*Ikh smert – zhyttia rozbudyt u narodi. / Se pochatok borni, a ne kinets. / Teper narod v nykh maie zhertwy vzir / I nenastannyi do posviat pidpal; / Ikh smert budushchi rody pererodyt, / Vshchepyt bezsmemrtnu sylu – ideal*” [“Their death will awaken life in the people. / This is the beginning of the struggle, not the end / Now the people have in them the image of a sacrifice, / and the unceasing fire of dedication; / Their death will rebirth future generations, and instill an immortal power – the ideal]. The “leader” Myron not only optimistically interprets mass “heroic death” as a guarantee of the future revival of the “people”, but also drives the “chained people”, like “*nemov lihyvyi skot, / V ohon i v sichu, v trudy i nebezpeky, / Shchob nibechnit plebeiski svi instynkty, / Shchob hartuvalys lytsari-zapeky*” [“like lazy cattle, / into fire and brimstone, into toil and danger, / to destroy all plebeian instincts, / to harden them into fierce knights”]. He even throws the rebels “to the slaughter” in order to “inflare, ignite” the “souls” of future generations for the desired victory.

In the poem *Na ritsi vavylonskii – i ya tam sydiv...* [By the river of Babylon, I sat, too...] (1901, printed in 1902), which is an original reinterpretation of the biblical Psalm 137: “By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept” with its motifs of exiles’ longing for their native land and the problem of singing songs in captivity, Franko introduces the theme of mercilessly exposing and scourging the inert slave mentality of the enslaved nation. The conditions of national subjugation depicted in the poem do not turn it into complete slavery, physical and spiritual, the enslaved enjoy certain social freedoms and material goods. However, they do not use these even limited social rights, freedoms and prosperity as opportunities for liberation, on the contrary, they are levers be mans of which the enslavers keep the conquered people in captivity, providing them with a kind of servile existence and causing the enslaved people to fear losing the commodities provided to them. Thus, being in captivity is tolerable and, thanks to adaptability, even financially secure. Hence the slavish deformation, the underdevelopment of the national psychology, the split soul in the enslaved, which, despite a desire for freedom, is formed as cautious, conformist, and slavish in a patient and even comfortable way. This

national mimicry, the fear of openly expressing one's opinion, become common features of slave mentality: „*I khoch zris ya, mov kedr, shcho vinchaie Lyvan, / Ta dusha v mni pokhla, povzka, mov burian. / ... Khoch ya put ne noshu na rukakh, na nohakh, / Ale v nervakh noshu vse nevolnytskii strakh. / Khoch ya volnym zovus, a, yak rab, spynu hnu / I svobidno v lytse nikomu ne zyrnu. / Pered blaznem usiakym koriusia, breshu, / Volne slovo v dushi, nache svichku, hashu. ... / Khoch dobra dorobyvs, ta vono lysh tiazhyt*” [“Though I have grown like a cedar that crowns Lebanon, / my soul is sloping, creeping like a weed. / Though I wear no fetters on my hands or feet, I still carry the fear of slavery in my nerves. / Though I call myself a free man, I bend my back like a slave, and I look no one in the face freely. / I bend and lie before every clown, I extinguish my free word in my soul like a candle... / Though I have gained goods, they only weigh me down”].

At the same time, in such a sharply reprehensible way, the author encourages his compatriots to actively fight for national liberation, while, as can be inferred from the poem, he also allows for an armed act of liberation. So, the self-critical national theme in poetry gives way to a creative, rebellious and liberating one: “*Ya khyllytsia pryvyk vid dytyniachykh lit / I vsmikhatsia do tykh, shcho katuiut mij rid. / I khoch chasom, mov hrim, hrymne slovo moie, / To tse bliashanyi hrim, shcho nikoho ne vbie. / I khoch dushu manyt chasom voli prybav, / Ale krov moia – rab! Ale mozok mij – rab! / ... I hkoch chasom v dushi pidiimaietsia bunt. / Shchob is put otriastys, staty tvrdo na hrunt, – / Akh, to i se ne toi hniv, shczo shabliuku styska, / Se lysh zloba nyzka i serditist rabska*” [“I’ve been bowing down since childhood / and smiling at those who torture my kind. / And though my words may sometimes be like thunder, / They are tin thunder that will kill no one. / And though my soul is sometimes drawn to the lure of freedom, My blood is a slave! And my brain is a slave! / And though my soul sometimes rises in rebellion. / To shake off the fetters, to stand firmly on the ground, / – Oh, this is not the anger that clutches a saber, / This is only low anger and a slave’s grudge].

With such a powerful philosophical and poetic “therapy” of the slave mentality of the subjugated nation, Franko affects the readers using the opposite method: the listed negative formulations should turn into positive ones in their perception.

A notable component of Franko's state-building artistic discourse of the beginning of the 20th century became his neo-romantic "awakening" poetry. Like the Galician romantic revivalists Markian Shashkevych, Ivan Vahylevych, Nikolai Ustianovych, Antin Mohylnytskyi, Yosyf Levytskyi, Volodymyr Shashkevych, K. Ustianovych, etc., the Bukovyna poet Yurii Fedkovych, as well as Panteleimon Kulish in the poems of the *Dzvin* [*The Bell*] collection (1893), to which Franko responded with a review (*Zhytie i Slovo*. 1894. Vol. 2. 5), he appeals to duchy statehood in his state-building pathos. Although in the late Kulish (not only in his poetry, but also in his artistic prose and philosophical journalism), the appeal to the cultural and state heritage of Kyivan Rus was ideological and conceptual, political and historiosophical, embodied in the original concept of Old Rus, in the mature Franko it was episodic: In the poems *Kryk sered pivnochi v yakims hlukhym okoli...* [*A scream in the night in some remote area*], *Vyishla v pole ruska syla...* [*The power of Rus stepped out...*] (both printed in 1902), *I dosi nam snytsia...* [*And we still dream...*] (written and printed in 1906). They are based on the *Tale of Igor's Campaign*, as evidenced by the relevant epigraphs. According to the romantic tradition, the poems *Kryk sered pivnochi v yakims hlukhym okoli...* and *I dosi nam snytsia...* express a longing for the heroic, albeit tragic, princely past, which contrasts with the sleepy, servile present, and stands in contrast to the indifference and obedience of the generations contemporary to the author with the brave ancestors. However, the poet does not idealize princely Rus.

In the poem *Vyishla v pole ruska syla...* his attention is focused on the present, and it is presented not in opposition to the heroic past, but in parallel to it: he depicts the revival of Ukrainianness, national manifestation and consolidation in the struggle for national rights: "*Vyishla v pole ruska syla, / Korohvamy pole vkryla; / Korohvy, yak mak, leliut, / A mechi, yak iskry, tliut ...*" [*"The Rus' army came out into the field, / and covered the field with banners; / The banners, swaying like poppies, / and swords, glowing like sparks"*]. Since foreigners were concerned about the massive entry of Ukrainians into the political arena of that time, they opposed them and attacked them with abuse (this is emphasized by the epiphany "*A lysytsi v poli breshut*" [*"And foxes are lying in the field"*] repeated at the end of the

first three stanzas, an allusive reminiscence of the epigraph: “The foxes yelp at the vermilion shields”), the poet resorts to a kind of political correctness, depicting the Ukrainians’ protest as inevitable resistance to aggressive neighbors: “*Vyishla v pole ruska syla, / Ne shchob brata zadusyla, / Ne shchob slabykh hrabuvaty, / A shchob ordy vidbuvaty, / ... Ne chuzhoho my bazhaiem, / Ta i svoie ne znevazhaiem, / Ta i ne pen my dereviany, / Shchob terpity styd i rany ...*” [“The Rus’ army came out into the field, / Not to strangle a brother, / Not to rob the weak, / But to repel hordes... / We do not want what’s not ours, / But we do not despise our own, / And we are not a wooden stump, / To endure shame and wounds...”]. Thus, in this historical excursion, the poem involves the national past. The author poetizes the stages of the Ukrainian “freedom” from the duchy of Rus to Haidamachchyna: the “foxes” “*Breshut na shchity chervoni, / Yak brekhaly vo dni oni,... / Zavdaly zh lysytsiam zhakhu / Ti shchity! I dosi snytsia / Im ta ruskaia volnytsia, / ... Te kozatstvo, haidamatstvo, / Shcho ne znalo voli vpynu, / Shcho borolys do zahynu; / I proishlo, yak more krovy, / ... Po istorii Vkrainy...*” [They lie to the red shields, / as they lied in those days,... / Those shields terrified the foxes! / And they still dream of that Rus freedom, / ... The Cossacks, the Haidamaks, / Who did not know freedom to the end, / who fought to the death; / and passed like a sea of blood, / ... Through the history of Ukraine...]. The image of Cossacks and Haidamaks in the poem is ambivalent: there is both a much-desired national “freedom” and a “sea of blood” that is undesirable for a humane poet. At the same time, this image sounds like a warning to invaders.

In *Dosi nam snytsia...*, to which the words of Prince Ihor were chosen as the epigraph: “*A liubo yspyty shelomom Donu*” (or “*Abo napytsia sholomom z Donu*” [“or drink a helmetful of the Don”]), is a continuation of the previous phrase: “*S vamy, Rusytsy, khochu hlavu svoiu prylozhyty*” [“I wish either to lay down my head”]), there are also allusive reminiscences from two works in which the hydronyms of the San and Don symbolize the western and eastern borders of Ukrainian ethnic lands and the future free Ukrainian state: the poem by the Galician poet and publicist Ksenofont Klymkovych *Velyky rokovyny* (Slovo. Lviv, 1863. № 5. 16/28. 1): *Iz-vid Donu ta azh do Sianu* [From the Don to the San], one of the most common versions

of the national anthem, *Shche ne vmerla Ukraina*. “*Stanem, brattia, vsi za voliu, / Vid Sianu do Donu, / V ridnim kraiu panuvaty / Ne damo nikomu*” [“We will rise, brothers, all for freedom, / From the San to the Don, / We will not let anyone / rule in our native land”] (the original edition by P. Chubynskyi in the Lviv *Meta* magazine, 1863, № 4, does not include these verses). Franko alluded to these symbolic boundary hydronyms immediately in the first stanzas of the poem: “*I dosi nam snytsia, / I dosi manytsia / Blakytneho toho Donu / Sholomom napytsia. / Vid rodu do rodu / Siu daleku vodu / My spivaly-spomynaly, / Yak mriu-svobodu. / Yakby-to nam z Donu / Ta ne bulo hromu, / To vzhe b my nad Buhom, Sianom / Ne dalys nikomu*” [“And still we dream, / and still we fantasize about the blue Don, of drinking a helmetful of it. / From generation to generation / We sang and remembered / this distant water / As a dream of freedom. / If only there had been no defeat on the Don, / We would have been over the Bug and the San, / We would have been unstoppable”].

According to the poet, the reasons for the national captivity of Ukraine lie in the unfavorable geopolitical situation of the Kyiv state, the vulnerability of its eastern borders, unprotected from the steppe hordes, as well as in the strategic miscalculations and tactical failures of the Kyiv dukes: “*Yakby-to nad Donom / Staly my riadamy, / Zaliznymy pantsyriamy / Sperlysia z ordamy! ... / Bula b nas ne rvala / Steoppvaia ptakha, / Yakby na Donu stoialy / Chaty Monomakha*” [“If only we had stood / in rows over the Don, / If only we had fought the hordes / with iron armor! //... The steppe bird would not have torn us apart, / If Monomakh’s sentries had stood on the Don”]. In the second half of the poem, the mythologeme of the river Don serves the author to bitterly conclude about the enslaved situation of eastern Ukrainians who did not conquer the Don. Instead, some of them were forced to move to the Donetsk basin in search of earnings: “*Dovelos-taky nam / Nad tym Donom staty / Robitnytskymy valkamy / Baidaky taskaty //... Pid zemleiu dla chuzhoho / Kamin-vuhil tsiukat*” [“We had to become / laborers over that Don / and pull the *baidaks*. / Under the ground mine for coal for the alien men”]. The poem contrasts the former national “our good” [*nash harazd*] from the times of the princely state with the work “for someone else”, that is, for a foreign country, state, or nation.

It was in those years that Franko again, as at the turn of the 1870s and 1880s, pondered the problem of power in history. From under his pen comes an unexpected and, at first glance, untypical poem *Konkistadory* [*Conquistadors*], imbued with romanticizing of armed raids (written and printed in 1904). This is a vivid heroization of strength and courage in history. However, if Franko's historical novel *Zakhar Berkut* (1882, printed in 1883) vividly depicts how the people of Tukholka put up a courageous resistance to the Mongol invasion, while in *Konkistadory*, on the contrary, the European conquerors of present-day Latin America and their attack on the peaceful "sleeping town" are poeticized. In Franko's scientific and journalistic works, we can find unique statements that are consistent with the pathos of defense in *Zakhar Berkut*. Why did the poet create this work and how does it fit into Franko's reflections on international struggles in history?

Despite the conquistador theme, *Konkistadory* as a poem is only superficially related to the history of the conquest of Latin America. Franko is not talking about the Spanish or Portuguese conquistadors. They are distant and foreign to him. It is not their militant heroism, which was used for conquest, that the Ukrainian poet actually praises. Sensitive to the liberation struggle of enslaved peoples, condemning the occupation of foreign lands, Franko could not have sympathized with the aggressive way of the conquistadors, who subjugated and exterminated the indigenous population of America. In the same year, in the article "Poduvy vesny v Rosii" ["Spring storms in Russia"], he noted:

Read the most prominent representatives of the Russian thought of the Nikolaev time – Pushkin and Lermontov, read what they say about the Caucasus – not a trace of the idea that those Caucasian highlanders have any right to independent life in their mountains and that war against them involves raiding and oppression, drowning free ethnic groups in blood, and not any civilization.

And a year before that, in the critical review "Shcho take postup?" ["What is progress?"], Franko illustrated the thesis "What steep roads sometimes human progress takes!" with the following example:

And it also happens that newcomers, like the Huns and Magyars once, arrive to an already inhabited region and begin to exterminate the older population like wild animals, or turn them into slaves by force in order to occupy their land. Such was the case with those Dutch settlers in South Africa who are now called Boers. Having left Europe 300 years ago, they cleared space at the Cape of Good Hope with obvious robbery; when the British came there later and took the region, part of the Boers ... went a little to the north and again destroyed a couple of African tribes and settled on their land ...; when the country was also conquered by the British, the Boers went even further north and once again plundered the vast lands 'beyond the mountains'... and the springs of the Orange River...

According to Franko's definition, those Boer conquerors were "little robbers". Here, Franko, traces the "complicated ways" of "human progress", giving the conquerors, "newcomers", an assessment from the point of view of humanism, clearly branding them as robbers. And much earlier in the second part of his *Prychynky do otsinennia poezii Tarasa Shevchenka* [Introduction to evaluating the poems of Taras Shevchenko], the article "Temne tsarstvo" ["Dark kingdom"] (written and printed in 1881) the young Franko explained his understanding of heroism:

In the times of great fanatical blindness of people, we see many such cases that make the hearts of next generations tremble, but which, however, no one thinks to count as heroic deeds. Only such a deed can be called heroism, where the pain and suffering of an individual acquires or redeems the good of the whole nation, the whole of humanity.

In the continuation of "Temne tsarstvo" (1882), Franko placed Shevchenko with his "heartfelt words" of "harmonious brotherhood" in the poem *Kavkaz* [Caucasus] – solidarity with the liberation struggle of the Caucasian peoples – "higher... than Pushkin, who in the poem *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* unapologetically praises the war against the Caucasians from the position of the greatness and glory of Russia..." (Franko refers to this imperial expansion a "predatory war").

It is noteworthy that in the poem *Velyki rokovyny*, Franko condemns the escape of Aeneas with the Trojans from Troy captured by the

Greeks and their search for a “better fate”, “luxuries”, “And glory, and brilliance, and gold” as a betrayal of their fatherland: “*Tikaie inshoi shukaty khaty. / Piatamy nakyvav vid tebe, nene! / Lyshyv tebe u ranakh, u krovi! / ... / Pishly novoi matery shukat*” [He runs away to look for another home, / / Pointing his heels away from you, mother! // I left you in wounds, in blood! / ... / We went to look for a new mother”]. For Franko, the desperate conquistadors are only an excuse and a means for poetic allegorization. For the same reason, the author abstracts from the suffering, the interests and the historical tragedy of American natives in the poem. The projection of the unconditional courage and zeal of the conquistadors onto the Ukrainian situation is meaningful and relevant for the poet: for him, it is important to educate Ukrainians to be ready for the unconditional, if necessary armed, acquisition of their rights and their statehood. In the end, the reconquest of their land (in his understanding, this is heroism for “the good of the whole nation”). Franko sets the desperate militant heroism of the conquistadors as an example for Ukrainians in his contemporary national competitions and in the future, revolutionary and liberating upheaval: in the struggle for national freedom, one must go resolutely to the end, without hesitation, recklessly and fearlessly, without leaving a humiliating escape route to retreat, because only in this way can the dreamed state independence be acquired. Here is the allegorical essence of this inspired neo-romantic poem, its heroic and acquisitive pathos: „*Ta zaky rushat, puskajte / Skriz ohon po korabliakh, / Shchob vsi znaly, shcho nema nam / Vorottia na staryi shliakh. / ... Shcho za namy, khai naviky / Vkryie popil zhyttovyi! / Abo smert, abo pobida! – / Tse nash oklyk boiovnyi!*” [“But when they set sail, let them / fire at the ships, / so that everyone knows that we / have no return to the old way. /... Let the ashes of life cover us forever! / Death or victory! – This is our battle cry!"]. The poem is not about the past conquest of America, but about the future achievement of Ukraine’s freedom, not about the historical conquering heroism of the conquistadors, but about the longed-for liberation heroism of Ukrainians. Recognizing that history is far from a peaceful competition of nations, Franko glorifies military, combative heroism, the acquisition of land for his ethnic group, and armed struggle for territory: “*Krov i trud os tut zdvyhne nam / Novu,*

krashchu vitchynu!” [“Blood and labor will build us / a new, better fatherland here!"]. Anticipating the upcoming liberation struggles in the Austria-Hungary and Russian Empire, the poet sends his nation characteristic symbolic impulses. It is no coincidence that the aphoristic statement from this neo-romantic poem is apt: “*Do vidvazhnykh svit nalezhyt*” [“The world belongs to the brave”] became one of the slogans of the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity.

Konkistadory fits in with Franko’s another work of the time, the poem *Moisei* [Moses] (written and published in 1905). The prologue to *Moisei*, pan-Ukrainian and state-like in its content, immediately begins with an appeal to the people (“My people...”), after which the author’s ideal is inspiredly stated: united and free Ukrainian people from the Caucasus to the Beskids and to the Black Sea. Earlier, Franko the publicist, disappointed and angry with his defeat in the March 1897 elections to the State Council in the Przemyśl, Sambir, Mostyska, and Drohobych regions, noted skeptically in the same year in the Polish-language preface “*Nieco o sobie samym*” [“A little about myself”] to his collection of short fiction *Obrazki galicyjskie* [Pictures from Galicia] (published in May): “... The future [of Ukraine – Ye. N.] is unknown to me and I see no grounds for her greatness”. Now, Franko the poet was prophesying with inspiration: “*Ta pryjde chas, i ty ohnystym vydom / Zasiaiesh u narodiv volnykh koli, / Trusnesh Kavkaz, vperezheshia Beskydom, / Pokotysh Chornym morem homin voli / I hlianesh, yak khaziain domovytyi, / Po svoii khati i po svoim poli*” [“But the time will come when you will shine / with your fiery look among free peoples, / You will shake the Caucasus, you will overcome the Beskids, / you will sound freedom across the Black Sea, / and you will look like a master of your / house and your fields”]. The expression of the pan-Ukrainian state idea with a similar territorial definition has already been found in Ukrainian poetry, for example, in the aforementioned poem by K. Klymkovych *Velyki rokovyny*, which poetizes “our land”, “*shcho rozstelyvsia skriz hen-hen: / Iz-vid Donu ta azh do Sianu, / Iz-pid Kavkazu za Karpat, / Do Chornomoria vid Esman*” [“which stretches far and wide: / From Don to San, / from the Caucasus to the Carpathians, / from the Black Sea to Esman”]. Similar borders of Ukraine with the same and other oronyms and hydronyms are marked in Franko’s poems *Rozvyvaisia, ty, vysokyi*

dube..., *Sviatovechirnia kazka*, *V dvadtsiat piati rokovyny smetri Tarasa Hr[yhorovycha] Shevchenka*, and *I dosi nam snytsia...*

The poetic image of the native people in the prologue to *Moisei* was usually understood then and is understood now as the cherished dream of Ukrainian statehood as an equal among other national democratic states. The eloquent prologue makes it clear that the poem, under the biblical images of “Israel”, “the nomadic laziness”, “the Hebrew camp”, and “the poor people” who are “a guest in their own homeland”, the fate of Ukraine and the historical ordeals of the Ukrainian people are allegorized. The idea of the ultimate transformation of Ukrainians “from lazy nomads” into “a nation of heroes” is encoded, and the Jewish ideals of the “state”, “wonderful promised land” and “glorious fatherland” are projected onto the struggling Ukrainian statehood (Franko-Moses to Ukraine in the image of Israel: “*V tobi dukh mii, budushche moie, / I krasa, i derzhava*” [“My spirit is in you, my future, / and beauty, and state”]). The poem emphasizes the image of “his people”, “his nation”. “*Chy zh doviku ne vyrvatsia vzhe / Liudu momu z nevoli?*” [“Will my people never escape from captivity?”] – This is the main problem that worries Franko’s “prophet” and “leader” Moses, despite the fact that the “Hebrew kingdom”, which “will cost tears and blood”, “*zavashyt u sudbakh zemli, / Yak ta mukha volovi*” [“will interfere with the destinies of the earth, / like a fly with an ox”]. In this way, the native, the national, despite its partial nature and seemingly insignificant impact on global processes, rises above the universal. In the prologue to *Moisei* and in the poem itself, Franko actually departed from his position of the early 1890s, when he denied the grounds for a Ukrainian statehood in Galicia and advocated the unity of Ukrainian and Polish (Masurian) peasants in addition to a joint Ukrainian-Polish unity of Eastern and Western Galicia (on Agrarianism) as a separate region of Austria-Hungary.

The biblical story of Moses has several very important contemporary meanings time: anti-pagan (directed against pagan polytheism, rituals, rites, beliefs, superstitions, etc.); moral, cultural (promoting the norms of clean, ethical, humane, and just coexistence of Israelites, social and family: categorical prohibitions on murder, theft, perjury, incest, homosexuality, etc., regulation and

prescriptions for the consumption of certain foods); ethnic (chosen people; regulates Israel's relations with other nations and tribes; liberation, seizure of land for living, creation of their own state). From this complex of meanings, Franko chooses a purely ethnic one, projecting it onto Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

Earlier, in the aforementioned *Velyky rokovyny*, the poet turned his gaze with hope to the youth: “*Tazh ne darom probudyvsia / Ukrainyski zhvavyi rid. / Tazh ne darom iskry hraiut / U ochakh tykh molodykh! / Chei novi mechi zasaiut / U pravytysiakh u tverdykh*” [“It's not for nothing that the Ukrainian people have awakened. No wonder the sparks play in the eyes of those young people! Whose new swords will shine in their strong hands!”]. It is striking that the poem *Moisei* also depicts the image of “children” who, to the surprise of “half-asleep parents”, “build strange toys”: / *To voiuie, muruie mista, / To horody horodyt* [“He wages wars, builds cities, and cultivates gardens”], or he kills scorpions in the steppe. In the Pentateuch of Moses, there is no image of new generations of Israelites, zealous children who, having grown up, would rise to liberation struggle (except that the Lord declares that only “children” will enter the promised land after forty years of wandering in the desert to atone for their parents’ “iniquities”. – Numbers 14: 29–35; Deuteronomy 1: 39). Probably, not without the influence of disputes with “young” radical statesmen (Viacheslav Budzynovskyi, Yulian Bachynskyi, etc.). Franko allegorically depicts how new generations of Ukrainians are growing up, who, at the right time, will resolutely and persistently take up the desperate struggle for national statehood. The poem concludes with a depiction of such a national liberation struggle of the people at the call of a young leader, the “prince of stablemen”, Yehoshua: “*Do pokhodu! Do zbroi! , Do boiu!*” [“Ahead! To arms!”, “To battle!”]. The last stanzas are a poeticization of the armed force used to gain the “promised land”. The former social revolutionary, who considered a “bloody war” to establish a socialist system (the poem *Na sudi*), now predicts a future armed struggle for Ukrainian statehood.

In Franko's *Moisei* (as in the Old Testament: Numbers 13: 25–33; 21; 31; Joshua 6–13, and elsewhere), Israelis act as conquerors. The poetic pathos, projected on the liberation cause of Ukrainians, involves approval of this, while Franko's insight in *Poema pro sotvorennia svitu*

[*Poem on the Creation of the World*] (1904, printed in 1905) did not go beyond ancient history and condemned Jewish ethnocentrism in the Old Testament:

... in those Hebrew books, at least in a significant part of them, God appears as the God of the Jews alone; he commands them to kill people of other nationalities without mercy and warns them very sharply not to succumb to the gods of those other nations.... Thinks of those things what you want, but they probably did not reveal the highest wisdom and the highest truth.

This is how Franco weighed the priorities between humanism and militant nationalism. It was a dynamic process dictated by the writer's desire to orient himself and give clear guidelines to his compatriots to defend their national interests in the complex and contradictory course of human history.

Against the early poem *Kameniary* in the second edition of the poem (fairy tale) for children *Lys Mykyta* [*Mykyta the Fox*] (1896), in *Velyky rokovyny*, in *Pokhoron*, and *Ivan Vyshenskyi* (printed in 1900) and *Moisei*, messianic accents change from universal to national.

The poem *A my z chym?* [*What do we have?*], written on September 9, 1915, two and a half months after Lviv was liberated from Russian occupation, was a response to the Ukrainian liberation struggle during the First World War. Probably inspired by this event, although the "*liutuie borotba*" ["battle is still raging"], the poet depicts how "*do vysokhikh bram derzhavnoho zhyttia, / V ladi i dobri ta dlia kulturnoi roboty / Narody tysnutsia pod naporom buttia*" ["peoples are pressing towards the high gates of state life, / In order and goodness and for cultural work, / under the pressure of existence"], and among them are Ukrainians, while, as hostile voices mock, "*vsesvitni zhebraky, / Nevmyta khlopska ta popivska orava*" ["the world's beggars, unwashed peasants and church mobs"], although, as the same enemies admit, there were once also "*Hetmany, kozaky, sami buntivnyky*" ["Hetmans, Cossacks, all rebels"]. To those who doubt their "historical right" to their own statehood, Ukrainians firmly declare: "*A otzhe i do nas poklykaie diishlo, / I my staiem do bram otykh mitsnykh / Iz arkhykanonom dumok vsikh vyzbolnykh...*" ["And so, the call has come to us, and we

are standing at this strong gate with the arch-canon of the thoughts of all the liberators....”].

The transition of the mature Franko from the primacy of the socialist idea over the national one and to the primacy of national interests over social ones, from socially radical views to national democratic ones, was expressed in his poetry, corresponding to the spirit of the times, and contributing to the strengthening of his authority as a national leader among Ukrainians, especially Galicians, who dreamed of gaining state independence in the early twentieth century. Expressed in clear, comprehensible poetic language, often even aphoristic, Franko's national-patriotic slogans, maxims, and prophetic visions with pan-Ukrainian and state-building accents not only awakened national feelings but also contributed to the formation of a strong consciousness of Ukrainian national unity and across the nation and the indispensable need for Ukrainian own statehood. Mostly silenced or even banned during the communist totalitarianism, such poetic works were returned to mass readers during Gorbachev's *perestroika*, triumphantly received new life and recognition in independent Ukraine, and have gained great relevance in the current context of the Ukrainian people's continued struggle for freedom, democracy, and European perspective.

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Yevhen Nakhlik – literary scholar, literary critic, historian; corresponding member of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, professor, doctor of philology. His research interests include the history of Ukrainian literature from the late 18th century to the present and comparative literature, Slavic studies (Ukrainian studies, Polish studies and Russian studies).

Director of the Ivan Franko Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Lviv).

He is the author of more than 710 scientific publications, including 15 monographs: *Dolia – Los – Sud’ba: Shevchenko i polski ta rosiiski romantyku* (2003); *Пантелеймон Куліш: Особистість, письменник, мислитель: у 2 т. Київ: Український письменник. Т. 1: Життя Пантелеймона Куліша: Наукова біографія; Т. 2: Світогляд і творчість Пантелеймона Куліша* (2007); *Perelytsovanyi svit Ivana Kotliarevskoho: tekst – intertekst – kontekst* (2015); *Virazhi Frankovoho dukhu: Svitohliad. Ideologia. Literatura* (2019).