

Imagining Early Modern Ukraine: The “Parallel World” of Natalia Iakovenko¹

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It would appear that present-day Ukrainian historiography remains no less a battleground between different political and scholarly agendas and approaches than it was prior to 1991.² This was not so apparent in the 1990s, when communist historiography in Ukraine (unlike in Belarus) withdrew from the battlefield without accepting actual battle. The immediate victor was the national paradigm, whose most important elements were either re-imported into Ukraine from the West (mostly through reprints of the works of diaspora historians) or rediscovered in the writings of Ukrainian authors of the interwar period, many of whom subscribed to the statist paradigm of Ukrainian history. One of the outcomes of such swift victory was that while Soviet-era ideas yielded without major resistance to the set of political and cultural postulates associated with the national paradigm, the actual bearers of the old ideas never left the historiographic field. They merely changed their colors (from red to blue and yellow) and replaced Marx and Lenin with Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi and V'iacheslav Lypyns'kyi as their new classics.

Today, after more than a decade of positioning and repositioning themselves on the battlefield, the practitioners of the historical profession in Ukraine have split into four major groups. Most of them carry the banner of the national paradigm, which they constantly adjust and readjust to meet the demands of the changing political environment. Thus they have slowly shifted from the promotion of Ukrainian state- and nation-building in the 1990s to the commemoration of the Pereiaslav Agreement with Muscovy (1654) in the early 2000s. A second, relatively small group of Soviet-era historians who remained active in the field protested the “excessive” nationalization of the Ukrainian historical narrative or tried to promote ideas of East Slavic commonality and unity. A third, much larger group criticized the professional establishment from the viewpoint of Ukrainian statist historiography of the interwar period. The 1990s also saw the emergence in

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Ukraine of a fourth, small but very prominent group of practitioners—especially influential among the younger generation of historians—who rejected not only Soviet-era postulates but also the dogmatism with which the national paradigm was accepted and applied by many historians of the Soviet school. They promote an ethos of professionalism, dissociate themselves from the servility toward the state characteristic of the historiographic mainstream, and turn to the West (in a broad sense of the term, now including Poland) in search of new methods and approaches to historical research.³

Natalia Iakovenko is certainly one of the leaders of the latter group,⁴ and she has no peer among nonconformists in the profession who study early modern Ukrainian history—the “golden age” of the Ukrainian national narrative and a highly competitive field in which the majority of Ukraine’s most famous historians made their names. She comes as close to playing the role of public intellectual as any of her professional colleagues in present-day Ukraine. Iakovenko emerged on the Ukrainian historiographic scene in the early 1990s after years of relative obscurity, when she was largely involved in archival work and the publication of documentary sources. Her first monograph, *The Ukrainian Nobility from the Late Fourteenth to the Mid-Seventeenth Century (Volhynia and Central Ukraine)* (1993), impressed the Ukrainian reader with the novelty of its subject, focusing as it did on the nobiliary elite as opposed to those Soviet-era favorites, peasants and burghers, or the Cossack heroes of the national narrative.⁵ It also demonstrated the author’s deep knowledge of the sources (Iakovenko began as a student of classical philology and, in addition to researching Latin sources on Ukrainian history, she has coauthored a textbook of Latin). The book also indicated that its author was at home in the vast, mostly pre- or non-Soviet, literature on the subject. By concentrating on the history of elites, Iakovenko positioned herself as a continuer of the tradition established in Ukrainian historiography by V’iacheslav Lypyn’skyi. In her next major work, *An Outline History of Ukraine: From Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (1997),⁶ Iakovenko declared her desire to go beyond not only the populist paradigm, which she associated with the name of Mykhailo Hrushevs’kyi, but also the “statist,” closely associated with Lypyn’skyi. As Iakovenko wrote in her introduction, she proposed to focus on the individual and the way in which he/she functioned in society. Her ultimate goal was to free Ukrainian history from old stereotypes and to purge the “virus” of modern agendas from the historian’s interpretation of the past. She also expressed interest in examining stereotypes of human behavior and the mechanisms of their change, attitudes toward the “other,” and the ways in which individuals perceived power and viewed their moral duties and obligations. It was difficult to accomplish all these tasks in a historical survey covering more than eight hundred years, especially given that there was very little to synthesize when it came to studies of medieval and early

modern Ukrainian mentality, the history of stereotypes, or even intellectual history. Substantial groundwork had to be done first. Hence the publication of *The Parallel World* (2002)—the latest contribution of this prolific author to the field of early modern Ukrainian history.

Natalia Iakovenko considers this book a continuation of the research undertaken in her monograph on the Ukrainian nobility. In it she moves on from examining the hard data on the history of the nobility as a social stratum to studying the elusive world of its mental stereotypes, perceptions, opinions, and ideological paradigms. Most of *The Parallel World* deals with the nobility in the broad sense of the term, from princes and magnates to petty nobles, including the Cossacks (with their “knightly” discourse, self-identification, and ethos) who aspired to gentry status. Certainly this collection of essays represents a return to Iakovenko’s established subject at a new stage of her career in which she has developed different historiographic interests. The book could not have appeared or, more precisely, would have differed in character, were it not for Iakovenko’s earlier work on the *Outline History* and her many years of co-editing (with Oleksii Tolochko and Lesia Dovha) the pioneering journal *Mediaevalia Ucrainica*. Despite its title, the journal was devoted mainly to early modern Ukraine and focused on the history of mental stereotypes and ideas.⁷

What are the “hard facts” about Iakovenko’s new book? First of all, it was attractively produced by the Krytyka publishing house in Kyiv and won a number of prestigious publishers’ awards in Ukraine in 2002. *The Parallel World* consists of eleven essays, most of them issued earlier but revised for the present publication. Nine of these essays deal with Ukrainian history of the early modern period (from the second half of the sixteenth century to the mid-seventeenth), while the remaining two discuss the interpretation of some aspects of that period in twentieth-century Ukrainian historiography. In explaining the structure of her book, whose constituent essays differ widely in individual focus and scope, Iakovenko draws on the arsenal of postmodern historiography. She claims, for example, that the nature of the subject under investigation (things “subjective, personal, and latent in the individual”) precludes systematic description, which would only amount to oversimplification. The same applies, in her opinion, to the nature of the sources under study, which, as she puts it, are neither “systemic” nor connected with one another.

Iakovenko certainly does not go so far as to proclaim the death of narrative. The object of her challenge is what she calls “national history,” meaning the national paradigm of Ukrainian history. There can be little doubt, however, that Iakovenko challenges certain elements of the national paradigm from within “the system,” remaining faithful to the idea of Ukrainian history as such. Indeed, her book concentrates so exclusively on Ukraine that the other component of the early modern “Ruthenian nation,” Belarus, is all but absent—this despite

the fact that one can hardly separate early modern Belarus from Ukraine of the same period, especially when it comes to the history of ideas and perceptions. If it is not the national narrative of Ukrainian history that Iakovenko rejects when she speaks of “national history,” what is it? It is safe to assume that what Iakovenko really wants is to cleanse Ukrainian historiography of its old myths and stereotypes, update its methodological repertoire, and place Ukrainian history into a broader historiographic context. Given the period under consideration, that broader context consists of the intellectual trends and social and cultural identities of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which encompassed most of the Ukrainian lands until the late eighteenth century.

The trouble with updating the methodological repertoire of national history at the beginning of the third millennium is that the latest and trendiest revisionist approaches were constructed in the West in opposition to or in defiance of national history and the methods used to narrate it. Adopting them for the purpose of renewing a national narrative presents a challenge and creates a tension that is often felt in Iakovenko’s book. Declaring her method to be that of historical and anthropological research, Iakovenko lists a number of questions that informed her writing, among them the motivations of social behavior, the hierarchy of values, and the structure of cultural meanings. To deal with these questions, Iakovenko marshals an impressive array of sources, much more varied in character than those used by her predecessors. Most of her narrative sources come from outside the canon of Ukrainian “polemical literature” of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and are written more often in Polish and Latin than in the literary Ruthenian of the time. Bringing into her discussion sources written not only in non-Ruthenian languages but also by non-Ruthenians makes Iakovenko’s vision fresh and provocative. That is certainly true of her interpretation of Polish and Latin panegyrics, largely ignored by Ukrainian and, to some degree, also by Polish students of early modern literature. She also exploits diaries and correspondence to the fullest as sources of information, without limiting her discussion to an analysis of the discourse created by those narratives. Her intimate knowledge of archival sources, especially the court materials of Volhynia and the Kyiv region, shields her very reliably against the temptation to treat the literary discourse of that day as a direct reflection of actual social practices and behaviors.

As one would expect, Iakovenko’s generally critical attitude toward the paradigm of “national history,” her use of new sources and careful rereading of old ones results in the slaughter of quite a few sacred cows of the Ukrainian national narrative and in the presentation of a fragmented but also new and credible image of early modern Ukraine as seen through the eyes of its nobiliary elite. One of those sacred cows is the image of the Poles and Polish culture as the ultimate “other” of Ukrainian early modern culture and identity. By situating the Ukrainian nobility’s political, social, and cultural ideas and values in the broader context

of the political and cultural perceptions and practices of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Iakovenko makes it possible to provide new explanations of a number of important phenomena of Ukrainian social and cultural life of the period. Those phenomena were defined by the political beliefs and conventions of pedagogical practice and the warrior ethos shared by all the noble elites of the Commonwealth irrespective of their religious and national traditions. This new approach certainly does not sit well with supporters of the traditional version of the Ukrainian historical narrative (built from its very inception on the “othering” of the Poles), which degenerated in Soviet times into the depiction of the Polish nobility as the ultimate colonizer of Ukraine and exploiter of the Ukrainian popular masses.

The methods of “othering” if not actually demonizing the Polish nobility and its state in twentieth-century Ukrainian history textbooks are discussed in the last essay of the collection, entitled “Poland and Poles in History Schoolbooks.” On the one hand, Iakovenko registers certain improvements in the treatment of Poland and the Poles in post-1991 Ukrainian historical surveys. Those include a fairly objective assessment of the historical significance of the Union of Lublin between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (1569), the inclusion of Polish-language literature written by Ukrainians or on Ukrainian territory in the discussion, the presentation of historical Poland as a cultural “bridge” between Ukraine and the West, and the reevaluation of the role of the church union in Ukrainian history. On the other hand, she points to the survival in textbooks of many anti-Polish stereotypes derived from Soviet and old Ukrainian historiography. One of them is the presentation of the Poles as an occupying force in Ukraine and of Poland as a state that consciously conducted a policy of subjugating and denationalizing Ukrainians. Another “hiccup” of the previous approach is the treatment of early modern Poland and Ukraine as two absolutely separate entities whose relations consisted entirely of mutual animosity and perpetual conflict.

Why is it wrong to treat Poland as imperial power in the region and Polish policy in early modern Ukraine as colonial?⁸ Iakovenko believes that this anachronistic approach does not fit the historical reality “on the ground.” She shows very convincingly how the stereotypes of Soviet historiography survive in post-Soviet textbooks, and she is certainly right to protest the Soviet-style depiction of the Jewish massacres during the Koliivshchyna Uprising (1768) as a war against leaseholders and tavern-keepers (p. 368). Iakovenko is highly effective in uncovering the roots of the demonizing of Poland and Poles in the Ukrainian national narrative of the nineteenth century. Her main argument appears sound and well presented. In essence, she argues that the two early modern peoples, the Poles and the Ukrainians/Ruthenians, had quite a few features in common. After decades of coexistence in a single state, the Polish and Ruthenian elites shared a

common educational background and political culture; they also subscribed to the same “knightly” ethos. Moreover, they often dealt with similar problems, cooperated in the defense of the steppe frontier against Tatar incursions, and adhered to common social forms in town and country. Still, adopting an overtly polemical tone from time to time, Iakovenko herself does not avoid occasional oversimplification. She implies, for example, that Hrushevs’kyi’s focus on ethnos and territory in Ukrainian history led to the treatment of all non-Ukrainian elements on that territory as aggressors (p. 369), and she claims without further explanation or qualification that at the time of the Khmel’nyts’kyi Uprising, the term “Pole” was used not as an ethnonym but as a political designation (p. 373).

Despite her offhand remark that “Poles” in mid-seventeenth-century Ukraine meant “nobles” irrespective of ethnic background while Polish identity was not ascribed to Polish commoners, Iakovenko is careful not to throw her support behind the belief, popular in present-day Polish historiography and often accepted in the West, in the existence of one Polish civic nation that allegedly crossed ethno-cultural boundaries and amalgamated the Polish, Lithuanian, and Ruthenian (Ukrainian-Belarusian) nobility.⁹ For Iakovenko, however close the Ukrainian nobility was or could have been in political culture and practices to the Polish nobility, it remained Ukrainian (not even Ruthenian), and as such constitutes the subject of her research. In general, Iakovenko demonstrates exemplary knowledge of the contemporary Polish historiography of the subject. It is here that she feels historiographically at home, and it is Polish historiographic tradition that often serves as her window on the West. It is also from Polish historical works that she borrows some of the ideas and approaches that irritate her critics in Ukraine.¹⁰ Her work shows how much Ukrainian historians can benefit from working together with, not in opposition to, their colleagues in Ukraine’s “near West.” As for Western scholarship, Iakovenko’s research demonstrates how much more productive and accurate results can be obtained by comparing Ukrainian political and cultural realities with those of early modern Poland and Lithuania rather than with Western Europe of the period.

It would be hard to find a better example of interaction between the Polish and Ukrainian historical and political ideas in early modern times than the panegyrics devoted to Ukrainian princely families and analyzed in Iakovenko’s essay on “The Topos of ‘United Peoples’ in Panegyrics to the Princes Ostrozkyi and Zaslavskyi (At the Sources of Ukrainian Identity).” The closely related princely families of the Ostrozkyis and Zaslavskyis (the latter took over the possessions of the former once the Ostrozkyis’ male line died out) began their “public career” in the mid-sixteenth century as pillars of Orthodoxy but converted to Roman Catholicism in the course of the seventeenth century. As Iakovenko shows, conversion did not change their role as protectors of the interests and privileges, including religious rights, of the Ukrainian Orthodox nobility. Nor

did it change the princes' image of themselves as heirs of the Riurykide dynasty of Kyivan Rus' and as leaders of the Rus' community in general. How do we know that? Partly on the basis of ideas presented in panegyrics written in honor of the Ostrozkyis and Zaslavskyis in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Of the forty-seven panegyrics analyzed by Iakovenko, only six were written by Ruthenian authors, whereas thirty-nine were the work of Poles, most of whom were clients or servants of the princely families. By tracing the genealogy of the Ruthenian princes back to legendary times, those authors also tried to associate their family stories with Polish founding myths. On the other hand, it was the same non-Orthodox and non-Ruthenian authors who tried to please their masters by articulating the latter's Rus' identity in writing. These same Polish panegyrists created for their patrons the virtual space of Rus'—a territory rooted in the historical tradition of the thirteenth-century Galician-Volhynian state of Danylo of Halych and encompassing the Ukrainian lands annexed to the Kingdom of Poland.

It is in these writings of the Polish-educated and non-Orthodox panegyrists of culturally Polonized Rus' princes that Iakovenko finds the early modern origins of Ukrainian identity. Despite the somewhat paradoxical nature of her argument, it makes a good deal of sense. No social group in Ukraine came closer than the princes to imagining their homeland within boundaries approximating the ethnic Ukrainian territories of the time. The Orthodox literati, by contrast, were promoting the concept of the unity of the Ukrainian-Belarusian Orthodox population throughout the Commonwealth (including the Grand Duchy of Lithuania), while in the 1640s the nobility, if one judges by the statements of its leader, Adam Kysil', was insisting on the commonality of four eastern palatinates of the Kingdom of Poland, with the notable exception of Galicia.¹¹ The princes, on the other hand, could not imagine their Rus' without Galicia, for the medieval state of Danylo of Halych was the only link they could establish between themselves and the Riurykide glory of Kyivan times.

An historian operating within the parameters of the traditional Ukrainian narrative could hardly imagine these Polonized princes, to say nothing of their Polish panegyrists, as early promoters of proto-Ukrainian identity. Iakovenko tackles another important mythologem of that narrative head-on in her essay "Religious Conversions: An Attempt at a View from Within." There she deals with the conversion of the Ukrainian elites to Roman Catholicism, which was treated in traditional Ukrainian historiography of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a betrayal of the masses by the elites. In this view, religious conversion was equated with the abandonment of Ruthenian identity. Iakovenko's main targets here are Mykola Kostomarov and Mykhailo Hrushevskyi. (The latter did indeed write about the "betrayal of the elites," but, contrary to Iakovenko's suggestion, never believed in the nobility's "almost complete abandonment

of Orthodoxy as early as on the eve of the Khmel'nyts'kyi Uprising" [p. 13].) Iakovenko pledges to avoid such "reflexive history," claiming that there were no mass conversions of Ukrainian nobles to Catholicism. Most of her essay is concerned, nevertheless, not with the nobility in general but with conversions and intermarriages among its upper ranks—the Rus' princes and magnates. And here Iakovenko proves (significantly extending our knowledge of the subject in the process) that an absolute majority of the traditional leaders of Rus' was indeed abandoning the traditional religion of Rus'. Certainly that did not mean the automatic loss of Rus' identity, but it shows that Kostomarov was at least partly right in his interpretation. Where he went wrong was in generalizing his view to encompass the nobility as a whole. As has been shown by Henryk Litwin's research, which Iakovenko substantiates with her own calculations of the rate of intermarriage between Orthodox and non-Orthodox nobles, an absolute majority of the Ruthenian nobility (up to ninety percent) remained faithful to Eastern Christianity.¹²

Not trusting (and for good reason) the claims of the competing religious parties regarding the numbers of actual conversions, Iakovenko also seems to reject those cases when the conversions in question involved a transfer from one Rus' church, the Orthodox, to another—the Uniate, created at the Council of Brest (1596) by the subordination of part of the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Kyiv to Rome. This approach cannot be accepted without further discussion. For Iakovenko, who seemingly regards the Orthodox and Uniate churches as two branches of one confession, divided by mere jurisdictional boundaries, these were not real conversions. Nevertheless, they were treated as such by Ruthenian contemporaries on both sides of the religious divide. The confessional border in Ukraine split the communities of the formerly united Metropolitanate of Kyiv, with the Uniates ending up on the Catholic side. The Uniate hierarchy accepted the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church and, in an era of advancing confessionalization, ceased to be Orthodox in the eyes of the guardians of both the Catholic and the Orthodox religious traditions. That development was reflected in statements of Jesuit proselytizers and Orthodox intellectuals alike.

Where Iakovenko seems perfectly right, however—and this would appear to be her main contribution to the study of early modern Ukrainian religiosity—is in claiming that the Rus' princes were highly tolerant in religious affairs, if not actually indifferent to the confessional quarrels going on around them. They readily married outside their religion, allowed their wives and children to belong to different churches, and tolerated monks of different traditions at their courts. Although it would be hard to treat that phenomenon as "ritual belief" (for the princes easily abandoned their own rite), the picture that Iakovenko presents with unprecedented clarity exposes the superficial nature of the religiosity of the Rus' princely elites, whose economic and political interests encouraged

them to be flexible on the issue. This is especially true for the second half of the sixteenth century, when confessional borders were not clearly demarcated or guarded and the catechization of nominal Christians had yet to occur. The situation clearly changed with the advance of confessionalization in the first half of the seventeenth century. The extent of change is well illustrated by the data on interconfessional marriages among the Rus' princes and nobility, carefully assembled by Iakovenko. It appears that among the princes, marriages outside their confession diminished from approximately fifty percent in the period 1540–1615 to twenty-nine percent in the years 1616–50. One explanation of that phenomenon could be the established fact that by 1616 most of the princely families had already abandoned Orthodoxy and proceeded to marry within their new confession (predominantly Roman Catholicism). But the same phenomenon can also be explained in other ways. Between the 1620s and the 1640s, the conflict over the church union among the Rus' elites clearly defined the boundaries between the two confessions in Rus' society and forced the elites to make a choice. At the same time, the confessionalization of religious life in the Commonwealth reached new heights, making interconfessional marriages and families an exception to the general rule. These developments should also be held responsible for the decline in the number of interconfessional marriages not only among the princes but also among the Ruthenian nobility in general. According to Iakovenko's calculations, they declined from sixteen percent in the years 1581–1615 to twelve percent between 1616 and 1650 (p. 36).

Do these low figures, as well as the virtual absence of Ruthenian nobiliary marriages outside the Orthodox Church prior to 1581, indicate that the nobility at large was religiously and culturally more traditional than the princes? Apparently they do, even allowing for the possibility that marriages between Orthodox and Uniates (whom Iakovenko treats as parts of the same "Orthodox rite" [p. 38]) did not make it into her statistics. But were the nobles more religious in general and less "superficial" in their faith than the princes? Iakovenko shows quite convincingly that they were not. She also argues that the Ukrainian nobility's religiosity was not so different from that of their Polish and Lithuanian counterparts. Although the Ukrainian nobles were much less integrated into Commonwealth society and culture than the princes and the magnates, Iakovenko demonstrates that they all shared a common knightly ethos, which she calls "the soldier's faith" (*zhovnirs'ka vira*).

What was that "faith"? Iakovenko offers a reply to this and a number of other war-related questions in her pioneering essay "How Many Faces Has War? The Khmel'nyts'kyi Uprising through the Eyes of Contemporaries." She draws the reader's attention to episodes usually overlooked by historians who write Ukrainian or Polish national history. These include examples of Commonwealth troops looting Roman Catholic churches and monasteries, as well as Khmel'nyts'kyi's

army going after the possessions of Orthodox churches and Ruthenian burghers. Indeed, the cases discussed by Iakovenko complicate or seriously undermine the traditional narratives of the Khmel'nyts'kyi Uprising. She rightly argues that in the seventeenth century church property was considered legitimate war booty regardless of the denomination to which it belonged, and that professional soldiers on all sides of the conflict shared that "knightly" attitude toward it. All of them, whether Polish soldiers or Ukrainian Cossacks, took part in the same "functionally specialized subculture." This is a highly valid observation, and Iakovenko should be complimented on applying it to the study of Khmel'nyts'kyi Uprising. But can we go on to assert, as she does, that "professional self-identification prevailed over ethnic or confessional identity" of the combatants (p. 208)?

This statement raises a number of important questions about the hierarchy of identities in early modern Ukraine. Joint banquets organized after or between battles by soldiers fighting on opposite sides and their occasional fraternization with the enemy, instances of which Iakovenko cites in her essay, are of course not limited to early modern times. It can also be said that throughout history, professional solidarity among warriors has rarely overridden their political, national, and institutional loyalties, to say nothing of cultural ones. Otherwise, why would they fight one another in armies divided along ethno-religious lines, as was often the case in the Khmel'nyts'kyi Uprising? If indeed the "soldier's faith" prevailed over "ethnic or confessional identity," then why were there no Roman Catholic or Protestant colonels and officers among the rebel elite? Why did Stanisław Michał Krzyczewski have to change his name to Mykhailo Krychev'skyi and convert from Roman Catholicism to Orthodoxy in order to become a colonel in Khmel'nyts'kyi's army? Why did Jews have to accept Orthodoxy to avoid being slaughtered by the rebels? Iakovenko recognizes that the religious purification of the land or, in other words, the creation of a monoconfessional Orthodox polity was one of the goals of the Ukrainian side in the uprising. Nevertheless, she seems to ascribe that program to the leadership of the uprising, the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church, and the peasant masses, which, in her opinion, were more susceptible to religious propaganda than were the Cossacks. The "old" pre-1648 Cossacks, for their part, allegedly subscribed to the denominationally indifferent "soldiers' subculture." What this interpretation does not take into account is that the leaders of the uprising were recruited from the same Cossack stratum, and that the Cossacks showed their readiness to use religious slogans in politics as early as the 1620s.¹³ But Iakovenko is certainly right to argue that the professional soldiers (including nobles and Cossacks) were far removed from the image of fighters for religion and nationality presented in traditional historical accounts of the Khmel'nyts'kyi Uprising.

Iakovenko's reinterpretation of the sources opens new vistas in the study of the largest Cossack uprising in Ukrainian history. Hers is probably the first attempt

by a Ukrainian historian to discuss the human costs of the war. This approach challenges many of the traditional Ukrainian interpretations of the uprising as a struggle for national and social liberation, as well as Polish attempts to depict the war as the heroic epic of their forefathers. It also undermines the interpretation of the uprising as a struggle for the preservation of the Orthodox faith or for the reunification of Ukraine with Russia—paradigms characteristic of imperial Russian and Soviet historiography. Furthermore, Iakovenko's research shows how careful one should be in taking contemporary narratives of the revolt at face value. Telling in that regard is her discussion of an episode in Wawrzyniec Rudawski's seventeenth-century chronicle account of the uprising. As Iakovenko demonstrates, Rudawski's comments on the Polish hero and Ukrainian villain, Prince Jeremi Wiśniowiecki (Yarema Vyshnevets'kyi, the scion of a Ruthenian princely family who converted from Orthodoxy to Roman Catholicism), were based not on the chronicler's acquaintance with contemporary sources but on his reading of Roman authors. The phrase attributed by Rudawski to Wiśniowiecki, who allegedly encouraged his soldiers to torture the captured rebels with the injunction "Torment them so that they feel they are dying," was in fact based on words attributed to Emperor Caligula by Suetonius. Rudawski's description of the attack of the rebel army led by Maksym Kryvonis on the town of Polonne, with its considerable Jewish population, was based on Tacitus's description of the fall of Cremona. Polish historians clearly followed ancient models in their descriptions of the war, as did Jewish writers, who modeled their stories on instances of martyrdom for the faith borrowed from the rich Jewish tradition—a practice recently documented by Edward Fram.¹⁴ In their turn, the Orthodox authors of the period (including Paul of Aleppo and the author of the *Eyewitness Chronicle*) stressed the religious motives of the Cossacks in their struggle with the non-Orthodox.¹⁵

The reality on the ground was considerably more complex than the picture presented by confessionally minded authors on all sides of the conflict. A telling indication of this is the archival data cited by Iakovenko about the losses inflicted on the Volhynian town of Kyselyn by a joint rebel and Tatar attack in the autumn of 1648. As Iakovenko notes, of thirty-five Christian dwellings in Kyselyn, only fifteen survived; out of thirty-seven Jewish dwellings, twenty survived. The rest were burned. What lies behind these figures and this strange selection of victims, which challenges every traditional narrative of the Khmel'nytskyi Uprising? Was it the religious indifference of the rebels, as Iakovenko claims, the unpredictable Tatar factor, or the direction of the wind on a given day? We do not know, but the tragedy of Kyselyn obliges us to pose new questions, seek new answers, and challenge existing interpretations of the war. Indeed, it is Iakovenko's analysis of the sources, pioneering and provocative in many ways, that has placed these questions on the agenda of historians of early modern Ukraine.

Not all the essays collected in Natalia Iakovenko's latest book have been considered here, and even those discussed in some detail contain important points omitted in my survey, partly for reasons of space. But the incomplete and fragmented character of the "parallel world" of early modern Ukraine, skillfully reconstructed by Natalia Iakovenko, also could not but influence the nature of this review. One cannot help thinking how fortunate it was that Iakovenko wrote a "systematic" survey of Ukrainian medieval and early modern history before she decided that many of the topics and phenomena discussed there precluded such an enterprise by their very nature, to say nothing of the incompleteness of the sources. Iakovenko is rightly skeptical of the prospect that her book might win over opponents in the ranks of the Ukrainian historiographic establishment or persuade them to eradicate the "virus of contemporaneity." Her hopes lie with the younger generation of Ukrainian scholars, whom she encourages to study the "second reality" or "parallel world" of human views and ideas. Here, the prospects are clearly more favorable. There is also the hope that someday the "parallel world" created by Iakovenko and her students will become the mainstream of Ukrainian historiography.

NOTES

1. See Natalia Iakovenko, *Paralel'nyi svit: Doslidzhennia z istorii uiavlenn' ta idei v Ukraïni XVI–XVII st.* (Kyiv, 2002), 415 pp. ISBN 966-7679-23-3.
2. On the political uses and abuses of Ukrainian and Belarusian history during the Soviet era, see Roman Szporluk, "National History as a Political Battleground: The Case of Ukraine and Belarus," in *Russian Empire: Some Aspects of Tsarist and Soviet Colonial Practice*, ed. Michael S. Pap (Cleveland, 1985), 131–50.
3. For an assessment of post-1991 Ukrainian historiography, see Orest Subtelny, "The Current State of Ukrainian Historiography," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 18, nos. 1-2 (Summer–Winter 1993): 33–54; Zenon E. Kohut, "History as a Battleground: Russian-Ukrainian Relations and Historical Consciousness in Contemporary Ukraine," in *The Legacy of History in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, ed. Frederick S. Starr (Armonk, N.Y., 1994), 123–46; Georgii Kasianov, "Rewriting and Rethinking: Contemporary Historiography and Nation Building in Ukraine," in *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, ed. Taras Kuzio and Paul D'Anieri (Westport, Conn., 2002), 29–46; Taras Kuzio, "Historiography and National Identity Among the Eastern Slavs: Towards a New Framework," *National Identities* 3, no. 2 (July 2001): 109–32; idem, "Post-Soviet Ukrainian Historiography and School Textbooks in Ukraine," *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 23, no. 1 (January 2001): 27–42.
4. Iakovenko currently chairs the Department of History at the National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy and is editor in chief of *Ukraïns'kyi humanitarnyi ohliad*, which reviews works on Ukrainian history and studies in the humanities. She is also president of the Ukrainian Society for the Study of East Central Europe and chairs a highly successful seminar for young historians at the Kyiv Mohyla Academy.
5. See Natalia Iakovenko, *Ukraïns'ka shliakhta z kintsia XIV do seredyny XVII stolittia (Volyn' i Tsentral'na Ukraïna)* (Kyiv, 1993).
6. See Natalia Iakovenko, *Narys istorii Ukraïny z naidavnishykh chasiv do kintsia XVIII stolittia* (Kyiv, 1997).
7. See *Mediaevalia Ucrainica: Mental'nist' ta istoriia idei*, 5 vols (Kyiv, 1992–1998).
8. For a recent discussion of the applicability of the imperial paradigm to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, see Roman Szporluk's dialogue with Andrzej Nowak, "Czy Polska była imperium?" *Arcana* 55–6, nos. 1–2 (2004): 24–37.
9. For examples of the acceptance of that paradigm in the West, see Andrzej Walicki, *Poland between East and West: The Controversies over Self-Definition and Modernization in Partitioned Poland* (Cambridge, Mass., 1994), 10; Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven and London, 2003), 3.

10. Iakovenko has recently been accused of attempting to introduce old Polish historiographic myths into Ukrainian historiography under the guise of postmodernism. See Valerii Stepankov's critique of Iakovenko's views (partly based on her *Paralel'nyi svit*) in his "1648 rik: pochatok Ukraïns'koï revoliutsii chy 'domovoï viiny' v Rechi Pospolytii?" in *Ukraina v Tsentral'no-Skhidnii Levropi (z naïdavnishykh chasiv do kintsia XVIII stolittia)*, vyp. 3 (Kyiv, 2003), 369–414.
11. On the model of identity advanced by the Orthodox intellectuals, see my *Cossacks and Religion in Early Modern Ukraine* (Oxford, 2001), 145–75. On Adam Kysil's regionalism, see Frank E. Sysyn, "Regionalism and Political Thought in Seventeenth-Century Ukraine: The Nobility's Grievances at the Diet of 1641," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 6, no. 2 (1982): 171–85. Cf. idem, *Between Poland and the Ukraine: The Dilemma of Adam Kysil, 1600–1653* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), 20–36, 104–14.
12. See Henryk Litwin, "Catholicization among the Ruthenian Nobility and Assimilation Processes in the Ukraine during the Years 1569–1648," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 55 (1987): 57–83.
13. For a discussion of Cossack attitudes toward religion and their involvement in religious conflict during the decades preceding the Khmel'nytskyi Uprising, as well as the role of the religious factor in the war itself, see my *Cossacks and Religion*, 100–44.
14. See Edward Fram, "Creating a Tale of Martyrdom in Tulczyn, 1648," in *Jewish History and Jewish Memory: Essays in Honor of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi*, ed. Elisheva Carlebach et al. (Hanover, N.H., and London, 1998), 89–109.
15. Cf. my treatment of Polish, Jewish, and Ukrainian accounts of the Khmel'nytskyi Uprising in *The Cossacks and Religion*, 176–206.