

**The Intellectual “in the Embrace of Empire”:  
the Problem of Individual and National Identity  
in the Ukrainian Novel of 20th Century**

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# Key Points

- the theoretical framework and methodological premises of the research;
- the examination of the novels
  - with focus on the identity of intellectual figure,
  - its correlation to the writers' self-understanding,
  - the development of the authorial interpretation of this issue  
from the beginning of the Soviet “empire” to the period of its collapse.

While appealing to the literary works, **the research aims**

to reveal divergent aspects of the intellectual's identity that experiences “the embrace of empire”.

# Writings for discussion

- Mykola Khvylyovyi *Вальдшнепи /The Woodcocks/* (1927)
- Viktor Domontovych *Без ґрунту /Without Ground/* (1942-1943, 1948)
- Leonid Mosendz *Останній пророк /The Last Prophet/* (1935-1948, 1960)
- Emma Andiyevska *Роман про добру людину /A Novel about a Good Person/* (1973)
- Roman Ivanychuk *Вода з каменю /Water from the Stone/* (1982)  
*Четвертий вимір /The Fourth Dimension/* (1984)
- Yuriy Andrukhovych *Московіада /The Moscoviad/* (1993)

# The methodological premises

- Myroslav Shkandrij *In the Embrace of Empire* (2001, 2004)
- Dmytro Dontsov *Split Souls* (1928), Mykola Shlemkevych *The Lost Ukrainian Person* (1954)
- Edward Said *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994)

“the intellectual is an individual with a specific public role in society that cannot be reduced simply to being a faceless professional... he is an individual endowed with a faculty for representing, embodying, articulating a message, a view, an attitude, philosophy or opinion to... a public”

- Paul Ricoeur *Oneself as Another* (1992), Julia Kristeva *Strangers to Ourselves* (1988)
- *National identity:*
  - psychological, cultural, historical, territorial and political dimensions (Montserrat Guibernau 2007),
  - the shared myths and historical memories, the association with the specific “homeland” and historical territory as main attributes (Anthony Smith 1991);
  - birthplace, blood ties, language, culture and national consciousness (Ola Hnatiuk *Farewell to the Empire* (2004,2005))

# Mykola Khvylyovyi



## ➤ Mykola Khvylyovyi as a cultural figure

- Participant of World War I, Civil War; Communist ideology vs. Ukrainian national idea.
- Pamphlets: *Апологети писаризму /Apologists of scribeism/*, *Камо грядешу? (Quo Vadis?)*, *Україна чи Малоросія? /Ukraine or Little Russia?/*
- “Symbolic autobiography” (Crabowicz) of his writings:  
the key moments of the author’s life gain narrative durability and autonomy

## ➤ *Вальдшнепи /The Woodcocks/ (1927)*

- Dmytriy Karamazov (“split souls”) and Aglaya: dialogue and confrontation
- “Awkwardness” (“мамулуватість”) of Ukrainian nation; the revival of nation and social idea
- Does the goal justify the means? “Love for the distant persons” demands “hatred of one’s fellowman”; the murder in the name of the idea and the proximity of God’s Mother in the countenance of his fellowman
- The crossroads of diverse ideologies: “there are thousands of such Karamazovs nowadays”
- Karamazov as a symbol of “the Ukrainian consciousness that has stood up to fight with itself” (Shkandrij).

# Viktor Domontovych



## ➤ Viktor Petrov – V. Domontovych – Viktor Ber

- Ukrainian writer, literary scholar, philosopher of culture, archaeologist,
- Soviet agent (World War II, the milieu of Ukrainian emigrants in the late 1940s)
- “The Soviet system could not capture Domontovych as a writer” (Sherekh-Shevelov)  
Scholarly works: *Ukrainian Cultural Activists – Victims of Repressions; Historiosophical Sketches, Principles of Poetics /from Ars poetica of Yevhen Malanyuk to Ars poetica of the epoch of atom-decomposed/, The modern image of the World /Crisis of Classical Physics/*

## ➤ *Без ґрунту /Without Ground/ (1942-1943, 1948)*

- Intellectuals: “catastrophic impermanence” and “terrible duplicity” of their life and creativity
- Avoiding public and artistic life in conditions of the permanently changing authorities
- Art and culture vs. industrialization of country; “ground” for modern national art
- Ambiguity of human existence and “a shadow” of a human person; historical and cultural memory
- The relativity of “unshakable” truths; anxiety, boredom and emptiness
- Abyss as element of landscape and psychological phenomenon; ambiguity of the words and silence

# Leonid Mosendz



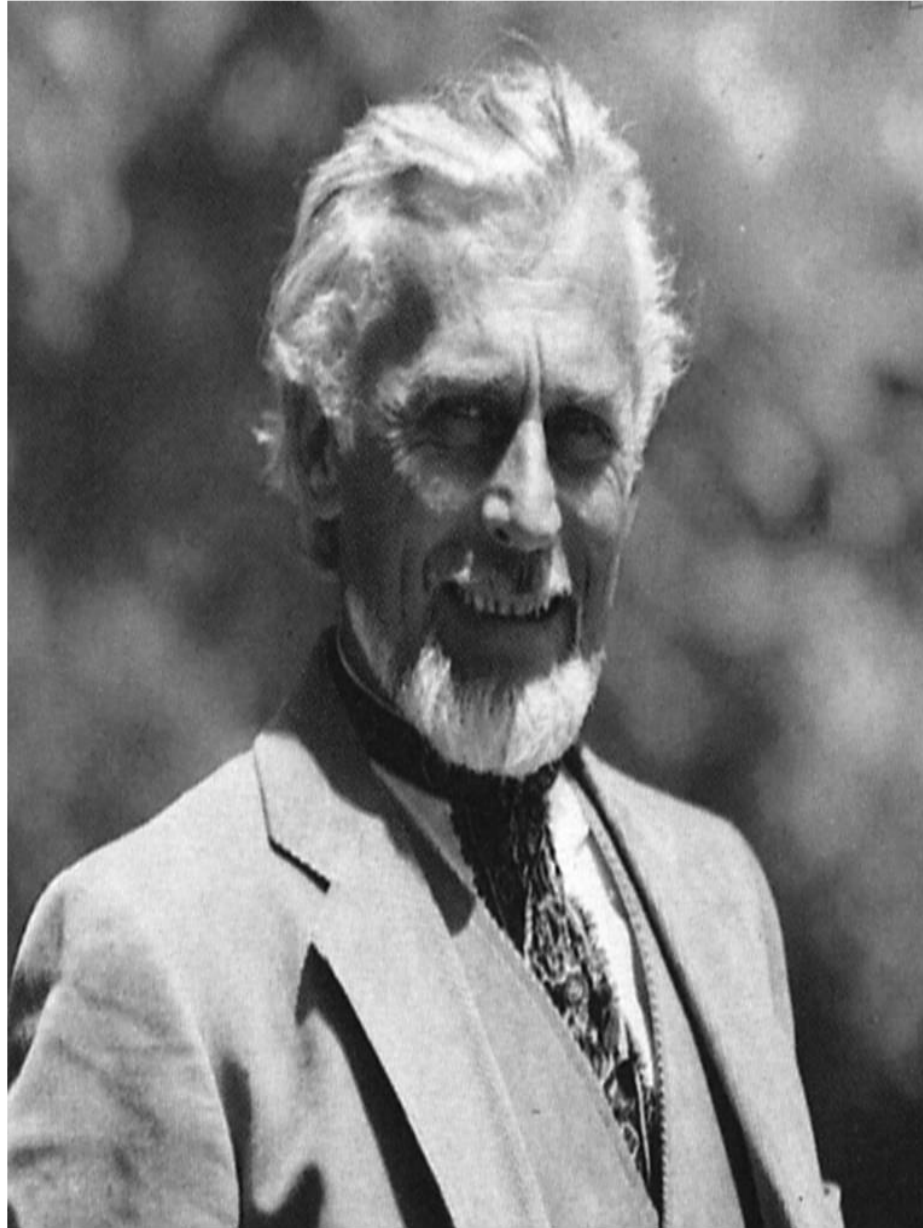
## ➤ Leonid Mosendz: Ukrainian writer and scholar

- Army of Ukrainian People's Republic; emigration to Poland and Czechoslovakia
- The Legion of Ukrainian Nationalists; doctorate (1931) in the field of engineering
- Member of "Visnyk Quadriga" and "Prague school" in Ukrainian literature

## ➤ *The Last Prophet* (1935-1948, 1960)

- Biblical chronotope: Jerusalem (1<sup>st</sup> century BC – 1<sup>st</sup> century AD) and the Roman Empire;
- Johanan (John the Baptist) as Lord's envoy and intellectual
- Non-accidental birth of human person, his /her essence and free will; the laws of the world
- Human freedom and the choice between good and evil; man's action and God's Providence;
- Dialogue of cultures; searching for truth
- Israel's struggle for national liberation and Ukrainian nationalist movement  
(B.Kravtsiv, I.Nabytovych, O.Bahan)
- Armed resistance vs. "Give mercy, not sacrifice!"
- "Human person is a measure of things. The goal does not justify the means." (Mosendz, 1948)

# Roman Ivanychuk



- Roman Ivanychuk: Era of Stagnation, ways of dissent, philosophical history
  - *Вода з каменю /Water from the Stone/ (1982)*
    - Markiyan Shashkevych: poet and spiritual leader; Lviv in the times of the Austrian Empire (1830-1840s)
    - Polish Uprisings and Ukrainian national revival: the problem of Ukrainian self-identification
    - “To take water from the stone” (Moses) and “to give it for those who need” (Ahasuerus): parabolic dimension
    - “Ruthenian Trinity”, *Rusalka Dnistrovaya (The Dniester Mermaid)*, Shashkevych’s sermon in vernacular
    - “Sword and Thought”: national or Slavophile ideas; Cyrillic or Latin alphabet; (dis)engagement of art
    - The fleetingness of life and inevitability of death, the struggle between good and evil, light and darkness.
  - *Четвертий вимір /The Fourth Dimension/ (1984)*
    - Mykola Hulak and Mykola Kostomarov as members of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius
    - Scholars and the Russian empire: science (Kostomarov) or the example of fortitude (Hulak) for descendants
    - Fear and treachery; “fourth dimension” of people’s memory, enforced silence and belated public appearance
    - Lifelong exile (Georgia, Azerbaijan) for Hulak
- “...in constant but tantalizing and unfulfilled [mental] touch with the old place” (Said)



# Emma Andiyevska



## ➤ Emma Andiyevska

born in Donetsk, World War II and DP camp in Mittenwald; emigration to Germany and the USA

## ➤ *Роман про добру людину /A Novel about a Good Person/ (1973)*

- Intellectuals as “displaced persons” in Mittenwald camp
- The concept of “round time” (Danylo Husar-Struk): totalitarian “hell” as a part of the past and present
- Long-term imprisonment in Soviet labour camps for intellectuals’ research activity
- Soviet regime: denunciations on relatives and colleagues, mocking a human person, contempt for national history, destruction of churches and cultural monuments, distortion of concepts and blurring the values.

“The world... proclaimed the executioners as liberators, however, Ukraine did not surrender and swear to evil.

Sons of light are still being born in Ukraine endlessly dying in the imperial butchery for freedom, goodness and justice”.

- Fear of repatriation committee and kidnapping in Mittenwald; mental travelling to the Homeland
- Philosophical discussions, lectures, cultural activity in Mittenwald
- Searching for “a good person” in the self and in other people

# Yuriy Andrukhovych



## ➤ Yuriy Andrukhovych

one of the key figures of postmodernism in Ukrainian culture; the beginning of Ukrainian independence

## ➤ *Московиада /The Moscoviad/ (1993):*

- The intellectual in the epoch of “farewell to the empire” and “overthrowing the imperial idols” (O.Hnatiuk)
- Otto von F. as a participant of the project of support for Soviet writers: the (un) real world of Moscow
- Material and mental features of Soviet culture: lack of goods and lack of freedom
- The empire’s threat for national identities and the problem of assimilation
- Otto’s journey through historical epochs and his own memory ; the unconscious and individual identity
- Forced collaboration with authorities and atmosphere of intimidation
- Soviet “rats” and numerous counterparts
- Moscow as “the city of losses” :“the earth must have a rest from this villain capital... it should not poison the world with the bacilli of evil forever...”.
- “... we are dreaming about Europe”.

# How does an intellectual appear in the Ukrainian novel of 20<sup>th</sup> century?

## ➤ **Mykola Khvylyovyi**

the beginning of Soviet empire: intellectuals as “split souls”, lost at the crossroads of different ideologies

## ➤ **Viktor Domontovych**

permanently changing authorities and Soviet politics; “catastrophic impermanence” and “terrible duplicity” of life and creativity; the loss of the ground; intellectuals’ weak possibility to keep their own individual and artistic identity.

## ➤ **Leonid Mosendz**

Biblical chronotope and parabolic approach: the Israel’s struggle for national liberation and Ukrainian nationalist movement, ‘the chosen man’ with his mission and destiny: love and mercy

## ➤ **Roman Ivanychuk**

intellectuals under the oppression of two empires (Austrian and Russian):  
to provide national revival for their people and to give an example of fortitude for descendants.

## ➤ **Emma Andiyevska**

Intellectuals as “displaced persons”: to overcome the trauma of Soviet “hell”, to retain the national identity; to look for “a good human person”

## ➤ **Yuriy Andrukhovych**

Intellectuals at the beginning of Ukrainian independence: to overthrow the imperial symbols; to search for individual and national identity