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Between *Narodnist'* and *Indyvidual'nist'*:
Ivan Franko's Theory of Literary Creativity

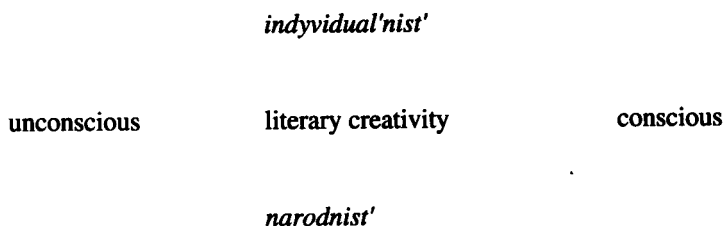
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Ivan Franko's theory of literary creativity has been the subject of many studies, most of them contending that his perspective moved from a sociological to a psychological one. Most significantly, John Fizer has argued¹ that Franko's seminal 1898 essay "Iz sekretiv poetychnoi tvorchosti" constitutes a "radical turn" in his aesthetic conception. Fizer maintains that in contrast to Franko's critical writings of the 1870s, those of the late 1890s show him as more and more interested in the psychological mechanisms of the poetic imagination. Fizer's interpretation of Franko is shared by a good number of other literary critics, even Soviet ones, among whom Ivan Doroshenko was the first to propose the scheme "from sociology to psychology" in his book *Ivan Franko—literaturnyi krytyk*.² Doroshenko's approach must be assessed as daring in the context of the 1960s: a censored version of "Iz sekretiv poetychnoi tvorchosti" appeared in the Soviet Union only in 1955.³ By 1966 it was possible to give a psychological—albeit still politically correct—interpretation of Franko in the Soviet periphery, but not in the very center: Doroshenko's book appeared in Lviv, whereas Mikhail Parkhomenko's study *Esteticheskie vzgliady Ivana Franko*, which advocated a very orthodox and arguably distorted picture of Franko's poetics,⁴ was accepted and published in the same year in Moscow.

However, the one-dimensional thesis "from sociology to psychology" is clearly unsatisfactory. Even Fizer acknowledges that his interpretation only covers Franko's development as a theoretician, not as a critic. One of the most puzzling phenomena of Franko's work that has been studied recently⁵ is his ambivalent relationship to modernism and decadence. During the first decade of the twentieth century, Franko was very critical of various Ukrainian and foreign modernist works. For instance, he fervently attacked the decadent group "Moloda Muza" in a review article written in 1907. On the other hand, Franko himself wrote such powerful and genuinely modernist works as the lyrical volumes *Ziv'iale lystia* and *Iz dniv zhurby*. Fizer is unable to solve this contradiction and concludes that Franko "united, but did not synthesize theory and criticism."⁶

I will try to show that it is possible to explain this apparent inconsistency if the one-dimensional model "from sociology to psychology" is modified in two respects. First, the idea of a clear development has to be dropped. From his

early writings on, Franko was already very much attuned to the poet's mindset and, furthermore, even after 1900 he never really lost his interest in the social functions of literature. Second, Franko's conceptualization of literary production cannot be reduced solely to his treatise "Iz sekretiv poetychnoi tvorchoosti." In this article, Franko investigated the roles of the conscious and unconscious at work, which are intertwined with each other to feed an artist's creativity. In fact, the dichotomy of the conscious and the unconscious is central to Franko's poetics. However, it has been overlooked that this conception was superseded by still another distinction that affected his aesthetics significantly: *narodnist'* and *indyvidual'nist'*. Franko conceptualizes art as a semi-conscious process in which popular culture is subjected to an individual transformation. Therefore, literary creativity is determined not by two, but rather by four factors. Basically, two axes can be identified: the first concerns the artist's psyche and the degree of conscious control over his creativity, while the second represents the narrower or ampler frame of reference that may be applied to a writer's work. Both axes intersect in the activity of artistic production. Graphically, the field of variables can be projected as follows:



The interaction between these two axes forms a surprisingly stable hermeneutic system, which is applied by Franko to writers of different epochs and nations and, as will be shown, to his own work. According to Franko, every writer can be located at a certain point in this field: a well-balanced position in the center implies for Franko a highly artistic achievement, whereas a one-sided inclination towards one of the four poles would be assessed negatively.

I

In the second letter among the five comprising his "Literaturni pys'ma" of 1876 Franko states programmatically:

The most important characteristic of all contemporary literatures is *narodnist'*.
[Головною ціхою майже всіх новітніх літератур є *народність*.]⁷

Franko's prominent use of the notion of *narodnist'* should not come as a surprise. Following the publication of Ivan Kotliarevskyi's *Eneida* in 1798, *narodnist'* proved to be a key concept in the intellectual definition of "Ukrainianness" throughout the nineteenth century. Special attention was paid to the role of the vernacular and the newly emerging national literature. The central question in this discussion, which was led by Mykhailo Drahomanov, Panteleimon Kulish, Mykola Kostomarov, Ivan Nechui-Levytskyi, and others can be put as follows: Does Ukrainian literature have a right to exist, and, if so, in what form? This is not the place to assess the legitimacy of such a question. For now, it is sufficient to recall that the question was one with which every Ukrainian literary critic was forced to grapple, particularly in the period between 1863/1876 and 1905, when tsarist Russia already had given its own, very rigid legislative reply.⁸

Franko's purpose in stressing the *narodnist'* of Ukrainian literature is two-fold. First, he argues on the basis of *narodnist'* that belletristic writing should be in the vernacular. He especially criticizes the centralist theory that Ukrainian is a mere dialect of Russian and therefore not fit for literary and journalistic use. In the third of his "Literaturni pys'ma," Franko ironically cites the position of the Russian-language journal *Slovo* on this question. In order to put forward the thesis of a unified language, the author from *Slovo* is forced to write in a maccaronic mixture of Russian, Ukrainian, and Church Slavonic:

"There is only *one* written (or literary) Russian language, which has been elaborated out of the living national language of all Rus', with one orthography, but two main oral pronunciations—a northern (Great Russian) and southern (Little Russian). The latter is closer and corresponds more to the written language than the former."—What a great linguist Mr. Ploshchanskyi is! ["Один книжный (или литературный) русский язык, выработанный на живом народном языке Всея Руси, с одною правописью, но с 2 головными северо- (велико-) и южно- (мало-) русскими устными произношениями, из которых последнее ближе и больше соответственно способу писания, нежели первое. (...)"]—Що за языкослов з п. Площанского!]⁹

Second, Franko uses the concept of *narodnist'* to show the natural, continuous evolution of Ukrainian literature. According to him, the great Ukrainian authors of the nineteenth century developed out of the folklore traditions of their land:

Those writers [Ivan Kotliarevskyi, Petro Hulak-Artemov'skyi, and Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko] were not innovators; in their Ukrainian works they just continued what had been developed during a former spiritual and literary phase of the Little Russian people. [Diese Schriftsteller waren keine Neuerer; in ihren ukrainischen Werken knüpften sie nur einfach an das an, was sich im Laufe der früheren geistigen und literarischen Entwicklungsphase des kleinrussischen Volkes ausgebildet hatte.]¹⁰

It is thus clear that Franko understands "literature" in a very broad sense. In his "Istoriia ukrainskoï literatury" (1909) Franko defines literature as the sum of all the spiritual products of humanity. Accordingly, literature has an oral (*slovesnist'*) and written (*pys'menstvo*) component.¹¹

Franko's positivistic approach is also shown in his understanding of the functions of literature. A central idea of the young critic echoes the aesthetics of Chernyshevskii ("prekrasnoe—eto zhizn'") and stresses the imminent rooting of literature in life. In the article "Poeziia i її stanovys'ko v nashykh vremenakh" (1876), Franko most succinctly expresses his central concept in a reciprocal formula: "Life is poetry, and poetry is life." ["Життя—то поезія, а поезія—то життя."] ¹²

In an article written in 1891, Franko states that literature should not limit itself to predetermined topics:

Today, everything that can be perceived in nature and society may be the topic of poetry and above all of the novel. [Сьогодні все, що тільки спостерігаємо в природі, в суспільстві, може бути предметом поезії і передусім роману.]¹³

In 1878, Franko posits a "scientific realism [*naukovyi realizm*]" that includes all the aspects of human life.¹⁴ The application of scientific methods to literature is explained most clearly in his 1891 work "Potęga ziemi w powieści współczesnej." In this article, Franko defines man as the "product of his surrounding [людина—це продукт свого оточення]." ¹⁵ Further, he argues that an author requires a knowledge of many sciences if he wants to describe the actual situation of humanity:

The novelist became not only a psychologist and a sociologist, he also nowadays has to be a natural scientist, an industrialist, a doctor, a lawyer, a manufacturer, a farmer, in order to understand, delve into, and reproduce a highly differentiated society. [Романіст став не тільки психологом і соціологом, він мусить бути тепер і природознавцем, і промисловцем, і лікарем, і юристом, і ремісником, і хліборобом, щоб зрозуміти, заглибитися і відтворити надто диференційоване суспільство (. . .)] ¹⁶

However, Franko does not limit the task of literature to an analytical description of life. He sees literature as one of the most important means for the emancipation of humanity. In his view, literary works are effective in depicting the misery of the majority of the people to the degree that the intellectual elite develops a sense of responsibility and is prompted into action. Franko defines the scope of literature as follows:

[It should] show in their very roots the good and bad sides of the existing order and create among the intelligentsia individuals willing to support with all their strength the good sides and to fight the bad sides of life—i.e., to bring the intelligentsia and the people closer to each other and to call it to the service for the benefit of the people. [(. . .) вказувати в самім корені добрі і

злі боки існуючого порядку і витворювати з-поміж інтелігенції людей, готових служити всею силою для піддержання добрих і усунення злих боків життя,—значить, зближувати інтелігенцію з народом і закріпити її до служби його добру.]¹⁷

This somewhat naïve program (written in 1878) sounds like a belated version of the Russian "khozhdenie v narod" ("going to the people"), which by that time had to be considered a failure.¹⁸ However, there is an essential difference between Franko and the Russian *shestidesiatniki*, whose educational program for the common people was based on materialistic concepts. Such populist writers as Nikolai-Zlatovraskii, Pavel Zasodimskii, and Vasilii Sleptsov saw in the mir (village commune) a possible offspring for a socialist society. In contrast, Franko's literary conception is fueled by a romantic sense of religious mysticism. In 1875 Franko wrote the poem "Bozhes'ke v liuds'kim dusi,"¹⁹ and one year later he defines poetry as the detection of God's spark in reality ("винайдення іскри божества в дійствительності").²⁰ Soviet critics have treated these texts as youthful aberrations, pointing to the poem "Ex nihilo, monolog ateista" (1885) where, according to them, Franko reached a scientific nihilism based on the ideas of Feuerbach ("Non Deus hominem sed homo Deum ex nihilo creavit"). However, throughout his whole literary career Franko parallels poetry with religion. In 1884 he wrote:

What once was religion, is now poetry. Most interesting is the fact that the ties between primordial religion and contemporary poetry are much closer than it might seem at first sight. [Що колись було релігією, то нині єсть поезією. Найцікавіше те, що зв'язок первісної релігії з новочасною поезією єсть далеко тісніший, аніж би се на перший погляд могло видаватися (...)]²¹

Furthermore, in the introduction (1902) to a collection of poems to be de-claimed, Franko very clearly states the close connection between the mimetic, the religious, and the psychological functions of poetry. In his view, it is precisely the encyclopedic character of literature that allows it to mirror not only the outer, but also the inner life of man. In an interesting mixture between romantic and positivistic poetics, Franko designs a conception of literature that is partially indebted to Leo Tolstoy's theory of art as a kind of infection ("Chto takoe iskusstvo?"):

Poetry was something higher, it was a prayer, it was the elevation of the spirit over everyday affairs to the highest superhuman beings, to God. [. . .] In this elevation of the human spirit over daily sorrow and struggle lie the main power and the main significance of poetry. In the beginning, only religion could achieve this, and therefore the oldest poetry was almost exclusively religious. [. . .] Poetry became the mirror of human life—not only of the superficial life that we perceive with our eyes, but mainly of the invisible life which takes place in our souls. [. . .] What is the effect of poetry? It shows us

the human soul like in a mirror in her most beautiful emotions and most horrible aberrations, it strives to render to us for a moment the feelings, opinions, sorrows, and joys of the most different human beings, hundreds of miles remote from us in space, hundreds of years in time. When we read poems by Shevchenko or other great masters of the word, we cease to be ourselves for a while; the poetic word abducts us, we live the life of Shevchenko, we look at the world through his eyes, we cry with his tears, and this is for us the highest education, because we learn to be a part of a great man, we make a part of his soul our own. And here, in its ultimate goal, poetry meets the prayer. [Поезія була чимсь більше, була молитвою, була піднесенем духа понад буденні справи, до висших надлюдських істот, до Бога. (. . .) В тім підношеню людського духа по над буденні клопоти та гризоти лежить головна сила і головне значінє поезії. Спершу це могла робити тільки релігія, і для того найдавніша поезія була майже виключно релігійна. (7) (. . .) Поезія стала ся зеркалом людського життя—не тільки того зверхнього, що бачимо очима, але головнo того незримого, що відбуває ся в нашій душі. (11) (. . .) А що ж робить поезія? Вона як те зеркало, показує нам людську душу в її найкращих поривах і найстрашніших заблудах, вона старає ся передати нам на хвилю почуття, погляди, долі й радощі найріжніших людей, відділених від нас сотками миль, сотками літ часу. Ми читаючи поезію Шевченка або інших великих майстрів слова на хвилю немов перестаємо бути самими собою; поетичне слово пориває нас зі собою, ми живемо життям самого Шевченка, дивимо ся на світ його очима, плачемо його сльозами, і се є для нас найвисша школа, бо ми вчимо ся бути часткою великого чоловіка, присвоюємо собі частину його душі. І тут, у своїй конечній цілі, поезія сходиться з молитвою. (13)]²²

Not only the religious but also the sociological function of literature constitutes a leitmotif in Franko's aesthetics. In a very important article on Lesia Ukraïnka (1898), Franko elaborates on his emancipatory and activist understanding of literature. For obvious reasons, Soviet critics frequently have cited the following passage:

Always and everywhere, poetry serves the necessities of life, the higher ideal order that leads people to action, to improvement of their destiny. And if sometimes it serves the entertainment and enjoyment of the higher classes, it achieves its highest power and aptitude only if it manages to express life and the fight of the broad masses and at the same time the powerful fight for the highest human and social ideals—for freedom, equality, and brotherhood of all men. [Все і всюди поезія—слуга життєвих потреб, слуга того вищого ідейного порядку, що веде людей до поступу, до поправи їх долі. І коли зразу вона служить інколи розривкою і забавою вищих верстов, то до найвищої сили і гідності доходить тільки тоді, коли робиться виразом життя і боротьби найширших народних мас і zarazом боєвим окликом за найвищі людські і громадські ідеали—свободу, рівність і братерство всіх людей.]²³

However, it is grossly misleading to reduce Franko's entire article to this quotation. The social relevance of literature is only one part of Franko's conception of literary creativity that complements other theoretical aspects. It also must be noted that Franko cautions against an exclusively social orientation of literature. In his article "Z ostatnykh desiatiy XIX v." (1901), which once again for obvious reasons has not been included in the fifty-volume edition, Franko criticizes the socialist theory of the diminishing importance of *narodnist'*:

Among the Ukrainian youth—and not only the youth—prevailed the creed, that all nationalities will be united in the future and that the nurturing of whatever national privileges is a regressive tendency [. . .] The Ukrainian intelligentsia, together with the Russian, prepared itself to go "to the people" and to herald in the factories the "vile mechanism" and the ideals of social justice—this, of course, in the Russian language. [В кругах тої української молодіжи—таї не лише молодіжи—панувало переконанє, що розвій іде до зливання народностей до купи і що плеканє якоїсь національної окремішности, то регрес. (. . .) Українська інтелігенція разом із московською готовилася йти "в народ" і проповідати по фабриках "хитру механіку" та ідеали соціальної справедливості—розуміється, московською мовою.] ²⁴

In a review of Anatolii Faresov's book *Narodniki i marksisty* (1899), Franko makes a similar point:

It is very sad that the most enthusiastic part of the Ukrainian youth is significantly captivated by this doctrine, even though social democracy becomes hostile to all manifestations of social independence and decentralization and to the Ukrainian national movement itself. From this point of view, social democracy is a much worse enemy for *ukrainstvo* than the Russian autocracy and Russian censorship. The autocracy is a pressure based on physical power and in a certain sense binds the hands; social democracy steals the soul, fills it with viscid and false doctrines and turns it away from action on the native soil. [Дуже сумно, що на сю доктрину ловиться в значній часті гарячіша українська молодь, хоча соціал-демократизм стає ворожо, як проти усяких об'явів суспільної самодіяльності та децентралізації, так само і проти національного українського руху, і з того погляду являється для українства далеко гіршим ворогом, ніж російське самодержавіє і російська цензура. Бо коли самодержавний тиск є тиском фізичної сили і так сказати, в'яже руки, то соціал-демократизм краде душі, напоює їх густими і фальшивими доктринами і відвертає від праці на ріднім ґрунті.] ²⁵

It is possible to discern three normative aspects in Franko's understanding of *narodnist'*. First, Franko emphasizes that every national literature has to be organically rooted in life and must reflect the popular mentality. This requirement also guarantees the comprehensibility of literature and its direct reception by the public. Second, Franko argues that *narodnist'* is not valid in literature

without a religious dimension. He coins the phrase "poetry as a form of prayer" in order to stress the importance of spirituality in art. Third, Franko draws a clear line between *narodnist'* and "socialism." To put it plainly, *narodnist'* is always socially engaged, but socialism in its pure form eventually undermines the national grounds of *narodnist'*.

II

Franko's psychological analysis of the poetic mind, which he unfolds in his treatise "Iz sekretiv poetychnoi tvorchosti" (1898), is well known and has often been quoted. In an abbreviated form, the same basic ideas can be found in his articles "Topolia T. Shevchenka" (1890), "Lesia Ukraïнка" (1898), and "Iuvilei Ivana Levyts'koho (Nechuia)" (1905). Franko's interest in psychology, however, predates these articles. Indeed, as early as 1878, Franko called psychology the most important auxiliary science for the contemporary novelist.²⁶ Moreover, Franko announced in a letter in 1880 his intention to dedicate one section of the newly founded journal *Svit* to psychology.²⁷ Therefore, in Franko's literary theory, "sociology" and "psychology" are not opposite but rather complementary dimensions of a single holistic conception. Franko is too fine an artist not to discern the difference between a political pamphlet and a work of art. According to Franko, Lesia Ukraïнка is actually a classic example of a poet who manages to present important thoughts in a genuinely artistic form:

The author forms his image, penetrating it with his fantasy, lighting it up from different sides, and by using poetological devices he tries to evoke it possibly in the same shape, in the same power, in the same atmosphere in the reader's soul. [. . .] The poetic technique, which is based on the laws of psychological perception and association, tells us that this goal is best reached with the simplest devices and with the combination of concrete images, but arranged in such order that they almost unwillingly touch the most secret strings in our souls and disclose the broad horizons of emotion and life. Without this, so to say, basic harmony, a poet may paint very nice and plastic images, but they don't leave in our souls a deep trace, [. . .] they leave us cold. A poet may call himself a real poet only if he enriches our soul with mighty emotions and makes us citizens of a higher, ideal world, pure from everyday mischance and egotism. If a poet's individuality is immature, low, characterless and inharmonic, then also his poetry will even with great talent not elevate itself, will not touch our souls. [Вглиблюючися фантазією в той образ, автор обрисовує, освітлює його з різних боків і силкується способами, які дає йому поетична техніка, викликати його по змозі в такій самій формі, в такій самій силі, в такій самій колориті в душі читача. (. . .) Поетична техніка, оперта на законах психологічної перцепції і асоціації, говорить нам, що се найкраще досягається найпростішими способами, комбінаціями конкретних образів, але так упорядкованими, щоб вони, мов знехотя, торкали найтайніші струни нашої душі, щоб відкривали

нам широкі горизонти чуття і життєвих відносин. Без тієї, що так скажу, долішньої гармонії поет може змалювати дуже гарні і пластичні образки, але вони в нашій душі не лишать глибокого сліду, (...) вони лишають нас холодними. Тільки той поет годен зватися правдивим поетом, хто (...) збагачує нашу душу зворушеннями могутніми, а притім чистими від примішки буденщини, випадковості і егоїзму, робить нас горожанами вищого, ідейного світу. (...) коли індивідуальність поета невироблена, невисока, безхарактерна і негармонійна, то й його поезія навіть при великім таланті не підійметься високо, не порушить нашої душі.]²⁸

The last sentence of this quotation contains the second key word on which Franko's literary theory is based: *indyvidual'nist'*. Whereas a poet's *narodnist'* has to ensure that his art is rooted in the people's tradition, his *indyvidual'nist'* guarantees the unrepeatable, unique originality of his work. In Franko's view, every artist must try to bring together these two elements:

[...] to contribute to the global treasury of literature at least a small drop of something new, something of his own, which was enclosed in the well of his national and individual life, which has not been exploited in this manner before. [...] вносити у всесвітню скарбницю літературну хоч малу крапельку, а нового, свого власного, зачертого в криниці того життя народного і індивідуального, що ще перед ним не було так експлуатоване.]²⁹

Franko uses *indyvidual'nist'* as *differentia specifica*, which separates art from science. The rights of literature go further than those of historiography. The historian has to limit himself to the typical traits of an event; the writer tries to sketch the aura of a certain historical epoch in an individualistic manner. In the foreword to his collection of poems *Z burkhlyvykh lit* (1903), Franko writes:

[The historian] has to discern in thousands of details a common stream, in disparate manifestations—the great law of development, in the individual traits—the type. The novelist, by contrast, grasps the manifestations in their flight. In the turmoil of historical action, he seizes individuality, laying it bare like a red thread in a colorful cloth, and only on the bases of this individuality can he show like a chronicler the great historical events; he lets us glance at them as if through a small window. His goal, like everywhere else—is the depiction of the human soul in its impulse, passion, struggle, triumph, and defeat. [(Історик) мусить віднайти поза тисячами дрібниць основну течію, поза відірваними явищами—великий закон розвою, поза індивідуальними рисами—типове. Белетрист, навпаки, ловить на льоту самі явища, у вихрі історичних подій він хапається за індивідуальність, виторочуючи її, мов червону нитку з різнобарвної тканини, і тільки на тій індивідуальності, мимохить, немов рикошетом, показує великі історичні події, дає нам глядіти на них ніби через невеличке віконце. Його ціль тут, як і всюди інде,—малювання людської душі в її поривах, пристрастях, змаганнях, тріумфах і упадках.]³⁰

Already in his 1891 article "Potęga ziemi w powieści współczesnej," Franko stresses the successful combination of sociological and psychological elements in the "first novel of newer profile," namely, *Don Quixote*: "... це суспільно-психологічний твір [...] this is a socio-psychological work]."³¹ Furthermore, in the article "Pryntsy i bezpryntsy" (1903) Franko defines the main task of literature as the twofold presentation of man in his social network and in the secrets of his soul [малювати чоловіка в його суспільному зв'язку і в тайниках його душі].³²

Franko often uses the juxtaposition of subjectivity and objectivity to describe these two aspects of literary creativity. If literature is to represent life in a valid manner, objective and subjective traits have to be intertwined and balanced in the artist's work. In an 1899 article, Franko praises the historical novellas of the Swiss writer Conrad Ferdinand Meyer as an example of a successful individual description of a broader social situation:

Meyer found a topic where he could—without doing harm to the historical and poetic truth—characterize his hero and at the same time express his own opinion, mood, sorrow, and hope. Precisely this contemporary subjective element, which is so delicately present in the whole poem, inconceivable yet palpable, is its most attractive bait. [Мейєр знайшов тему, де без ушкодження історичної і поетичної правди міг, характеризуючи свого героя, дати вираз також власним поглядам, настроям, жалем і надіям. Власне цей сучасний суб'єктивний елемент, так делікатно розлитий по цілій поемі, невлловимий, а чутний, є найбільшою її принадою].³³

The direction of this artistic process is also reversible. Objective history may not only be rendered through a subjective perception, but a very subjective destiny also can be elevated to obtain objective validity. Franko gives an enthusiastic characterization of Dante Alighieri, who managed to express his most subjective feelings in the form of an objective epos:

An objective presentation of the most subjective thing, an epic based on lyricism, a love song, which expanded to the size of the *Iliad*—that is Dante's "Divine Comedy." [Об'єктивне преставлення речі найбільш суб'єктивної, епос оснований на ліриці, пісня любовна, що розрослася до розмірів Лїади,—отсе Дантова "Божественна комедія."] ³⁴

Here, the relationship between subjective and objective elements is presented not only as a balance but also as a synthesis. Franko detects this kind of mutual mirroring of *indyvidual'nist'* and *narodnist'* in all of the most influential texts of world literature, and—what is most important for his role as a literary critic—the synthetic principle becomes a normative measure that Franko uses to assess contemporary Ukrainian writing.

III

In his article "Stare i nove v suchasni ukrainskii literaturi" (1904), Franko sketches out the recent development of Ukrainian literature. In his view, the poetics of the older generation of writers of the nineteenth century are very much characterized by *narodnist*:

[Ivan] Karpenko-Karyi and [Panas] Myrnyi are two talents who have all the characteristics of great painters, people, and national psychologists. Both of them are true sons of their nation, products of their milieu, [. . .] organically tied to their people. [Карпенко-Карий і Мирний—ось два таланти, наділені всіма прикметами великих малярів побуту і національних психологів. Оба вони правдиві сини свого народу, вирости серед нього (. . .), органічно зв'язані зі своїм народом.]³⁵

The younger generation of writers, Franko continues, is no longer interested in describing national characters but rather tries to analyze the human psyche in general:

The young Ukrainian writers don't confine themselves solely to national types; they aim at a psychological analysis of the human being without regard for which national or class-marked dress he might wear. Their task is the description of all motions of the human soul, which basically is the task of every great artistic literature. [Молоді українські письменники вже не обмежуються на самих національних типах; вони беруться до психологічного аналізу чоловіка без огляду на те, в який би національний чи класовий костюм він був одягнений. Їх завдання—висловлення всіх рухів людської душі, що й творить велике завдання кожної артистичної літератури.]³⁶

However, this shift in Ukrainian writing from the characterization of the national society to the psychological study of individuals does not coincide with a development from objective to subjective literary techniques. Franko clearly distinguishes between the topic of a literary work and its presentation. He states that the newer generation of Ukrainian writers—especially Vasyl' Stefanyk—chooses a point of view that is highly uninvolved:

In comparison to the old epics one might call them lyrics, although their poetry is not at all subjective. On the contrary, they are much more objective than the old narrators, because they vanish totally behind their heroes and actually transfer themselves into their souls, let us see the world and the people through their eyes. [В порівнянні до давніших епиків їх можна би назвати ліриками, хоча їх лірика зовсім не суб'єктивна; навпаки, вони далеко об'єктивніші від давніх оповідачів, бо за своїми героями вони щезають зовсім, а властиво, переносять себе в їх душу, заставляють нас бачити світ і людей їх очима.]³⁷

It is probably no coincidence that the history of Ukrainian literature as perceived by Franko is paralleled by his own development as an author. Tamara

Hundorova has structured her book *Franko—ne kameniar* according to the different periods of Franko's writing: the idealism of the 1870s, the naturalism of the 1880s, the psychologism of the 1890s, and the humanitarianism of the 1900s. Nevertheless, she characterizes Franko's writing as "synthetic": his fictional works very often are a sociological study, a detective story, a psychological analysis, a didactic piece, and a lyrical sketch all at the same time.³⁸

In the foreword to the second edition of *Ziv'iale lystia* (1910), Franko characterizes his own work with the same categories that he had applied earlier to the history of literature in general:

A second edition of this collection of lyrical songs has become necessary. These songs are the most subjective which have appeared here since the times of Shevchenko's autobiographical poetry and at the same time the most objective in their manner to paint the complicated human emotions. [(...) запотребилосся друге видання сеї збірки ліричних пісень, найсуб'єктивніших із усіх, які появилися у нас від часу автобіографічних поезій Шевченка, та при тім найбільш об'єктивних у способі малювання складного людського чуття.]³⁹

In Franko's view, it is precisely the well-calculated balance between subjectivity and objectivity that distinguishes his modernist verse from the decadent poetry of, for instance, *Moloda Muza*. For the same reason, Franko presents his "lyrical drama" not as the product of his own ego, but rather assumes the role of an editor. In the article "Z dziedziny nauki i literatury" (1891) Franko explicitly states the shortcomings of decadent literature:⁴⁰

The exclusive preoccupation with one's own ego, the permanent rummaging in one's own soul, the straining of one's ears to the most secret nervous movement—is doubtlessly a pathological case, which is proved by the narrowing of the horizon, by the decay of what constitutes the human being above all—the feeling of a social adherence to other people. An exaggerated individualism is always and everywhere an illness and eventually leads to insanity. [Виключне заглиблення у своє "я," постійне копирсання у власній душі, прислуховування до найпотаємніших порухів своїх нервів—без сумніву стан хворобливий, що свідчить про обмеження кругозору, про занепад того, що передусім робить людину людиною—відчуття спільності з іншими людьми. Перебільшений індивідуалізм завжди і всюди є хворобою і зрештою веде до божевілля.]⁴¹

The most prominent writer criticized by Franko for his hypertrophy of individualism is the Polish modernist Stanisław Przybyszewski:

Insanity, a serious psychic illness—these are the clear characteristics of his writing of which the symptoms are especially the inquiet and fast flashing of images in his fantasy, the sudden leaps from the fifth to the tenth, and the completely insane narrowing of his spiritual horizon, which compels the author to see in the whole world only his own idolized and isolated ego. [Божевілля, тяжка духовна хвороба—се виразні признаки сього

писання, виразні особливо в тім неспокійнім і прудкім миготанні образів його уяви, в наглих перескоках з п'ятого на десяте і в тім наскрізь хворобливим затісненні духовного кругозору, що змушує автора в цілім світі бачити тільки своє власне я, обожане і нічим не зв'язане (. . .).⁴²

In his 1894 article "Odczyty Miriama," Franko directly polemicizes with modernist poets and pathologizes them:

In vain, gentlemen, you call yourselves symbolists, decadents, geniuses, and lyrical musicians, artists for the sake of art. Call yourselves hysterics, so we may immediately understand. [Даремце, панове, ви називаєте себе символістами, декадентами, художниками й музикантами в поезії, артистами для артизму. Назвіть себе істериками, то ми вас відразу зрозуміємо.]⁴³

Franko frequently uses medical terms to describe modernist tendencies in literature. This metaphorical field results from a special kind of literary Darwinism to which Franko adheres. According to him, only literary texts that are "healthy" and fit for life will survive. In this context, the article "Internatsionalizm i natsionalizm u suchasnykh literaturakh" (1898) is particularly revealing:

We don't have to fear that insane and nihilistic directions may get the upper hand and dominate: they do not have fertile power—like all hybrids in zoology—and if they beget something, their fruit will not be fit for life. [Немає страху, щоби хворобливі, нігілістичні напрями перемогли і запанували; вони, так як бастарди в зоології,—не мають розплодової сили, а коли й сплodyть щось, то сей їх плід нездібний жити.]⁴⁴

Not only a surplus, but also a lack of individualism is harmful to literary writings. The shortcoming this time is called "epigonism." Franko points to the work of Panteleimon Kulish, who, in his view, tries to imitate Shevchenko's creative individuality but proves to be unable to add a personal tone to his material:

Kulish struggled until death with Shevchenkian perceptions and images of Ukraine, Cossacks, *haidamaks*, lords, and simple people. [(. . .) Куліш до смерті воював із шевченківськими поняттями та образами України, козацтва, гайдамацтва, панства і простолюття.]⁴⁵

There may be a lack not only of *indyvidual'nist'* but also of *narodnist'* in a poet's work. For Franko, the Ukrainian school in Polish literature is a case in point. All poetic mastership is in vain, if the topic of the literary text is not deeply rooted in the people:

Excluding carefully from Ukrainian tradition everything that would have recalled an autonomous, independent, and protesting Ukraine, Zaleski *had* to arrive at the creation of a fictitious, painted Ukraine. The more beautifully this fiction was being painted, the worse it was for Polish society, because in this way *one big illusion* became more firmly rooted in their hearts and minds.

[...] The example of the Polish poets of this school demonstrated how one should not write for the Ukrainian people. [Виключаючи пильно з української традиції все, що нагадувало таку власновільну, самостійну, протестуючу Україну, Залеський мусив дійти до витворення України фікційної, мальованої. Чим краще мальована була та фікція, тим гірше для польської суспільності, бо тим сильніше скріплювалась в її умі і серці одна велика ілюзія (...). Примір поетів польських тої школи більше вказував на те, як не треба писати для українського народу, ніж як треба.]⁴⁶

Most interesting in this respect is Franko's famous critique of Adam Mickiewicz as a "poet of treason."⁴⁷ In Franko's view, Mickiewicz managed to deprave the self-consciousness of a whole nation with his highly personal ethics of camouflage and treachery. Thus, Polish *narodnist'* is fatally determined by a highly gifted artistic *indyvidual'nist'*, which adheres to wrong values. In this special case, the relationship between *indyvidual'nist'* and *narodnist'* is literally perverted: Mickiewicz's poetic individuality has not grown organically from Polish nationality, but Polish nationality turns out to be the ideological construction of a strong individual. Franko's essay ends with a statement of grief:

Sad must have been the time when an ingenious poet was driven on such wrong ways, and sad must be the fate of a nation, which considers such a poet without reservations as its highest national hero and prophet and keeps nourishing every new generation with his poisonous spiritual products. [Traurig muss die Zeit gewesen sein, wo ein genialer Dichter auf solche Irrwege gedrängt wurde, und traurig muss es mit einer Nation beschaffen sein, welche einen solchen Dichter ohne Vorbehalt als ihren höchsten Nationalheroen und Propheten betrachtet und immer neue Generationen mit seinen giftigen Geistesprodukten nährt.]⁴⁸

In contrast to these negative examples, Shevchenko is hailed as the incarnation of a true poet who manages to express the deepest feelings of the Ukrainian people in a highly personal tone, or—to use Franko's own terminology—who links *narodnist'* with *indyvidual'nist'*:

We have to consider Taras Shevchenko as the writer, who accomplished here what Dante did in Italian literature. Moreover, in his works the traditional element in respect both to content and to form is still very powerful and noticeable, but his mighty and bright individuality is everywhere able to bestow on these borrowed elements a distinctly Shevchenkian brand, a distinct light. [Писателем, котрий зробив у нас те, що Данте в літературі італійській, (...) мусимо вважати Тараса Шевченка. І в його творах елемент традиційний і щодо змісту і щодо форми ще дуже сильний і помітний, але його могутня, світла індивідуальність усюди вміє тим запозиченим елементам надати відрубну, шевченківську ціху, відрубну окраску.]⁴⁹

Shevchenko, the "Ukrainian Dante," thus fully conforms to the definition of the ideal writer set forth by Franko in his *Istoriia ukraïns'koï literatury* (1909):

Without negating the sense for beauty and harmony, he will seek their expression not in maintaining aesthetic formulas and clichés, but in the careful attention to manifestations of social and individual life, to the phenomena of the power, creativity, and harmonic development of the human person and the whole nation. [Не відкидаючи набік почуття краси й гармонії, він буде, однак, шукати їх виразу не в придержуванні естетичних формулок та шаблонів, а в пильній увазі до явищ соціального та індивідуального життя, в виявах сили, творчості та гармонійного розвитку людської одиниці й цілої нації.]⁵⁰

In conclusion, Franko's theory of literary creativity should not be reduced to the scheme "from sociology to psychology." On the contrary, it should be viewed as a complex field with at least two ideological axes intersecting each other. First, there is the dichotomy between conscious and unconscious artistic work—as most prominently outlined in "Iz sekretiv poetychnoi tvorchosti." Second, there is the dichotomy between *narodnist'* and *indyvidual'nist'* as presented throughout Franko's critical essays. The quality of a writer can be judged by comparing the balance of these four categories. Franko does not exempt his own modernist poetry from his literary theory, but conveys it as the successful taming of the excessive individualism present in modernist poetry, both Ukrainian and foreign. He makes a universal use of his critical categories—they are applicable in world literature, Ukrainian literature, and in his own texts. Finally, they provide a grid which not only can systematize the synchronic but also the diachronic dimension of literature.

NOTES

1. Ivan [John] Fizer, "Ivan Franko: Vid sotsiologichnoi do psykholohichnoi zumovlennosti literatury," *Slovo i chas* (5) 1993: 54.
2. Ivan Doroshenko, *Ivan Franko—literaturnyi krytyk* (Lviv, 1966), p. 174.
3. Fizer, "Ivan Franko," p. 54.
4. I omit a detailed critique of Soviet scholarship that presents Franko as an "inexorable fighter" for the rights of the people. It is, however, interesting to consult the *Slovnyk literaturoznavchyykh terminiv Ivana Franka* (Kyiv, 1966), where only the official notion of "narodnist" appears—there are no entries for "sotsiologhiia," "psykholohiia," and "indyvidualnist'."
5. Stefan Simonek, *Ivan Franko und die "Moloda Muza." Motive in der westukrainischen Lyrik der Moderne* (Cologne, 1997); Tamara Hundorova, *Proiavlennia slova: Dyskursiia rann'oho ukrains'koho modernizmu. Postmoderna interpretatsiia* (Lviv, 1997), pp. 201–32.
6. Fizer, "Ivan Franko," p. 59.
7. *Druh* 20 (1876): 317. Italics in the original. The fifty-volume edition of Franko's works includes only the first, fourth, and fifth of his "Literaturni pys'ma," probably because the second letter speaks in positive terms about the Church and the third letter protests against Russian chauvinism and advocates the right to use the Ukrainian language.
8. George Grabowicz, *Do istorii ukrains'koï literatury. Doslidzhennia, ese, polemika* (Kyiv, 1997), pp. 25, 218.
9. *Druh* 21 (1876): 332.
10. Ivan Franko, *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Kultur der Ukraine. Ausgewählte deutsche Schriften des revolutionären Demokraten 1882–1915* (Berlin, 1963), p. 81.
11. Ivan Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv u p'iatdesiaty tomakh*, vol. 40 (Kyiv, 1976–1986), p. 7. The same concept can be found in Franko's article "Iuzhnorusskaia literatura," written in 1904 for the Brokgauz-Éfron encyclopedia: "В ю[жнорусской] литературе, как и во всякой другой славянской, духовная жизнь нации с незапамятных времен отражалась параллельно в словесности (устной традиции мифологической и поэтической) и письменности; первая была достоянием более или менее широких масс народа, вторая была преимущественно органом государства, церкви и школы проникая, однако, постепенно в более или менее широкие народные массы." *Ibid.*, vol. 41, p. 101.
12. *Ibid.*, vol. 26, p. 394.

13. Ibid., vol. 28, p. 181.
14. Ibid., vol. 26, p. 13.
15. Ibid., vol. 28, p. 180.
16. Ibid., p. 181.
17. Ibid., vol. 26, p. 12.
18. This problem lies at the center of Turgenev's *Nov'* (1877). Franko's review of this novel is very indicative: "Живучи далеко від Росії, він [Turgenev] не міг зжитися з тим життям, котре по його від'їзді закипіло в Росії, і, розуміється, не міг його відмалювати так вірно, як в попередніх величних картинах." Ibid., p. 50.
19. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 290.
20. Ibid., vol. 26, p. 399.
21. Ibid., p. 333.
22. Ivan Franko, *Vybir deklamatsii dlia rus'kykh selian i mishchan* (Lviv, 1902), p. 2.
23. Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv*, vol. 31, p. 269.
24. Ivan Franko, *Moloda Ukraïna: Chast' persha. Providni ideï i epizody* (Lviv, 1910), p. 3.
25. Cited in Mykola Zhulyns'kyi, "Vid tradytsii XIX stolittia do rannikh poshukiv XX ta Ivan Franko," *Suchasnist'* 1991 (5): 25.
26. Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv*, vol. 26, p. 12.
27. Ibid., vol. 48, p. 257.
28. Ibid., vol. 31, p. 272–73.
29. Ibid., vol. 29, p. 9.
30. Ibid., vol. 21, p. 190.
31. Ibid., vol. 28, p. 179.
32. Ibid., vol. 34, p. 365.
33. Ibid., vol. 31, p. 432.
34. Ivan Franko, *Dante Alihiiëri: Kharakterystyka serednikh vikiv. Zhyttia poeta i vybir iz ioho poezii* (Kyiv, 1965), p. 179 (see also p. 114).
35. Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv*, vol. 35, p. 93.
36. Ibid., p. 104.
37. Ibid., p. 108.
38. Tamara Hundorova, *Franko—ne kameniar* (Melbourne, 1996), p. 91.
39. Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv*, vol. 2, p. 120.

40. This article repeats the main points—sometimes almost literally—of Hermann Bahr's 1891 essay "Die Décadence." See Stefan Simonek, "Zur widersprüchlichen Konzeption von Dekadenz und Moderne bei Ivan Franko," *Österreichische Osthefte* 35 (1993): 614.
41. Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv*, vol. 28, p. 164–65.
42. Ibid., vol. 32, p. 32–33.
43. Ibid., vol. 29, p. 121.
44. Ibid., vol. 31, p. 39.
45. Ibid., vol. 33, p. 234. Franko (see pp. 237, 266) also identifies the very same shortcomings in the works of Stepan Rudans'kyi and Mykhailo Starytskyi.
46. Ibid., vol. 27, p. 32.
47. George Grabowicz, "Ivan Franko i Adam Mitskevych," in *Ivan Franko i svitova kul'tura. Materialy mizhnarodnoho sympoziumu IuNESKO (Lviv, 11–15 veresnia 1986 r.)*, vol. 1 (Kyiv, 1990), p. 137.
48. Ivan Franko, "Ein Dichter des Verrates," *Die Zeit* 8 May 1897: 89.
49. Franko, *Zibrannia tvoriv*, vol. 28, p. 78.
50. Ibid., vol. 40, p. 18.