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## In Search of 'Your Own' 19th Century

**Annotation:** The essay, by way of introduction, offers a brief historiographical sketch of the study of the 19th century, with an emphasis on disputed issues and promising trends. Special attention is paid to the most notable recent works devoted to the 'long 19th century' in the history of Eastern Europe. The essay concludes with an overview of the articles comprising this collection.

**Keywords:** 'long 19th century', Eastern Europe, historiography, modernization.

### W poszukiwaniu "naszego" dziewiętnastego wieku

**Streszczenie:** Esej, pełniący rolę prologu, stanowi krótki szkic historiograficzny badań nad XIX w., z naciskiem na kwestie sporne i obiecujące tendencje. Szczególną uwagę zwraca się na najwybitniejsze najnowsze dzieła poświęcone „długiemu wiekowi XIX” w dziejach Europy Wschodniej. Esej kończy się przeglądem artykułów wchodzących w skład tego zbioru.  
**Słowa kluczowe:** długi wiek XIX., Europa Wschodnia, historiografia, modernizacja

A huge number of books and articles have been published on the 19th century. And this is not surprising, because much of what we could call 'modern' made its first appearance in that era. By peering into this relatively recent past, we can better understand ourselves and the trends of today. Obviously, from this point of view it does not make sense to limit ourselves to the hard chronological boundaries of the '19th century', because we are interested in 'processes' and developments. As noted by Jürgen Osterhammel, author of one of the seminal works on the period, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*<sup>1</sup>, "In the case of the nineteenth century...

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<sup>1</sup> The book was first published in 2009: J. Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt. Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts*. München: C.H. Beck, 2009. 1568 s. It went through five editions in 2009-2010, and a revised edition came out in 2011. An English translation appeared three years later: J. Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World: a Global History of the Nineteenth Century* / Princeton (N.J.), 2014. In 2011, ex-

the lusterless boundary dates underscore the formal character of this procedure: neither the beginning year nor the end year of the calendar century coincided with a major turning point<sup>2</sup>. Accordingly, historians have for quite some time been using the expression 'long 19th century', which usually covers the period from the French Revolution to the beginning of World War I. Osterhammel himself, however, proposes to extend these limits even further – to start with the 1770s (the creation of the United States) and end with 1919 or even the 1920s, when the transition to the global post-war era was complete<sup>3</sup>.

Researchers draw on a variety of markers in characterizing this 'long 19th century'. For instance, Peter N. Stearns<sup>4</sup> writes about the 'three bases' that are often used to explain the distinctiveness of this period: the rise of a "new aggressive and extensive European imperialism", the influence of the French Revolution, and the "undeniable advent of the industrial revolution" (according to Stearns, the most important marker of all). However, he is also quite skeptical about their global applicability (especially beyond the 'Atlantic zone'), since "there was, quite simply, too much international diversity in political and social forms and experiences, in part of course because of divisions among imperial, postcolonial and newly-colonized areas". If we look beyond Western developments, Stearns believes, it is the emphasis on global industrialization, beginning in the mid-19th century, that best allows us to make sense of this period as a phenomenon of *world history*.

Jürgen Osterhammel, also trying to sum up the developments that characterized the 'long 19th century', pointed in his turn to the colossal growth of different types of mobility and social tension, intercultural influences and transfers, and a variety of forms of emancipation. This takes us back to the theory of modernization, which became widespread in the 1960s and '70s thanks to the works of Walt Rostow, Marion Levy, Daniel Lerner, and Cyril Edwin Black. According to this theory, the rapid spread of literacy, mass communication, and migration eroded the institutions and cultural models that had previously served as the foundations of traditional society. This argument, of course, was based on the analysis of processes that began in the second half of the 18th century and came to full fruition in the 20th. With time, such features of modernization as bureaucratization, capitalist industrialization, secularization, and democratization began to be identified more and more clearly as well. Such developments can easily be found in the 'long 19th century'. Particularly noticeable are the changes associated with industrialization. In fact, this is what the first stage of modernization is generally called today – the 'industrial' stage. However, nowadays researchers increasingly point out that modernization is a variable process and that there is a nonlinear connection, for example, between modernization and democratization. This calls for a pluralistic approach that would recognize the multi-vector and distinctive nature of modernization in various cultural and civilizational contexts. It is evident, however, that the idea of

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tracts from the book were translated into Russian by A. Kaplunovski and published in the journal *Ab Imperio* (Ю. Остерхаммель, *Трансформация мира: история XIX века. Главы из книги „Ab Imperio“*, 2011. № 3).

<sup>2</sup> J. Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World: a Global History...*, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>4</sup> P.N. Stearns, *Rethinking the Long 19th Century in World History: Assessments and Alternatives [2010] „World History Connected“*. 2012. Vol. 9. Issue 3. URL: [http://worldhistoryconnected.press.illinois.edu/9.3/forum\\_stearns.html](http://worldhistoryconnected.press.illinois.edu/9.3/forum_stearns.html).

the 'long 19th century' itself is a product of reflection specifically on European history. Hence it is not surprising that our understanding of many developments associated with this concept is based on what was happening in this part of the world. Thus, Eric Hobsbawm, who produced one of the best surveys of European history, splits the 19th century into three stages: the age of revolution (1789-1848), age of capital (1848-1875) and age of empire (1875-1914). How pertinent is this scheme to other parts of the world? Clearly not very, and modern researchers acknowledge this, arguing that in adopting it we are paying "undue attention to the West"<sup>5</sup>. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that the 19th century was a 'European' century. The dominance of Europe, which in this period set the vector of development for the whole world<sup>6</sup>, allows us to view a 'Eurocentric' perspective on the 19th century as in many ways justified.

At the same time, we understand that 'Europe' in the 19th century was not a simple undifferentiated entity. Its different regions exhibit distinctive modernization patterns of their own, rooted in their cultural and historical specificity. And both the 'density' and 'duration' of modernization varied. In particular, it has been noted that many of the changes identified as characteristic features of the 'long 19th century' were in fact concentrated in its second half, or even its last decades. So, the question arises, how do the first and second halves of the 1800s fit together? In addition, a number of processes 'typical' of this period began in the early modern era and continued into the 20th century<sup>7</sup>. Accordingly, today historians in different European countries are trying to make sense of 'their' 19th century – that is, to identify its local dimensions and what Osterhammel called 'regional times'<sup>8</sup> and offer their own periodizations of the 'long 19th century' based on region-specific events and developments. Efforts in this direction should enable us to better see spatial differentiation across the continent and furnish us with material for comparative analysis, creating the basis for a deeper understanding of the distinctive nature of the 19th century.

And yet, as in any global transformation, these local processes shared a lot in common, at least in part thanks to diffusion of ideas, technology transfer, and adoption of experience. Thus, the path forward today seems to be associated with the promise of the so-called 'global history'<sup>9</sup>, which is less about reflecting on the 'high road' of humankind than about tracing the history of such interconnections, seeing an element as part of the whole.

Examples of this strategy are already well known. Particularly often brought up in this regard is Christopher Bayly's *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global*

<sup>5</sup> P.N. Sterns, *Rethinking the Long 19th Century in World History...*

<sup>6</sup> Representatives of the British school of global historians, particularly Christopher Bayly, have proposed the term 'imperial meridian', denoting the era of European geopolitical, technological, economic, and intellectual superiority over the rest of the world in the 19th century (C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World 1780-1830 (Studies in Modern History)*. 1989. Routledge)

<sup>7</sup> P.N. Sterns, *Rethinking the Long 19th Century in World History...*

<sup>8</sup> J. Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History...*, p. 47. Early in the section on "National and Global Turning Points", he observes that "historical periodization must face the problem of the 'temporal diversity of cultural domains'", as well as notes the inconsistency between 'breaks' in political, economic, and social history (*ibid.*, pp. 52-53). Further along in the book, he states that "the smallest degree of worldwide synchronization was to be found in the realm of culture" (*ibid.*, p. 62).

<sup>9</sup> On global history, see: S. Conrad, *What Is Global History?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016. 299 pp.

*Connections and Comparisons*<sup>10</sup>, which approaches the transformation of the world through the analysis of the interweaving of political, economic, social, and cultural developments in the 'long 19th century'. Then there is, of course, the already mentioned work by Jürgen Osterhammel, which has become a milestone of 'global history'. According to A. Kotenko, "Osterhammel's book on the world history of the 19th century seems to be the example of a new type of world history, with the emphasis on mobility and movements, comparisons and transfers, networks and connections"<sup>11</sup>. We must also recognize the importance for our understanding of the 19th century of the seminal studies by such classics as Eric Hobsbawm<sup>12</sup> and Immanuel Wallerstein<sup>13</sup>. Characteristics of these and other works can easily be found online<sup>14</sup>.

What has been said so far about prospective avenues of research in 'long 19th century studies' fully applies to Eastern Europe. However, pursuing these avenues is not an easy task. Without setting out to write a full-scale historiographical review, we will briefly consider only a few key works on the history of Eastern Europe in the 19th century that have been published in the last decade.

The collection of essays *Invention of the Century: Problems and Models of Time in Russia and Europe in the 1800s*<sup>15</sup> was published in 2013 as part of the *Studia Europaea*, a joint project of the German Historical Institute in Moscow and the NLO Publishing House, following the international conference "Our 19th Century: A Phenomenon of Culture and a Historical Concept"<sup>16</sup>. Even though the name of the conference seems to evoke the search for regional specificity, the aims of the organizers and participants were in fact much broader. They included, in particular, "the reconstruction of temporal

<sup>10</sup> C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons*. 2004. Blackwell Publishing.

<sup>11</sup> Котенко А. [Review] „Laboratorium: Russian Review of Social Research”. 2018. 10(1), с. 98. DOI: 10.25285/2078-1938-2018-10-1-95-103

<sup>12</sup> E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789–1848*. London and New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson / Vintage Books. 1962; E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital: 1848–1875*. London and New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson / Vintage Books. 1975; E. Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991*. London: Michael Joseph, 1994. Several of Hobsbawm's books were translated into Ukrainian. We would particularly like to note this Ukrainian edition of *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*: Е. Гобсбаум, *Нації і націоналізм, починаючи з 1780 року: програма, міфи, реальність*. Пер. з англ. та примітки Т. Корпала. Київ: Український Центр духовної культури, 2010, 288 с.

<sup>13</sup> I. Wallerstein, *The modern world-system III. The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World -Economy, 1730s – 1840s*. University of California Press, 2011; I. Wallerstein, *The modern world-system IV. Centrist Liberalism Triumphant, 1789–1914*. University of California Press, 2011. In Russian: *И. Валлерстайн Мир-система Модерна. Т. IV. Триумф центристского либерализма, 1789–1914*. Ред., пер. с англ. и коммент. Н. Проценко. Москва: Русский фонд содействия образованию и науке, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> The Ukrainian historian Yaroslav Hrytsak very aptly remarked on Hobsbawm's phenomenal popular appeal: "Type his last name into Google and you will get two and a half million hits. The article about him in the English-language Wikipedia is among the longest, most detailed, and actively rewritten, as evidenced by the amount of material that appeared in it immediately after his death on 1 October 2012"; he agrees that "Hobsbawm's fame is well deserved" (see: Я. Грицак *Довге століття винахідника традиції „Критика”*. 2012. № 11-12. С. 41. <https://krytyka.com/ua/articles/dovhestolittya-vynakhidnyka-tradytsiy>).

<sup>15</sup> „Изобретение века. Проблемы и модели времени в России и Европе XIX столетия”: сб. науч. ст. Ред. Е.А. Вишленкова, Д.А. Сдвижков. М.: Новое литературное обозрение, 2013. 368 с.

<sup>16</sup> См.: В. Файбышенко *Международная конференция «Наш XIX век. Феномен культуры и историческое понятие» „Новое литературное обозрение”*. 2011. № 112. С. 474–483.

models of the 19th century as the era's self-description and a fact of social life"<sup>17</sup>. This gives rise to questions that appear already in the book's annotation:

How has the 19th century been 'assembled' from events and phenomena of the past? What did the contemporaries and descendants associate it with? Does it make sense to speak of the Russian 19th century, and how is it related to modernity? What is, generally speaking, the nature of models of historical time: are we dealing solely with the invention of historians, or with an element of real people's self-perception?

In the words of one of the collection's authors and editors D. Sdvizhkov, "The abstract 19th century begins a life of its own, focuses in itself the questions of the age, garners epithets (the age of steam, of electricity, of history, and the like) and verbs – loves, demands, – and finally becomes ours, part of social self-identity"<sup>18</sup>. The book offers many valuable arguments and observations, which together represent another step towards comprehending the idea of 'your own 19th century'. Here are two of the statements that drew our particular attention: a) "the emergence of the notion of the 19th century in its Russian iteration is closely linked with giving shape and substance to the notion of the West"<sup>19</sup>; and b) "Russian notions of lived time are ahistorical, but their correlation with Europe, with history, perceived as a model and metronome, is obvious"<sup>20</sup>. Thus, we may speak of interconnections not only between historical developments in different parts of Europe, but also between procedures of making sense of this past.

Another approach is evident in the fifth volume of the six-volume *History of the World* (a project of the Institute of General History of the Russian Academy of Sciences under the direction of editor-in-chief Academician A. O. Chubaryan), dedicated to the 19th century<sup>21</sup>. The team of authors, following a set plan, did extensive comparative work correlating national narratives with global contexts. The volume's editor V. S. Mirzekhanov outlined several avenues of inquiry – the demographic boom, revolution in technology, urbanization, standardization, rationalization of faith, liberalization of politics, the 'Russian 19th century', and the 19th-century world order. Much space is given to such important markers (themes) as colonialism/imperialism/nations/empires. In particular, the authors dwelled on the far-reaching changes in structures of the everyday and discussed lifestyles and quality of life during the era of industrialization. Still, reviews of the book noted insufficient attention to the problems of culture, which presupposes its own special rituals, conventions, social barriers, and the like<sup>22</sup>. The

<sup>17</sup> Д.А. Вишленкова, Д.А. Сдвижков, *Наш XIX век: ощущения и модели времени „Изобретение века. Проблемы и модели времени в России и Европе XIX столетия“*, с.7.

<sup>18</sup> Д.А. Сдвижков, *Изобретение XIX века. Время как социальная идентичность „Изобретение века. Проблемы и модели времени в России и Европе XIX столетия“*, с. 37.

<sup>19</sup> Е.А. Вишленкова, Д.А. Сдвижков, *Наш XIX век: ощущения и модели времени*, с. 9.

<sup>20</sup> Д.А. Сдвижков *Изобретение XIX века. Время как социальная идентичность*, с. 37.

<sup>21</sup> *Всемирная история: В 6 т. Т. 5 Мир в XIX веке: На пути к индустриальной цивилизации*. Гл. ред. А.О. Чубарьян; отв. ред. В.С. Мирзеханов. М.: Наука, 2014. 939 с.

<sup>22</sup> О.В. Павленко, *Осмысливая «долгий XIX век»: новые подходы в современной российской историографии (К выходу 5 тома научного издания Всемирная история: В 6 т. Т. 5 Мир в XIX веке: На пути к индустриальной цивилизации / гл. ред. А.О. Чубарьян; отв. ред. В.С. Мирзеханов. М.: Наука, 2014. 939 с.) „Вестник РГГУ. Серия «Политология. История. Международные отношения»*. 2016. (1), с. 151.

volume is structured around the tension between the global and local perspectives – an important role in its conceptual framework is played by the idea of the asynchronicity of transformations in different parts of the world. As remarked by reviewers, the authors convincingly showed that the choice of tools of modernization depended not only on local economic patterns, but also on the condition of governing institutions and elites in different countries<sup>23</sup>. Highlighting such specificities was an important contribution of the book.

One more publication<sup>24</sup> we would like to mention followed a series of international conferences held in Minsk under the common name “The ‘Long 19th Century’ in the History of Belarus and Eastern Europe”. According to the organizers and editors I. R. Chikalova and S. F. Shymukovich, its main goal was to explore the distinctive historical dynamics of the ‘Belarusian 19th century’. They narrowed down (or, rather, expanded) the book’s chronological boundaries as follows:

For a number of territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, including the ethnic Belarusian lands, the ‘long 19th century’ began... with the first (1772) partition of the Polish state between Russia, Austria, and Prussia. It was this event and the following second (1793) and third (1795) partitions that for more than a century determined the conditions and parameters of existence for the peoples of this region within the Russian and Habsburg empires and the Kingdom of Prussia (later the German Empire). Its end is also defined by concrete events: the collapse of these empires – Russian in 1917, Austro-Hungarian and German in 1918... Belarusian statehood in the form of the BPR is an important historical fact at the very least because it ended the ‘long 19th century’ for Belarus<sup>25</sup>.

The authors made a number of other statements marking out the specificity of their subject. They pointed out that the Belarusian lands were positioned as “a frontier on the borders of civilizational spaces and political entities”; that, in the economic sphere, “capitalist industry initially developed outside cities”, which “was a distinctive feature of the capitalist modernization in the Belarusian lands”; that “the liquidation of the infrastructure of higher education in the Belarusian lands in the 19th century led to the washing out of intellectual elites from the region”, and so forth<sup>26</sup>.

A lot of interesting research on the history of the 19th century has been done in Ukraine. Here, we find innovation interwoven with old approaches. The 19th century is seen as one of the key periods in Ukrainian history. Its perception is often shaped less by scholarly than by ideological interpretation, since it was the 19th century that witnessed the active advance of ‘nation building’ in what is now Ukraine. It is not surprising that old ideological conventions and stereotypes often define the interpretive

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<sup>23</sup> З. А. Чеканцева *Долгий XIX век в глобальной перспективе „Диалог со временем“*. 2016. Вып. 57, с. 356.

<sup>24</sup> «Долгий XIX век» в истории Беларуси и Восточной Европы. *Исследования по Новой и Новейшей истории*: Сб. ст. «Алетейя», 2022.

<sup>25</sup> И.Р. Чикалова, С.Ф. Шимкувич, *Белорусский «Долгий XIX век»: от традиции к модерну (вместо предисловия) „Долгий XIX век“ в истории Беларуси и Восточной Европы. Исследования по Новой и Новейшей истории*. Сб. ст. «Алетейя», 2022, с. 7, 8.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, с. 8, 9, 11.

framework. And yet, new research trends are gradually gaining ground in Ukrainian historiography. Thus, Iryna Kolesnyk insists on looking at the developments in 19th-century Ukraine from the perspective of global history, using such categories as the 'imperial meridian', 'backwardness', or 'cultural transfer'<sup>27</sup>. In her view, the 'imperial meridian' in Ukrainian history can be defined as the period from the final destruction of Cossack statehood to the end of World War I (1780s to 1918), when the Ukrainian lands found themselves within the borders of two 'peripheral', or 'old', empires (Russian and Austro-Hungarian, which Kolesnyk contrasts with the 'dynamic' French and British empires). She further observes that 19th-century Ukrainian history moved between the poles of backwardness and revival. But backwardness, from the perspective of global history, should be interpreted as originality, distinctiveness, a developmental path, an incident of difference, of the historical norm, of normality. Accordingly, such features as multi-ethnicity, permeability of cultural borders, interrupted statehood, or discontinuities in the history of the elites, habitually seen as disadvantages, become advantages. Kolesnyk further suggests looking at the Ukrainian national revival during this era in the categories of global history as well. Specifically, in this case we may speak of cultural transfer, which takes this phenomenon beyond the scope of national history<sup>28</sup>.

Integration of the 'Ukrainian 19th century' into the global historical context appears to us an urgent but difficult task, because Ukrainian historiography is dominated by Eurocentrism and the cult of the nation state. That is why, in order to explore new research frontiers and take advantage of what global history has to offer, we should begin not with the fashioning of a metanarrative, but with a series of concrete-historical studies. Historians of the 18th century are, in a sense, showing us the way forward. Recently, one of the world's leading academic presses published a collection of English translations of articles on 18th-century Ukrainian history seen by the compilers as particularly *au courant*, operating at the cutting edge of scholarship<sup>29</sup>. The book covers the main areas of 18th-century life and reflects the discoveries of recent years. It gives a fairly clear idea of the boundaries and significance of the 'Ukrainian 18th century', as seen by today's researchers.

One must agree with the editors that during the 1990s Ukrainian historiography became much more open to the world and receptive to the latest trends and practices. During the early 2000s, this led to a noticeable turn towards the new social and cultural histories, which shift gave Ukrainian historical writing the means and the freedom to break out of the boundaries set by the traditional accounts of political history<sup>30</sup>. In particular, these innovations paved way for the embrace of 'new imperial history', which

treats imperial hegemony not strictly in political and economic categories, but also in cultural ones.... This more flexible framework opens substantial

<sup>27</sup> І. Колесник, *Глобальна історія як квест для українських істориків* „Український історичний журнал”. 2021. №5, с. 159.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, с. 161.

<sup>29</sup> *Eighteenth-Century Ukraine. New Perspectives on Social, Cultural, and Intellectual History*. Ed. by Z. E. Kohut, V. Sklokin, F. E. Sysyn, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2023. xxii + 648 p.

<sup>30</sup> Z. E. Kohut, V. Sklokin, F. E. Sysyn *Introduction „Eighteenth-Century Ukraine. New Perspectives on Social, Cultural, and Intellectual History”*, p. 5.

opportunities for analyzing issues of discursive power and coercion, symbolic geography, as well as academic and literary narratives pertaining to imperialism and colonialism<sup>31</sup>.

In the view of the editors, the internationalization, 'globalization', and digitalization of 18th-century history should in the near future become priorities for Ukrainian historians, who are, however, still somewhat slow to accept a transnational perspective and place their research into the global 18th-century context.

All this fully applies to the study of the 1800s – all the more so if we consider the immediate connection between the 18th and 19th centuries. In the words of D. Sdvizhkov,

the 19th century became what it was only because there was the 18th century. This seems self-evident; however, the point is not the sequence of numbers, but the interconnection of eras. The very concept of an age [one of the words for 'century' in Russian – S. P.] in the context of modernity is introduced precisely by the Age of Enlightenment. It creates a certain balance of expectations for its follower<sup>32</sup>.

Indeed, many ideas and quests of the 18th century created a kind of scaffolding for the 19th century that came after. And even though 'progress' took the place of 'enlightenment', succession is beyond doubt.

Accordingly, the order of the day is to hold conferences and produce collections of papers in which scholars could express their views on individual problems of the history of the 19th century. This will enable the research community to discuss methodological innovations not 'in theory', but through the accumulation of a valuable experience of concrete-historical studies. It is precisely these considerations that motivated us to prepare this special issue of the *Wschodni Rocznik Humanistyczny*.

The structure of the issue is determined both by the submissions we received and by our desire to show the distinctive features of the 19th century in the Eastern European terrain. We grouped the articles into four sections: "Economic and Social Transformations", "National Identities and National Projects", "Personal Stories and Culture", and "Historiography".

We begin with the works of Volodymyr Kulikov, Anastasiia Khovtura, Svitlana Nyzhnikova, and Iryna Shandra, which can be classified as studies in economic and social history.

Volodymyr Kulikov tackles the subject of economic modernization, in particular through considering the role of Ukraine in the agricultural and industrial production of the Russian Empire in the late 19th to early 20th centuries on the basis of statistical data. He observes that, even though the Ukrainian provinces comprised only 2 percent of the empire's territory and were home to 19 percent of its population, they accounted for 26 percent of cereal production and 42 percent of grain exports (giving Ukraine the reputation of the 'breadbasket of Europe'). They also produced 3 percent of the world's coal, 2 percent of cast iron, and 4 percent of steel. In the imperial context, the figures were even

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> Д.А. Сдвижков, *Изобретение XIX века. Время как социальная идентичность*, с. 18.



more impressive: at the end of the 19th century, Donbas (a region in eastern Ukraine) produced half of all coal, cast iron, and rolled metal in the Russian Empire. Given that the Second Industrial Revolution was associated with the use of steel and construction of railways, these figures in and of themselves are enough to show the major contribution of the Ukrainian provinces to the economic growth of the Russian Empire after the 1870s. Revisiting in this connection the question of the colonial status of the Ukrainian lands, Kulikov argues that the empire made strategic use of these territories to stimulate economic growth and facilitate the process of modernization.

Anastasiia Khovtura's article on the *Modernization of Infrastructure and Social Space in Kharkiv, Second Half of the 19th to Early 20th Centuries* focuses on the role of urban infrastructure in the transformation of the social space of Kharkiv. The author suggests that the modernization of the city's infrastructure not only improved the residents' living conditions, but also changed their perception of the urban space, which stimulated the process of gentrification. Svitlana Nyzhnikova, in her article *Teachers of Eparchial Women's Schools in the Ukrainian Provinces of the Russian Empire, Second Half of the 19th to Early 20th Centuries: A Collective Portrait*, considers the process of modernization in the system of women's education. It should be noted that the 19th century witnessed significant changes in education throughout Europe – its extension to new social groups, the creation and improvement of educational systems, incorporation of scientific advances into the educational process, and more. Since Nyzhnikova's study concerns clerical educational institutions for girls, she concludes (on the basis of biographical data on the teaching corps of Ukraine's eparchial schools) that the Orthodox Church did not remain untouched by these developments.

In her article *'More Civilized and Regular': An Outside View of Labor Conditions in the Kingdom of Poland in the Late 19th Century*, Iryna Shandra examines the ways Russian officials, journalists, and public figures perceived and reflected on Polish industrial development in the late 19th century. The author notes that this 'outside view', despite its pronounced bias, registered a significantly higher level of labor culture in the industrial enterprises of the Kingdom of Poland compared to the core regions of the empire. Shandra shows that the difference lay not only in previous history, traditions, and national characteristics, but also in the higher level of education and qualification among the Polish industrial workforce, a more developed social security system, better labor conditions and incentives for workers, and more advanced organization of production.

The 19th century is often described as 'the age of nations and nationalisms'. Indeed, even though empires remained the decisive force of the era, nationalism was rising in their depths, marking out new horizons for the political history of Europe, including its eastern part. The articles by Oleh Zhurba, Tetiana Lytvynova, Serhiy Naumov, and Barbara Kalinowska-Wójcik are devoted to this aspect of the 'long 19th century'.

The section on "National Identities and National Projects" opens with a contribution by Oleh Zhurba and Tetiana Lytvynova that reexamines the elite of Left-Bank Ukraine's search for a national identity. The authors scrutinize some historiographical stereotypes on which our current understanding of this process is based, and focus in their conclusions on the confrontation between different 'Ukrainian national projects'. In the next article, Serhiy Naumov tackles the problem of external influences in Ukrainian nation building, particularly the nature of Polish-Ukrainian cultural interaction in the 19th century and the role of the Polish factor in the development of the 'Ukrainian

national project', through the analysis of the personal relationships of Panteleimon Kulish (one of the figures standing at the source of this project) and their contemporary and, later, academic (mis)representations. Naumov concludes that, while the creators of the 'Ukrainian project' certainly were open to wider European political and cultural trends of the day, their consciousness was formed primarily on local soil.

Barbara Kalinowska-Wójcik discusses the emergence of a proto-Zionist movement in Katowice and Upper Silesia in the last quarter of the 19th century. She argues that the Concordia Lodge played a key role in the socio-cultural and national development of the Jewish population of East-Central Europe, and that the Katowice Conference marked the beginning of the path towards the State of Israel.

The anthropological paradigm, which has defined the development of historical scholarship in recent decades, places at the center of our attention the experiences, thoughts, and actions of the human being living in a given era. Among other things, this approach enables us to not only notice what is typical and similar, but also pinpoint the exceptional, because each person is unique in her own way.

Almost all contributors to this collection adhere to this paradigm in one way or another. However, we also set aside a special section on "Personal Stories and Culture", which brings together articles seeking to show the role of particular individuals in cultural evolution and dissemination of cultural patterns, as well as the significance of their communication with those around them. Thus, Oleksandr Dobrzhanskyi considers the development of local studies in Bukovyna, which from the last quarter of the 18th to early 20th centuries was part of Austria (Austria-Hungary). The author discusses many individuals who sought to enrich the knowledge of the region, its history, and its inhabitants. Dobrzhanskyi stresses that the progress of local studies was closely connected with the formation of a regional identity, emergence of the concept of the 'little homeland', and discussions around the relationship between the center and periphery.

Olha Vovk's article is devoted to the prominent Ukrainian educator, scientist, and public figure Vasyl Karazin (1773-1842), with the focus on his international connections and his perception of, and reactions to, events and issues abroad. While Karazin was far from 'ordinary,' a close look at his life and work helps us better understand many developments in the intellectual life of the Russian Empire during the first half of the 19th century.

Krzysztof Jan Sadurski draws our attention to the stories of Polish exiles that, after the November Uprising, found themselves in Siberia (in this case, Irkutsk), built families there, and had a significant influence on the development of the region. Sadurski approaches this subject through the publication and analysis of letters from Franciszek Brydycki to Marian Dubiecki written between 1877 and 1881. 'Ego-documents' give us the opportunity to glimpse the inner world of a particular individual but at the same time observe the mind and behavior of a denizen of 'modernity' more generally. It is important to note that these letters were written by a teenager, and thus give us a window not only into the world around the author, but also into the unfolding formation of his personality.

The last section of the issue, devoted to historiography, features only one article, which in no way speaks to the relative significance of historiographical studies in general and this contribution in particular. On the contrary, there is every reason to argue that historiographical analysis is a particularly effective way to reach new research frontiers. In his highly informative essay, Michał Patryk Sadłowski considers the latest Russian histo-

riography of the Civil War of 1917-1922. Both chronologically and conceptually, this work represents the logical conclusion to the conversation that our authors had on the pages of this collection. As already noted, the end of World War I marked a break in world history. The collapse of the Russian Empire and establishment of the Bolshevik regime became the determining factors in the 20th-century history of Eastern Europe. Naturally, this turning point continues to cause fierce debate, and not only among historians. Sadłowski provides a brief overview of the latest works on this subject, published in 2021 to 2023, and, through his very interesting remarks, observations, and arguments, engages in the sometimes implicit discussion around these events, with a focus on the performance of the anti-Bolshevik forces and especially the reasons for their defeat. In particular, Sadłowski stresses the importance of exploring the phenomenon of mass emotions and public sentiment. We cannot but agree that researchers working in this field should reconsider the achievements and shortcomings of Russian emigrant and Soviet historiography, as well as studies published during the 1990s in Russia and abroad. However, the same can be said about all other subjects our authors deal with, because the academic pursuit of the past can never be completed. We hope that this conversation about the distinctive traits of the Eastern European 'long 19th century' will be continued, and our collection will contribute to its progress.

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