

Ivan Franko and His Community. By Yaroslav Hrytsak. Trans. Marta Daria Olynyk. Ukrainian Studies Series. Brighton, Mass.: Academic Studies Press, 2018. xxiv, 561 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Tables. \$42.00, paper.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2021.112

The appearance of an English translation of Hrytsak's biography of Ivan Franko is an event of singular importance. Ivan Franko (1856–1916) was a writer, scholar, journalist, political activist, and cultural landmark in western Ukraine, more precisely in the Galician crownland of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He is not particularly well represented in English. His literary prose works are now widely available, thanks to the translations of Roma Franko, and some of his more important poetic works are also available in various publications. However, his non-literary works and other writing remain mostly unavailable in English. What's more, there is very little scholarship in English on this exceptionally important figure. Any new work in English on Franko should thus be welcome—and a major monograph by one of the foremost experts on Franko all the more so.

Yaroslav Hrytsak is one of Ukraine's leading historians and public intellectuals. He is also the preeminent authority on Ivan Franko, with an unparalleled command of the enormous archive of materials that constitute Franko studies—a scholarly discipline all on its own. Most important, given the uneven quality of some Franko scholarship, is that Hrytsak is a serious scholar, diligent, meticulous, and scrupulous in his research. This monograph amply displays these virtues.

And yet, for no fault in the book itself, some readers are bound to be disappointed. This is a half-biography of half a person. For a number of sensible reasons (the book is already 570 pages long!), Hrytsak has chosen to write about just the first thirty years of Franko's life, that is, half of it. The second half of Franko's life is, if anything, even more richly documented than the first. Hrytsak has promised to work on the second half and if he does, we can all look forward to a volume or more that continues the story. It is an enormous task, though.

The volume at hand is an unusual biography for other reasons as well. A biography usually tells us about one person as an individual, as well as his or her environment and significance. This volume gives us considerably more of the latter than the former. Readers looking for a portrait of a living, breathing human being—his quirks and foibles, his style and habits, his likes and dislikes, his day-to-day activities, his favorite shoes and least-liked vegetable—may well be disappointed. So too may readers seeking a literary biography that traces the intimate daily connection between a writer and his creative works. Hrytsak's biography of Franko is different—it's all about context. This is a book about ideas more than it is a story of one man's life. In his first sentence, Hrytsak announces that this is a book about nationalism. Indeed it is. And its thesis is that a new Ukrainian national identity emerged in Galicia as a result of the leftist radical culture whose chief creator and central symbol was Ivan Franko.

The book is divided into two parts, the first devoted to a presentation of historical and background information and the second focused on the society in which Franko lived. There are seventeen chapters plus an introduction and conclusion, as well as an appendix of tables, voluminous endnotes, an extensive bibliography, and three proper noun indexes. Each chapter is structured around an idea or a question. In part one these include: What was Franko's sense of self-identity? Did peasants have national identity? In part two the chapters have titles of the form "Franko and His . . ." with the ellipses replaced by such nouns as "Women," "Jews," "Boryslav," "Readers," and so forth. The limits of this review do not allow a presentation of the many arguments Hrytsak explores. Suffice it to say that his discussion is always erudite, extremely well-researched and well-rounded, as well as interesting and instructive.

This volume will be of great interest to a wide variety of readers, not only to those specifically focused on Franko. The first chapter is an excellent short summary of the history of Austrian Galicia, and the volume as a whole will be of importance to anyone who studies this topic. The discussions of socialism, antisemitism, and Polish-Ukrainian relations have much to offer historians and political scientists alike. Above all, this is a profound contribution to the history of national awakenings.

Translators are at their best when they are invisible. Marta Olynyk has done an admirable job of making Hrytsak's text sound as if it were originally written in English.

MAXIM TARNAWSKY
University of Toronto