

83.3466

8

MUSEE

IN

PRISON

THE MUSE IN PRISON

THE MUSE IN PRISON

*ELEVEN SKETCHES OF UKRAINIAN POETS
KILLED BY COMMUNISTS AND TWENTY-TWO
TRANSLATIONS OF THEIR POEMS*

by

YAR SLAVUTYCH

Foreword by

CLARENCE A. MANNING

**"SVOBODA", UKRAINIAN DAILY
JERSEY CITY, N. J.**

Copyright 1956, by Yar Slavutych

Printed in U. S. A.

"Svoboda", — 81-83 Grand Street, Jersey City, New Jersey

C O N T E N T S

Introduction	11
Mykola Zerov	21
Pavlo Fylypovych	25
Mykhaylo Dray-Khmara	28
Dmytro Zahul	31
Mykhaylo Yohansen	33
Yevhen Pluzhnyk	36
Volodymyr Svidzinsky	39
Dmytro Falkivsky	45
Oleksa Vlyzko	48
Marko Antiokh	52
Conclusion	55
General bibliography	59

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this volume is very grateful to William Gibbon, Miroslava and Sviatoslav Hordynsky, who have read the manuscript and made their valuable remarks. A special acknowledgment must be given to Prof. Clarence A. Manning for his kind foreword and final editorial touches to this volume.

Y. S.

F O R E W O R D

Perhaps there is no more difficult task than to bring to world knowledge the works of contemporary authors. It is safe to say that any wide appreciation of the literature of the present is confined to those works that have secured some unusual publicity in their homeland. That may be for reasons entirely independent of their artistic merit. Slowly but surely the classics of one country find an often dim but definite reflection abroad but the contemporary writer is all too often forced to wait for future generations.

This knowledge of the present genius of a nation is all important at the present time with the growing interrelation of the world. Yet it has never been more difficult to secure the needed information and that information it still more lacking in the case of Ukraine, where the dominant and occupying power has decided that the works of the Ukrainian Renaissance shall be plunged into non-existence.

We must therefore especially welcome this little volume by Yar Slavutych who has sought to bring to the American public some knowledge of that great intellectual movement which burst into bloom after the liberation of Ukraine and which continued for about a decade, steadily developing and increasing, until it was ruthlessly crushed and its workers liquidated by order of red Moscow.

We can only hope that this volume will receive the attention that it deserves and make the poets whom it includes something more than names to the literary world of America and freedom. It pictures the wealth of Ukrainian spirit during those years when it was reasonably possible to reveal it and to show the Ukrainian contacts with the Western world of the twentieth century.

CLARENCE A. MANNING

Oh, human race, now hear the truth!
“The Crusaders for Truth”

INTRODUCTION

On January 22, 1918, the Ukrainian National Republic declared its independence. This was the greatest day in the modern history of the Ukrainian people. It marked the culmination of centuries of Ukrainian hopes and aspirations for their own state, their own independent country that had been submerged and swallowed up in the Russian Empire a century and a half before.

It was the result not only of dreams and of hard and self-sacrificing work. The Ukrainian revival had been started in the literary and scholarly fields by Ivan Kotlyarevsky (1769-1838), who in 1798 in his *Eneida* had introduced into literature the ordinary speech of the Ukrainian villager and thus commenced the task of making of the folk language of the village a literary medium of expression.

It was continued and clarified by Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861), the great Ukrainian national poet. In works that have never been surpassed Shevchenko set forth the hopes and aspirations of the Ukrainian people and showed them their great past and the future that still lay before them. He paid dearly for his work. For nearly 10 years he was confined as a Russian in a Russian disciplinary battalion in Asia and by the orders of Tsar Nicholas I he was forbidden to write or paint.

Shevchenko was followed by many other writers and many of them also suffered for their efforts. Panteleymon Kulish, Mykola Kostomariv, Arkhyp Teslenko and many others were rewarded with longer or shorter terms in prison. Pavlo Hrabovsky spent the most of his adult life in prison in Siberia. Both the Russian right and left combined against this demand of the Ukrainians to be themselves and the Russian Minister of the Interior, Count Peter Valuyev, summoned it up in his phrase in 1863: "There never has been, is not and never will be a Ukrainian language." He forbade the publication of books in Ukrainian and his measures were extended in 1876 by Tsar Alexander II,

the Tsar-Liberator. Yet Ukrainian literature lived on despite the overwhelming odds.

The struggle was shifted from the purely literary and scholarly field to that of politics in 1900 when the first Ukrainian political party, the RUP — Ukrainian Revolutionary Party, was organized. All through the next years and the Revolution of 1905, the struggle went on. Outwardly it seemed but a record of arrests and failures but the seeds of life were taking root and they sprang up in 1918 with the declaration of the independence of the Ukrainian state.

That state was to have no easy life. The Russian Communists under Lenin, even before its official proclamation of independence, savagely attacked it in order to bring under their control in Moscow all the lands that had been included in the old Russian Empire. They sent in Russian Communist soldiers to fight their battles and at the same time they pretended to create a Ukrainian Soviet Republic as a legal device for extending their own authority.

For four years the unequal struggle went on, while the democratic world looked on without comprehension and appreciation. From 1918 to 1921 the battles raged and Ukraine was plundered and devastated, before the government of Moscow was able to find itself in control. Even then it did not feel secure and so it continued the Ukrainian Soviet Republic in power, for it did not venture openly to restore the old status.

With the ending of the political struggle, the Ukrainian efforts were again directed to the cultural sphere and here they achieved an astounding success. The short period of independence and the relatively easy conditions that followed produced a remarkable Ukrainian Renaissance in all spheres of life. A new generation of artists had reached their prime and maturity. They included such poets as Mykola Zerov, Maksym Rylsky, Yevhen Pluzhnyk and above all Pavlo Tychyna, such prose writers as Mykola Kulish, Valerian Pidmohylny, Hryhoriy Kosynka, Yuriy Yanovsky and Arkadiy Lyubchenko. These men and others placed the new Ukrainian literature on the full European cultural level.

This Ukrainian Renaissance was summed up in the so-called Literary Discussion which was carried on from 1925 to 1928. It was inspired by Mykola Khvylovy, an outstanding writer, who

summarized the results of the Ukrainian movement in his celebrated phrase "Away from Moscow." Khvylovy demanded the creation of a new type of a Faustian Ukrainian who would be inspired by the great ideals and figures of European culture and not bound by the shackles of Muscovite art. He was ably seconded by Mykola Zerov who called for a return "To the Sources" — Ad Fontes — and by this he meant a revival of the Ukrainian traditional connections with the classical world, the repository of still unexhausted and eternal spiritual values, and with the European cultural unity, of which Ukraine in the past had been a component part.

The Russian Communists in Moscow looked on with dismay and anxiety at the progress of the Ukrainian Renaissance which was spreading into all fields of Ukrainian life, cultural, educational, economic and even political, for it was supported by such pillars of Communism as Skrypnyk, the Commissar for Education and an old friend of Lenin. Stalin tried to interfere in the Literary Discussion with no effect and finally he and his associates gave the signal for a general attack upon Ukraine. This was to take a double form. It aimed to check the movement by attacking and liquidating the intellectual elite, the brains of the nation and by attacking and breaking the peasants, who were the backbone of the Ukrainian people and who had not accepted in their thinking the new philosophy of Communism.

The movement started with thousands of arrests and deportations. Khvylovy and Skrypnyk and many others escaped the clutches of Moscow by suicide. Other writers and thinkers were arrested, executed or deported to concentration camps from which they never returned.

The Muscovite attack upon Ukraine and its cultural Renaissance fell into three distinct phases. These were not the result of sporadic occurrences. They were carefully planned in Moscow and carried out by special details of the secret police, the GPU-NKVD-MVD.

The first phase lasted from 1929 to 1934. This saw the elimination of the leading figures among the Ukrainian writers. Only a few weakened and consented to serve the occupying masters. The graves of the great majority lie hidden in the wilderness of the far north and Siberia. Millions of peasants were uprooted and robbed of their possessions, deported and

disappeared. Six million more were starved in the artificial famine which the Moscow government arranged in 1932-3 in an effort to end for good and forever the Ukrainian aspirations for their traditional life and freedom.

The second phase came in 1937-8. The police of Yezhov gathered in all those authors who had chosen silence rather than collaboration and obedience. They struck out at suspected peasants; they raged unchecked in the cities and seized hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian officials, peasants and workers as "bourgeois nationalists." They massacred thousands of innocent people in cold blood as they did at Vynnytsya (see *The Crime of Moscow In Vynnytsya*. Introduction by John P. Stewart, Scottish League for European Freedom, Edinburgh, 1952).

The third phase opened with World War II. The treaty of non-aggression and friendship with Hitler had allowed Moscow to extend its rule over Western Ukraine. Then the German attack forced the retreat of the Red Army. From the start, the Communists applied the same measures of liquidation with even greater efficiency. Ukrainian writers, leaders in every field, workers and peasants were marched to pits already dug and shot above them. Thousands more were burned alive in locked buildings. Still more were deported under the most inhuman conditions.

There was a short respite in 1942-6 when the Soviets attempted to win Ukrainian aid in the war by slight concessions but this was only temporary. With the return of the Red Army, the old tactics were resumed and once more the Soviets tried to make Ukrainian literature and culture choose between annihilation and obedience. This was no idle threat. The Soviets were not satisfied with their control of the present and the future. They sought to deny the past. As soon as a writer was arrested, his works were removed from all Ukrainian libraries and bookshops. His name was dropped from all histories and annals. It became a crime to read his works. It is small wonder that later generations quickly forgot some of these men or that it is almost impossible to find their works. If it did become necessary to mention any of these names as models of bourgeois nationalism, their names were printed usually without capitals.

The Soviet methods are well represented by the fate of Volodymyr Sosyura who was seriously criticized and condemned

for his poem, "Love Ukraine." That poem had been reprinted in many of the collections of poems issued by the State Printing Houses in Moscow and Kiev. Yet all that did not save it from savage criticism. Here are these stanzas in my translation:

Of love for Ukraine, as of love for the sun
And winds and the grass and the water,
In days of our joy and when grief is begun,
Be proud as a son of true daughter.

For love of Ukraine, as for love of a dream
Attend to our motherland's calling,
For her wondrous beauty, her radiant gleam,
Her language like nightingale's trolling.

Recall her at work, when you kiss, when you fight,
And love her with all your endeavor.
With soul and with heart, love Ukraine as the light,
And deathless we shall be forever.

Sosyura's crime was that he regarded Ukraine as an ideal. There was not a word of aught but Ukraine and no mention of the Soviet Union. He was writing for his compatriots of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic but his language could be used and his thought could be thought by a "bourgeois nationalist" poet, and the agents of Moscow scented the possibility of treason as had the minions of Ivan the Terrible in his day. This illustrates the terror and the pressure exerted upon the modern Ukrainian writers by the Russian Communist regime. Writers are to write and think only what and as Moscow approves and there is no need to dwell upon the wooden and unliterary literature that results.

During the almost thirty five years of Communist rule, the Soviets have executed or deported to concentration camps some two hundred Ukrainian writers (poets, prose writers, dramatists, literary scholars and critics) as well as artists (painters and screen stars). None of those in the following list have ever returned home (and this does not include scientists or publicists who were not connected with literature). It also does not include those few who by some miracle have been released and returned home or established living contact with the world of men.

E X E C U T E D

Kost Bureviy, writer and dramatist (shot in 1934),
Vasyl Chumak, poet (shot by the Russians of Denikin in 1919),
Hryhoriy Chuprynka, poet (shot in 1921),
Mykhaylo Donets, actor (1941),
Petro Doroshenko, art critic (shot in Odessa in 1919),
Dmytro Falkivsky, poet (shot in 1934),
Mykola Havrylko, sculptor (shot in 1920),
Hryhoriy Kosynka, writer (shot in 1934),
Ivan Krushelnytsky, poet (shot in 1934),
Taras Krushelnytsky (shot in 1934),
Agatangel Krymsky, academician, poet, linguist (shot in 1941?),
Mykhaylo Lebedynets, writer (shot in 1934),
Mykola Leontovych, composer,
Serhiy Matyash, literary critic (shot in 1934),
Lada Mohylyanska, poetess (killed in exile),
Alexander Murashko, painter (slain on the street),
Hnat Mykhaylychenko, writer (shot by the Russians of Denikin
in 1919),
Volodymyr Naumenko, literary scholar (shot in 1919),
Kostyantyn Pivnenko, literary critic (shot in 1934),
Mykola Plevako, literary scholar (killed in exile in 193?),
Havrylo Protsyuk, literary critic (shot in 1934),
Serhiy Pylypenko, writer, fabulist,
Dmytro Revutsky, musicologist (shot in 1941),
Roman Shevchenko, literary scholar (shot in 1934),
Roman Skazynsky, writer (shot in 1934),
Oleksander Soroka, poet (killed in a field during an attempt
to escape in 1941),
Ivan Steshenko, literary scholar (killed in 1918),
Lyudmyla Starytska-Chernyakhivska, poetess, novelist (shot in
1941?),
Volodymyr Svidzinsky, poet (burned alive in 1941),
Ivan Tereshchenko, literary critic, (shot in 1934),
Oleksa Vlyzko, poet (shot in 1934),
Ivan Yukhymenko, theatre director (burned alive in 1941).

COMMITTED SUICIDE

Dmytro Borzyak, writer (used broken glass in prison),
Hryhoriy Holoskevych, philologist (hanged himself in exile),
Arkadiy Kazka, poet,
Mykola Khvylovy, poet, writer, pamphleteer (shot himself in
1933),
Vadym Okhrimenko, writer (shot himself in 1941),
Lyudvik Sidletsky (Sava Krylach) writer,
Vira Sidletska,
Mykola Skrypnyk, educator and statesman (shot himself in 1933),
Borys Teneta, writer (hanged himself in prison).

DEPORTED TO CONCENTRATION CAMPS WHERE THEY DISAPPEARED WITHOUT A TRACE

Ivan Andriyenko, writer,
Borys Antonenko-Davydovych, writer,
Vasyl Atamanyuk, poet,
Yulian Bachynsky, publicist,
Stepan Ben (Bendyuzhenko), poet,
F. Bila-Krynytsya, poet,
Vasyl Bobynsky, poet,
Mykhaylo Boychuk, leading master of the Neo-Byzantine school
of painting,
Sava Bozhko, poet, writer,
Dmytro Buzko, writer,
Vasyl Chechvyansky, writer,
Dmytro Chepurny, poet,
Veronika Chernyakhivska, poetess (lost her mind in prison),
Vitaliy Chyhyryn, writer,
Vasyl Desnyak (Vasylenko), literary critic,
Spyrydon Dobrovolsky, writer,
Oles Dosvitniy, writer,
Mykhaylo Dray-Khmara, poet, literary scholar,
Victor Dubrovsky, philologist (died in a concentration camp),
Mykola Dukyn, writer,
Antin Dyky, poet,
Hryhoriy Epik, writer,
Mykola Filyansky, poet,

Pavlo Fylypovych, poet, literary scholar,
Yukhym Gedz, writer, humorist,
Volodymyr Gzhytsky, writer,
Yosyp Germayze, historian,
Mecheslav Hasko, poet,
Kost Horban, literary critic,
Mykola Horban, writer,
Dmytro Hordiyenko, writer,
Dmytro Hrudyna, drama critic,
Myroslav Irchan, dramatist,
Pavlo Ivanov, writer,
Ovsiy Izyumov, philologist,
Ivan Kalyanyk, poet,
Pylyp Kapelhorodsky, poet, writer,
Ivan Kapustyansky, literary scholar,
Yevhen Kasyanenko, translator,
Hnat Khotkevych, writer,
Pavlo Khrystyuk, publicist,
Andriy Khvylya, literary critic and publicist,
Meletiy Kichura, poet (died in a concentration camp),
Petro Kolesnyk, literary critic,
Hryhoriy Kolyada, poet,
Volodymyr Koryak, literary critic,
Hordiy Kotsyuba, writer,
Yakiv Kovalchuk, writer,
Borys Kovalenko, literary critic,
Mykhaylo Kozoriz, writer,
Antin Krushelnytsky (senior), writer,
Mykola Kulish, dramatist,
Ivan Kulyk, poet,
Les Kurbas, stage-producer,
Ivan Kyrylenko, writer,
Ivan Lakyza, literary critic,
Ananiy Lebid, literary scholar,
Maksym Lebid, poet,
Petro Lisovy, writer,
Ostap Lutsky, poet (died in prison),
Mykola Lyubchenko (Kost Kotko), writer, humorist,
Ivan Lyzaniivsky, editor and publisher,
Hryhoriy Mayfet, literary scholar,

Mykola Makarenko, art historian,
A. Muzychka, literary scholar,
Yukhym Mykhayliv, painter,
Andriy Mykhayluk, poet,
Ivan Mykytenko, writer, dramatist (shot himself during an attempt to escape?),
Ivan Myronets, literary scholar,
Andriy Nikovsky, literary scholar (?),
Mykhaylo Novytsky, literary scholar,
Halyna Orlivna, writer,
Ivan Padalka, painter (shot in concentration camp),
Mykhaylo Panchenko, stage director,
Andriy Paniv, poet, writer,
Hryhoriy Piddubny, writer,
Valeryan Pidmohylny, writer,
Lyutsiana Piontek, poetess,
Yevhen Pluzhnyk, poet, writer (died in Solovky concentration camp),
Klym Polishchuk, poet, writer,
Valerian Polishchuk, poet,
Oleksiy Pravdyuk, literary critic,
Fedir Pushchenko, linguist,
Hryhoriy Richytsky, publicist,
Mykhaylo Rudynsky, archeologist,
Petro Rulin, drama critic,
Yakiv Savchenko, poet, critic,
Yuriy Savchenko, critic,
Vasyl Sedlyar, painter,
Mykhaylo Semenko, poet,
Antin Senchenko, critic,
Yevhen Shabliovsky, literary critic,
Ivan Shalya, philologist,
V. Shchepotyev, literary scholar,
Samiylo Shchupak, literary critic,
Ivan Shevchenko, poet,
Geo. (Yuriy) Shkurupiy, poet, writer,
Illya Shulha, painter,
Mykhaylo Shulha-Shulzhenko, poet,
Havrosh Siry, poet,
Oleksa Slisarenko, poet, writer,

S. Smerechynsky, philologist,
Oleksander Sokolovsky, writer,
Todos Stepovy (Didenko), dramatist,
Mykhaylo Strutynsky, literary critic,
Oleksa Synyavsky, philologist,
Dmytro Tas (Mohylyansky), writer,
Ivan Tkachuk, writer,
Zinayida Tulub, writer,
Petro Vanchenko, writer,
Marko Vorony (M. Antiokh), poet,
Mykola Vorony (senior), poet,
Vasyl Vrazhlyvy, writer,
Ivan Vrona, painter (died in a concentration camp),
Yuriy Vukhnal, writer, humorist,
Mykhaylo Yalovy (Yulian Shpol), writer,
Hryhoriy Yakovenko, writer,
Feliks Yakubovsky, literary scholar,
Volodymyr Yaroshenko, poet, fabulist,
Matviy Yavorsky, historian,
Serhiy Yefremov, academician, literary scholar,
Mayk Yohansen, poet, writer (lost his mind and was shot in a
concentration camp),
Volodymyr Yurynets, literary scholar,
Pylp Zahorulko, writer,
Dmytro Zahul, poet,
Mykola Zerov, poet, literary scholar.

Most materials given in this book are very rare and not widely known, even in Ukrainian publications.

MYKOLA ZEROV



The name of Mykola Zerov is closely linked with the history of the new Ukrainian literature. An outstanding poet and scholar, regarded as the founder of the neo-classical school and its *maitre*, who influenced Ukrainian poetry for over 30 years, M. Zerov was born April 26, 1890, in Zinkiv, Poltava. He was graduated from the University of Kiev and taught at several high-schools and universities. In 1919 he acted as editor-in-chief of the bibliographical monthly "Knyhar" (Bookman), where he showed his great talent as a critic.

The poetic activity of Zerov was noted as early as 1920.

In this year appeared his *Anthology of Roman Poetry* with superb translations of the works of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus, Propertius, and other Roman poets. The Ukrainian translations of Zerov are unique in their kind and not to be matched in any Slavic literature.

The original poems of Zerov are his masterful sonnets and Alexandrines. Some of them were published in the volume *Camena* (1924) while a complete collection of Zerov's sonnets appeared under the title *Sonnetarium* (1948, Germany). Prof. V. Derzhavyn, a theoretician and an apostle of Ukrainian classicism called Zerov "the Ukrainian Goethe" and in his introduction to this book prepared a serious study of the author. All of Zerov's

Alexandrines were published in 1951 in Philadelphia under the title *Catalepton*. Both of these books have been edited and briefly but comprehensively annotated by Mykhaylo Orest, the greatest living Ukrainian poet in exile.

M. Zerov's style was formed not so much under the tradition of the ancient Roman poets, but rather under the influence of the French Parnasian school, especially of the poet José-Maria de Hérédia of whose works Zerov made splendid translations. "Beautiful plasticity and sharp contour and selective style" were inherent in the poetical creed of M. Zerov. The motifs of "The Odyssey," episodes from the history of Rome and the Near East, the Kievan Rus period of Ukrainian history and the cultural mission of the Ukrainian baroque in Eastern Europe with Kiev as its centre — all this was *ad fontes!* (to the sources) which so stirred the soul of the poet.

As compared with the so called "proletarian" Soviet poets M. Zerov considered himself as an Aristarchus — the ancient scholar — who carefully edited Homer's epics or as a sculptor who "creates in marble unseen gods." His historical works frequently conceal many allusions to the cultural life under the Soviets. In the sonnet "To Kiev" the author complains that the glory of Kievan Rus, the ancient Ukrainian state, was borrowed by the younger Moscow. It was this that forced the Ukrainians, who did not want to be considered Russian Moscovites, to change during the Kozak-Hetman period their own ancient name *Rusyn* or *Rusych* into *Ukrainian*. In another of his sonnets Zerov compares the entrance of the Moscow communists into Ukraine to that of the snakes and hordes of catchpolls.

These "catchpolls" remembered this later when Zerov was arrested in 1935. He remained in the Solovky concentration camp where, after a heavy day's work, he would sit down in some corner of a shanty and translate Latin and English poets. In January of 1938 he was taken to an unknown destination, and disappeared without a trace.

The neo-classicists or classicists of Kiev were the high masters of true poetical art. No other contemporary school of poetry, whether that of the neo-romanticists, expressionists or impressionists (these schools had their own outstanding poets) reached the heights of the Ukrainian neo-classicists. In a time

when various poetic trends, often ephemeral, were fighting for the primacy in Ukrainian literature, and when the poetic youth was misguided by the so called "proletarian poetry," the neo-classicists with their deep-rooted poetic traditions became a rock in the tumultuous Ukrainian literary sea. Now, from the perspective of over two decades their achievements can be regarded as almost revolutionary.

Beside his poetical work, Zerov was, like most of the Kiev neo-classicists, a recognized critic and historian of literature. Even his greatest foes called him an "academic authority", who "conducts a planned war against communism" (F. Yakubovsky). Zerov left three volumes of articles and theory: *To the Sources* (1926), *The New Ukrainian Literature* (1924), *From Kulish to Vynnychenko* (1929). Many articles from these books were reprinted in 1943 in Lviv during the German occupation.

* * *

TO KYIV (KIEV)

Be welcome, dreaming by a golden dome
Upon blue hills! It's time a dream to meet.
A younger realm, not thou, thy kingdom's feat
Now claims as splendor of the ancient home.

Thy days of glory pass as if pale foam,
And copper bells are weeping in a beat
Because a happy trice will not repeat,
While Ukraine's freedom lives in catacomb.

Stop here, strange wanderer! Upon the rock
Behold the sculpture of the church baroque,
The wonder white of Shedel's colonnades.

Life still abides upon this pensive mount
That spreads its mass of green, and like to blades
In the bright sun, the azure gleams around.

ARISTARCHUS

Beneath the capitol in the bazaar of states,
In the museums, lanes and under colonnades,
There swarmed the voiceful poets and the poetasters.
Descendants of the ancients, unsuccessful masters,
They filled the shady steps of the poetic modes
And brought to patrons wreaths of their abhorrent odes
And strove among themselves and peace again concluded.
There was a lonely nook, from all loud noise secluded,
Where lovely calm itself could wholly isolate,
Where clever Aristarchus, aesthete with bright fate,
Immersed himself in Homer's rhapsody quotation
Which must — for all Greek sons! — be saved from vulgar
fashion.

PAVLO FYLYPOVYCH



Pavlo Fylypovych, another Ukrainian neo-classicist and philosophical poet was born August 20, 1891, in the village of Kastanivka, Poltava. After graduation from the University of Kiev, he taught at the same university and wrote a series of valuable critical works on Taras Shevchenko, Mykola Hohol (N. Gogol), Ivan Franko, Lesya Ukrainka and others. Like M. Zerov, Fylypovych was also an acknowledged literary authority.

Fylypovych's role in Ukrainian poetry started in 1918 (earlier he tried to write in Russian) when some of his poems were published in the magazine "Muzahet." His first volume of poems, *Earth and Wind*, appeared in 1922. His other book was entitled *Space* (1925).

In his early works the poet was close to symbolism, but their classical forms, especially in his later period, caused him to be considered a neo-classicist. Accepting life as it is, he endeavored philosophically to lend it meaning. To him "man stands on the black field proud as the heaven and strong as the earth." A philosopher pantheistically inclined, he valued above all else man as the unique ruler of space, earth, and wind.

Fylypovych influenced the Ukrainian poets of the thirties, especially Oleh Olzhych who was active in Western Europe. The pure philosophy of the poetic image united both these poets.

By the end of the twenties the poet could not publish his beautiful poems of that balanced emotion which created such a

dynamic life. The Moscow destroyers of Ukrainian literature also arrested Fylypovych as a "bourgeois nationalist," according to communist newspapers.

Semen Pidhayny in his memoirs "Portraits of Solovky Exiles" says of the poet: "The fact that he gave up writing poetry in Russian and began to write in Ukrainian was sufficient for his arrest. No other prisoner suffered so much from exile in Solovky as Fylypovych. He was always gloomy and lonely. Compelled to hard manual labor, he tried as hard as he could to fulfill his quota, but as a rule he never succeeded." *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin. A White Book*, v. I., Toronto, 1953).

Like many other exiles, P. Fylypovych probably died. Unfortunately his fine poems never have been republished and now his works are very rare. Only one of his critical articles, *M. Hohol's (N. Gogol's) Ukrainian Background*, has appeared in a second edition in the series "Slavistica" (Winnipeg, 1952).

**
**

The shadows trembled, and the clouds met evening.
I passed on horseback fields and house and light.
Into the fold the shepherd's herd was streaming,
But I refused to stay here for the night.

Where is my love and her vivacious singing?
My only thoughts had something else in view:
A chilly ocean turbulently swinging
In grayish distance 'neath a boundless blue.

Then sorrow fell as my unwieldy mantle,
When I had stayed my horse upon the way.
No raven took Prometheus to dismantle.
The darksome night ate out the heart of day.

**
*

There again in the sea is the azure.
Cherry trees in white blossom vibrate.
And the sun, a dispenser of pleasure,
Brings the gold of encouraging fate.

There again with the glee of the sprouting
Flies on purple the swift butterfly,
Which will pass, o'er the greenery floating,
But my song shall enjoyment supply.

To remain there invites a temptation,
And the rye seeks the grain to produce.
Undiscovered applause and elation
In my soul and my heart now break loose.

**
*

'Tis neither the gold, nor odor
Of incense brought by three kings —
The song meditating broader
Foretells the delight of spring.

'Tis always the same, and ever
The earth will caress a boy.
Again the fields will be clever
To grant a harvest of joy.

The air and the plants and rivers
Together welcome the blue,
And one to another delivers
A love both sincere and true.

And Orpheus goes politely
To charm by his words alone,
With power daily and nightly
To give wakening unto the stone.

MYKHAYLO DRAY-KHMARA

Mykhaylo Dray-Khmara was born in 1889. He became a professor of languages and literature at the University of Kamyanyets Podilsky. Only one volume of his poems, *The Sprout*, was published in 1926 in Kiev, but this single book assured the author's reputation.

The first poems of Dray-Khmara showed the strong influence of symbolism. "The holy oriflammes of the insurgent spring," the fatherland that "flew into the fight like an eagle," and "the wound in the middle of the brow," — all these figures portrayed the recent struggle for Ukraine's independence. He compared this struggle to Christ on Golgotha. On the other hand, Dray-Khmara searched for the symbolic motifs in the Eastern fables:

I drink the quietness of the gardens,
When coolness to mature expands,
And hear Sheherezade. . .

The early poems of Dray-Khmara showed those characteristic features which united him with M. Zerov, P. Fylypovych and M. Rylsky. The poet's style was colorful and abounded in figures of speech: "My grief is like a ruby settled in a ring." It is no wonder that the poet admitted "I like full-ringing words" when he joined the highly artistic Kievan classicists.

In 1928 Dray-Khmara published his sonnet "Swans" where in his allegorical manner he showed the fate of the "fivefold cluster": Mykola Zerov, Maxym Rylsky, Pavlo Fylypovych, Yuriy Klen (Osvald Burghardt) and himself. At once this sonnet became famous because of its true picture of cultural life under the communist regime, which charged the poet with hostile action. Although Dray-Khmara explained in the press that under the "fivefold cluster" he meant the French poets, especially the

“Abbaye” group, nobody believed him. Even the author’s comparison of “The Swan” of Mallarmé with his own “Swans” did not help. In 1935 Dray-Khmara was arrested for the last time and deported to a concentration camp in the Far East where he died of starvation in 1939. The poet’s letters to his wife described his experiences in the Soviet camps of death:

“I live with forty men in a shanty with wooden walls” (June 2, 1936).

“I have become extremely thin. All the flesh on my stomach and chest has vanished. My chest is but skin and bones, all my ribs stand out. The veins on my hands and legs are taut, as in old people. . . My hands hurt me most, since we have to work with them, and you know my hands are as weak as a child’s” (April 16, 1938).

“I cannot write you about everything. . . If I do not rest, I fall at my work, and then they suspend me. . . My feet are completely swollen” (August 20, 1938).

Besides composing original poems, Dray-Khmara translated the works of Mallarmé, Maeterlinck, and others. He was also an historian of Ukrainian literature, and his study of the poetess Lesya Ukrainka was written with the pen of an acknowledged authority.

The Kievan neo-classicists did not organize a popular movement of an official school. This cluster of five was grouped on the basis of artistic taste and eagerness. Three of them (Zerov, Fylypovych, and Dray-Khmara) disappeared in concentration camps. After publishing his *Memoirs of the Neo-classicists* in Munich, Yuriy Klen died in exile in 1947. The last one of the group, Maxym Rylsky, lives in Kiev under the Soviets. Instead of his previous highly artistic poems, he now writes only base panegyrics as Moscow dictates.

**
*

S W A N S

Along the lake where willows' branches dream,
there swans, in silence floating every day,
do idly splash with beaks the waterway,
and their necks bow like osiers on the stream,

But when the sounding frosts like mirrors beam
and inlets sleep, recalling flowery May,
the swimmers break the ice as if 'twere clay,
and no shore scares them by its frozen seam.

O fivefold cluster of unconquered bards!
Through storm and snow your mighty singing wards,
wards off the sorrow, chilly and adrift.

Keep on, o swans! Though servitudes survive,
there stars of Lyre urge you your wings to lift,
where foams the ocean of exultant life.

**
*

To view this night, to be with you,
refreshing cool and quiet fields,
and hear how earth beneath the dew
in its despair to anguish yields.

How dead all is! A fragile ice
untimely hides the heart's desire;
and like hot pearls from starry skies
fall down the Perseides' tears of fire.

DMYTRO ZAHUL



Among the Ukrainian symbolists, Dmytro Zahul was the most outstanding. He was born August 28, 1890, in the village of Mohyliv, Bukovyna, a district of southwestern Ukraine. He graduated from grammar school in 1913 and studied several years at the University of Chernivtsi.

The first poems of Zahul were published in 1907. His realistic pictures of the scenery of his native Bukovyna, permeated more with happiness than sorrow, were marked by a highly developed versification. At that time, however, the vogue of

symbolism spread from central Europe to the eastern countries. On the other hand, at the same time the Russian tsarism in Ukraine became more eager to stamp out every trace of Ukrainian thought. Most of the Ukrainian poets, who accepted symbolism, very often used the so-called "Aesopian style" which provided new possibilities for expressing their longed for national ideas. Not seeing any justice on earth, Zahul fled to the "land of fantasy." "There are no tears, no pains, no sorrows" — the author reflected, and he found happiness in "the dream of life":

Our Elysians
Are only visions.

Of course, Zahul could not long find happiness in "the world of make-believe." Wandering in "a land of dreams," in "a realm of phantoms," he asked the sun and clouds for the truth. But they did not answer. Then the poet tried to return to the world of reality.

This world became dreadful. The independence of the young Ukrainian state was broken by the Moscow communists in 1920. It seemed to most Ukrainians that Zahul revealed his weak character when under communist pressure he started to collaborate with the new occupants. Together with other "proletarian" poets, he not only tried to sing odes to communism, but he played an active role in the ideological fight against the Kievan classicists, the true representatives of highly developed poetry, which was not acceptable to "socialistic realism". However it did not continue long. Zahul was a highly educated man who understood his low role, and the Moscow communists had reason not to trust him.

In the early thirties the poet was arrested and soon deported to a concentration camp in Solovky where he disappeared without any trace. Thus Ukrainian literature lost a talented poet who could have enriched it still further with his melodious and original poems.

As a translator, Zahul contributed to Ukrainian poetry by his fine translations of the works of Heine and especially Goethe ("Faust," etc.).

Zahul's volumes of poems are: *From the Green Mountains* (1918), *On the Edge* (1919), *Our Day* (1925), *Motifs* (1927).

**

Beyond the veil of earthly finite space
There live such men as I;
And here, unknown unto the human race,
Deploring my sad fate,
My soul can only cry.
I have been struggling against that rigid bar
Now for a thousandth year,
But with my thoughts which calm and steady are
I can't proceed from earth
Into that other sphere.
Or may someone with hands that know no fear
Disjoin the veil of realm of day?
If he can feel the strength of joy sincere,
The strength of joy sincere,
As long ago I was extremely gay?

MYKHAYLO YOHANSEN



A master of the poetic language, a true filigree of words and images, Mykhaylo, who often called himself Mike, Yohansen was born in Kharkiv in 1895, the son of a professor of foreign languages. After graduation from high school, he entered the University of Kharkiv where he studied philosophy and the history of literature.

Yohansen entered into the literary world in 1921 together with Mykola Khvylovy, a writer known for his slogan "Away from Moscow!", and the talented poet Volodymyr Sosyura, who recently was cruelly attacked by

the Moscow *Pravda* for his patriotic poem "Love Ukraine."

The first works of Yohansen already showed his intellectualism, a very rare occurrence in Ukrainian poetry which before that time had been totally a poetry of feelings. In his search for the coolness of intellectualism, his works acquired a truly artistic balance. Sometimes the poet is impartial, and at times even indifferent to that which he is creating. But he always retains a high culture of the word and image. These traits connected Yohansen with the Kievan classicists, who always valued him. The poet himself, being one-third neo-romanticist, one-third symbolist, one-third futurist, often accepted the classicists' style of expression. As never before, this fusion produced an original author: "the poet's poet," "a goldsmith of tone," "a philologist

of poetry,” according to the critics of that time. It was not accidental that he, one of the best poets of the time, was the first to write a theoretical work *Elementary Rules of Versification* (1922).

During the Literary Discussion in 1925-28 Yohansen played an active role in support of M. Khvylovy who in 1926 founded in Kharkiv the literary association VAPLITE (Free Academy of Proletarian Literature). All the members of VAPLITE held that Ukrainian literature must be, first of all, independent with a great variety of styles.

The prose works of Yohansen, *Seventeen Minutes* (1925), *Travels of Dr. Leonardo* (1928), etc. won him the favorable opinion of his readers and critics.

When the Moscow communists started to destroy the Ukrainian national achievements, Yohansen tried “to change color” and to collaborate with them, with the intention of saving his own life. During this short period he published some ballads and poems on Soviet themes and consequently lowered his status as a master of the poetic language. However this period did not continue long. In the middle of the thirties, he was arrested. On the way to a concentration camp, probably after being tortured, he lost his mind and was shot by the Soviet police somewhere in a north Russian forest as a useless woodcutter.

Yohansen volumes of poems were: *Up* (1921), *Revolution* (1923), *The Circle of Steps* (1923), *Harvest* (1924), *Ash-Tree* (1930), *Ballads* (1933), *Selected Poems* (1933), and others.

**
*

DAYBREAK

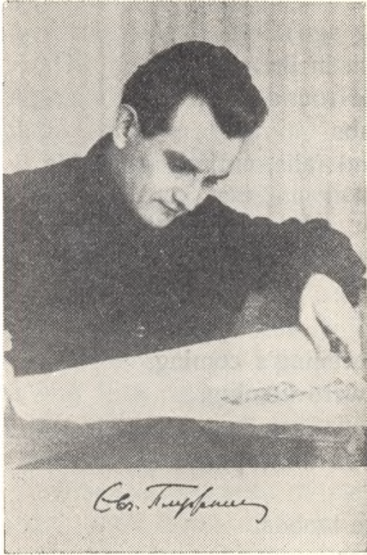
There is frozen a star with fear
 Over the forest
 (The moon died long ago)
And shafts of vermillion scream in the east,
While heaven receives a purple round beet,
Which higher and higher climbs
And quickly blows, whistles and falls, entirely glittering
 — The morning.

**
*

The fields grew blue with evening's coming,
The river waves on shores were homing,
 And so politely
Along the sky white smoke on mute plants
 Arose:
The supper's cooking for the woods.
Already evening pushes hither,
Already grasses weep like zither.
 Low and quietly
The poets — woodlands
 On clouds repose.

1920.

YEVHEN PLUZHNYK



The first outstanding impressionist in Ukrainian poetry, Yevhen Pluzhnyk was born in Kantemyrivka, Northern Ukraine in 1898. Soon after graduation from high-school he taught in an elementary school in Bahachka, Poltava, later studied the theater in Kiev, and at last found himself in literature. In 1924 together with the writer Hryhoriy Kosynka, the poet Dmytro Fal-kivsky (both were shot by communists in 1934) and with Valerian Pidmohylny and Borys Antonenko - Davydovych (both these writers were later deported to concentration camps) and others,

Pluzhnyk established the literary association "Lanka" (Link), the name of which two years later was changed into MARS, and which was really the Kievan division of VAPLITE (see sketch of M. Yohansen).

The life of Pluzhnyk was unhappy and entirely not conducive to the writing of poetry. As a result of inherited tuberculosis, the poet spent most of his life in bed. In addition, together with other Ukrainian writers he was sentenced to death in 1935, but given an "amnesty" and deported to the concentration camp in Solovky Islands, where one year later he died. "His grave in Solovky is known because the NKVD made no secret of his place of burial, as it frequently did in other cases" (Semen

Pidhayny, "Portraits of Solovky Exiles" in *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin*, vol. I, page 353).

The first volume of Pluzhnyk's poems, *Days*, published in 1926, was followed by *Early Autumn* (1927) and one book of prose.

Impressionism in Ukrainian literature appeared for the first time in the stories of Mykhaylo Kotsyubynsky (1864-1913), but much later in poetry, specifically in the poems of Pluzhnyk who was perfectly at home in this style. As a true impressionist, he tried to awake the reader's feeling and to take possession of all the fibres of his heart. On the other hand, the poet wrote in such a manner that the reader's soul would be stirred to think deeply and broadly. Indeed, Pluzhnyk succeeded. The philosophy of human life, its unknown path and forces, always interested him. For instance, he created in his short poem, "The peasant mowed the rye," something essentially Ukrainian, the tragedy of his own nation, which through centuries kept losing its own elite to its neighbors, Poland and Russia. At the time of the proclamation of Ukraine's independence in 1918 the nation was almost a nation of peasants, who loved only the fields, such as the hero of Pluzhnyk's poem.

Nature is the true school where Pluzhnyk observes the world. He advises: "Learn from nature," because "it has been cleverly placed on earth," especially at the beginning of autumn.

The philosophical elements which were hidden in the first two volumes of the poet reveal all their depth in his posthumous book *Balance* (Augsburg in Germany, 1948). Pluzhnyk presents here all his statements on the conditions for one to grow into a great thinker. However, now as always, Moscow communists kill everyone who is non-Russian and who surpasses their native writers.

**

Night. My boat is a silver bird!
What are words when the heart is brimming?
Not so fast, o my boat! Any path is absurd.
All the world is peacefully dreaming.
Over us, under us glows the starry sphere.
How delightfully there to span it!
And how splendidly thee to cheer,
Lustrous planet!

**
*

Behind our passion there is born a tender fondness.
O thirst of lips! O fiery bodies' call!
Indeed they could prevail in any hall —
Behind our passion blooming with a tender fondness.

You wait again? Don't lose the final chances,
Spread out your arms as mighty wings not late —
And fly upon them! These are pressing changes.
Behind our passion there endures a listless fate.

**
*

A peasant mowed the rye and paused to pull it:
His scythe stuck in a skull's dark-yellowed pate.
For what and who was killed here by a bullet?
Why did he wish his life to abnegate?

Th' impassive mower's on a field of battle
Where now the rye gives out its plenteous grain.
One to manure fell with death's cruel rattle, —
In vain!

The peasant is ungrateful. Angry cutter,
He only mourns the loss of his best scythe.
Then, kicking at the skull, in a loud mutter
"You're scattered!" he announced with hearty writhe.

**
*

Dreams from my heart have I torn:
Branches enfeeble the root.
'Tis not enough to be born —
Life must be well understood!

Possibly, poets are those
Who became gray in their youth.
Dreams, o my fancies of loss,
Dreams, o my visions of truth.

VOLODYMYR SVIDZINSKY

Volodymyr Svidzinsky was born October 9, 1885, in the village of Mayaniv, Podillya. He spent his childhood in a priest's family. After graduation from the Commercial Institute of Kiev he worked as a clerk in an office. Soon after the First World War he entered DVU (State Publishing House), where he remained for a long time.

His first poem was published in the magazine *Ukrainska Khata*, 1912. The first volume of his works, *Lyrical Poems*, appeared in 1922, but the poet became known only after his second book, *September* (1927). His third and last volume, *Poems*, was published in 1940. One year later, after the beginning of the German-Soviet war, the poet was burned alive by the Russian police somewhere near Kharkiv where he spent many years. He was killed because he did not want to go to Russia, but preferred to stay in Ukraine.

Some of Svidzinsky's poems were posthumously published in the Ukrainian magazines in exile (Germany).

A talented poet, an exquisite craftsman of symbolistic miniatures, with a great strain of impressionism, Svidzinsky had his own unique style. His vocabulary was rich and colorful. Old and rare words came to life under his pen, and his scope was that of the old Ukrainian folk tales. Several times he wrote beautiful *kazky* in verse ("Flute," "The miraculous handstaff," etc.). His ballads (the cycle "Treason") were colored by the ancient Ukrainian prehistoric polytheism of the kind which was reflected in the *Slovo o polku Ihorevi* (The Tale of Prince Ihor's Campaign).

Svidzinsky's poetry is unimposing, soft and frequently even too subdued. The quiet melancholy of *September* lies upon it. However it is a true deep poetry, noble in its aesthetics and the strong charm of its well chosen words.

In addition to his original poems and ballads, Svidzinsky was a translator from Ancient Greek and Latin (“The Works and Days” of Hesiod, “The Metamorphoses” of Ovid, “The Frogs” of Aristophanes, etc.).

**
*

I sent in flight my reedy arrow
With its well tarréd end.
It sang above the lofty bushes
And met the flowers' blend.

But there the brainless cattle grazéd,
One creature, lazy meat,
Did trample down my lovely arrow
With sharp and cloven feet.

Alas! How zealously I handled
The stalk beloved by light!
With what rejoicing to the sunbeams
I sped my singing flight!

O dusky tar! My righteous anger
Boils up with every spark.
Why did I dip this child of summer
In your base pot so dark?

**
*

The heaven blue becomes entirely dark.
The south steams up. No sun, no star,
And cloudy billows [hang] without a spark.

It rains afar.
With joy the cuckoo's voices sound.
Am I a child?
I want to climb unto a lofty nest,
Where lightnings ever lie
Like snakes encased in wool and wild.
It rains afar.

What can I do? — the rain will come
To spray with pearls the thirsty brownish field,
Disturb a cluster of the trees,
And then
At once, as any dying breeze,
Will with the lightning slowly yield
As meadow's wonder.
What can I do? — when solemn sounds of thunder
Reecho loud, when everything will sing,
The sun comes in as gay young fellow —
The girl will place her hands asunder
And with all tenderness will bring
A crystal vase with grapes blue-gray and mellow.

MYKHAYLO SEMENKO



Mykhaylo Semenko considered himself an innovator and revolutionist of style. He was born December 31, 1892, in the village of Kybyntsi, Poltava, and studied psychology in Petrograd. During First World War he spent some months in the Far East.

The name *futurist* was constantly applied to M. Semenko for he not only wrote his poems in this style, but he considered himself a theorist of pan-futurism. Consistently opposed to traditional patterns, he proclaimed a new era in Ukrainian literature.

His main goal was the destruction of the "old-fashioned" taste.

Although some critics saw in Semenko's works a "non-Ukrainian melody," they appreciated his talent and his eagerness for innovation. Indeed, Semenko's poems brought a new current into the Ukrainian poetry of the time. The little poem "The Card," given below in an almost literal translation, is eloquent proof of this. However he did not write such poems frequently. In his works M. Semenko approached more and more the colloquial language. His attacks on the generally accepted tastes became more and more extreme. The elements of affectation grew immeasurably, and the poet's works turned into linguistic experiments and shiftings without any sense:

Semenko enko nko mykhayl
Semenko mykh mykhaylse menko
O semenko mykhayl
O mykhayl semenko!

Another of his poems had only this:

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Futurism in Ukrainian literature was sprung from foreign roots. Semenko understood this very well, and in his magazine *The New Generation* (1927) he called for international and leftist movements not only in poetry, but in all branches of cultural life. He was one of the first to introduce town life into Ukrainian poetry. Movies, show windows, parks, and restaurants were liberally showered through his works.

The great importance of Semenko depends not on his writings (which are not of high rank!), but on his efforts at innovation which influenced many authors, even such outstanding poets as Pavlo Tychyna and Mykola Bazhan.

Thirty-five years ago futurism, which had been imported from Italy at the beginning of the twentieth century, was fashionable in Ukrainian literature. It caused a wild tumult, but in Ukraine it produced a very scant harvest.

Semenko's first volume *Prelude* was printed in 1913. The last edition of his poems appeared in 3 volumes in 1931. Soon after the poet was arrested and deported by Moscow communists to a concentration camp in Solovky. Every educated non-Russian author, although he retained nothing of his native nationalism of yesterday, was (and is still) considered dangerous by Moscow, because he may be the nationalist of tomorrow. Thus 20 years ago Semenko, the greatest futurist of Ukraine, disappeared.

THE CARD

I glean the silver of existence
and the occasion
into a card's restricted distance
and complication

Once more the impotent reflection
and sunny tender
supply my error's incorrection
and verbal splendor.

DMYTRO FALKIVSKY



The life of Dmytro Falkivsky may really be called tragic. He was born October 22, 1898 in the village of Velyki Lypesy, Polissya, the son of a brick-worker. World War I interrupted his studies in Berestya, and he turned to underground revolutionary activities. Being undecided as to his political allegiance, he willingly joined the Red Army. As a fighter for communism, which he considered something really good for all the people, Falkivsky took part in the Soviet offensive against Warsaw. After that he served three years in the *cheka* (Russian Secret Police). In 1923 he left the

secret police which had caused the death of so many Ukrainians and White Ruthenians who had been fighting for the independence of their native countries. At this time he started to write and publish his poems.

Even the first poems of Falkivsky reveal a deep disappointment. The ideas for which he struggled with a gun in his hands did not materialize. Finally he realized that he had been deceived. The Moscow communists did not bring justice. Instead of happiness for all the people, they introduced Russian domination in the artificially organized Soviet Union in which the Ukrainians did not have equal rights with the Russians. This discovery shook the mind of the poet, and he started to grieve and repent for his former service to the communists.

I forgot any singing gladness,
My motif is a yearning grief, —

the poet admits. "My wings are broken," "my heart is tired," "the wrinkles have covered my forehead," "it resulted from the misfortune of my missing youth," — such expressions are very frequent in the poems of Falkivsky. He tried to find an escape from his great despair and turned to the marshy land where he was born.

The tall reed was a crib to my childhood,
On the swamps I was born and raised.

This devotion to Polissya, the northwest section of Ukraine, provides the setting for the entire poem "Polissya." The description of the seasons of the year is rendered in an unusually warm lyrical stream which penetrates every word of the work.

However Falkivsky does not forget his "missing past." He returns to it very frequently and he calls himself "a son of the error with the painful past." Only occasionally the fields of Ukraine return to him a moment of happiness:

In my peasant's soul
Neither field, nor cornflower will die . . .

This love for the Ukrainian fields was considered by the Moscow communists as something very nationalistic, because the poet refused to sing odes to communism. In 1934 he was arrested and quickly executed, together with Hryhoriy Kosynka, Oleksa Vlyzko and others. Thus ended the life of a talented lyrical poet, who did not reach the peak of his creative ability.

Falkivsky's career demonstrates the tragic fate of those few Ukrainians who once wrongly believed in communism, discovered their mistake, and were subsequently killed by those whom they had served.

The volumes of Falkivsky are: *The Shepherd* (1925), *Horizons* (1927), *On the Ash-Fields* (1928), *Polissya* (1931).

**
*

One foot is in the stirrup.
The snows and winds and night.
His shoulder's blood is stirred up.
His head is lost in fight.

The horse desires to vanquish:
"Where am I going now?"
The iron hooves with anguish
Are pressed into the snow.

He looks with wary query:
"When will my master rise?"
And into space, unwearied,
He gallops o'er the ice.

He dashes through a hollow
Toward south and north and east.
Red spots behind him follow
As 'twere a bloody beast.

And now, his course is slackened;
He neighs unto the moon.
"Why has he not awakened?
How soon?"

One foot is in the stirrup.
The snows and winds and night.
His shoulder's blood is stirred up.
His head is lost in fight.

He could rejoice tomorrow
With friends sincere and glad.
But now... O sorrow!
Dead.

OLEKSA VLYZKO



One of the distinguished Ukrainian neo-romanticists, an exceedingly talented poet, — Oleksa Vlyzko was born in 1908 in Odessa, the large Ukrainian port on the northern shore of the Black Sea. It is not accidental that his first poem had the expressive title “A Heart Toward the North” (1925). The sea penetrates almost all his works.

The most valuable poems of Vlyzko are those that reveal the high power of his youthful and vigorous enthusiasm.

Thirsty for a great “superhuman love”, the poet longed —

... to love mankind and beast and earth,
Live in the sun and breath with it alone,
Build up a happiness by heavy sweat
For sons and grandsons and descendants
Of future days!

(“Ninth Symphony”)

“Having purified his heart with fire,” the poet longed for “the great unknown”:

I take thee, world of the existence,
Into my ardent arms!

Yakiv Savchenko, a sensitive critic of that time, wrote of Vlyzko’s “Ninth Symphony”:

“I do not know in the Ukrainian poetry of the last decade anything better than this, from the aspect of its strength and social pathos . . . It strikes one all the more because Vlyzko is only 19 years old.”

Vlyzko from his entrance into the literary life very well understood his duty:

We need more new Shevchenkos,
We need more new Frankos, —

the poet exclaimed, considering the task of the new elite rising among the Ukrainian people. Consequently, he scorned the commonplace style of life, the routine of the common people, and he urged everybody to become a revolutionist. This conviction led him to develop the style of his early poems, which were close to neo-classicism, into the extreme futurism of his later works.

However, he always remained a neo-romanticist. Being almost deaf and dumb from childhood, he could not clearly declaim his poems, which seemed to roar out like thunder from heaven.

Vlyzko met a sudden death in December, 1934 when he was only twenty-six years old. He was executed by the Moscow communists as an activist who tried to create by his works a new generation of defenders fighting for Ukraine's independence.

The volumes of Vlyzko are: *I Shall Tell For All* (1927), *I Live and Work* (1929), *Book of Ballads* (1930), *The Drunken Ship* (1933), and others.

**
*

With the fire my heart enlightening,
I am going, glad and strong,
And the weepers, sorrow brightening,
Do not mark my happy song.

I produce the glee. Invest it all
In your bodies for the joy.
Set me on the lustrous festival,
And I can my voice employ!

SAILORS

Strongly steeled by the winds and hot weather,
Sailing over the ocean and fear,
We know never a gate or a tether,
But the alien sphere.

We hurl hearts at the storm with sheer courage,
We have spat in Beelzebub's face
And compute by the miles and the tonnage
Our perpetual race.

Our protection — the sharpened stiletto.
And our image — sea-flowering storms.
All our hearts live in port near the meadow
Where the anthracite swarms.

THE IRONIC OVERTURE

Under blows of wind tramontane
There the hearts and masts are trembling,
And the captain, ruthless viking,
Is directing his great ship.
He is going through the darkness,
Past the piers of gay Odessa,
Where the frivolous survivors
Make attack on toasted fish.

Do not smile, my dearest reader!
I do not believe in legends.
Just a vision is the viking
In the song of fishermen.
Hérédia sang in sonnet
An idyllic lass of Briton.
I create Odessa's ballad
On tramontane and the girl.
O believe me! It is easier
To create the blue of Briton
Than to catch the splendid colors
Of Odessa lovers' talk.

They allude to their wild passion
And unto a harbor inlet,
Which is glad to feel tramontane,
Which is hiding swollen fish.
Dearest reader! Show your pity!
I can dream about such details,
Lasting on from its beginning
And without a happy end.

O'er my native precious Black Sea
There the hearts and masts are trembling,
And the captain, ruthless viking,
Is directing his great ship.
He is going through the darkness,
Past the piers of gay Odessa,
Where there dwell the nice survivors
And the nicest of the girls.

MARKO ANTIOKH

The son of the poet Mykola Vorony and on his mother's side the grandson of the poet M. Verbytsky, Marko Antiokh was born in 1904 in Chernyhiv, North Ukraine.

M. Antiokh began to publish his poems in the middle of the twenties in the magazines *Literaturno-naukovy Visnyk*, *Chervony Shlakh* and others. In the early thirties he was arrested in Moscow, where he had gone to hide. At that time it was very dangerous to live in Ukraine, because the Moscow destruction of Ukrainian literature had already begun. It is known that the poet was sent to a concentration camp on the Solovky Islands, where he probably died.

The poetic works of M. Antiokh are not many. It has been very difficult, almost impossible, to gather all the poems of this exiled poet. Immediately after the arrest of each author the Soviet police were wont to pick up all his books. Thus every trace of the author's work disappeared as soon as the author was apprehended.

Some twenty poems of M. Antiokh, possessed by the admirers of his poetry, show that his creative ability was already well matured, although he was not yet twenty-two when these were written. His reflections on life and creation (the sonnet "The World"), on love and fear as the eternal attributes of existence ("Love and Fear"), his vision of "The Infernal Destruction," and especially his highly spiritual poems "The Christmas Elegy," "Easter," "The Church and the Angels" — all these show the poet had a distinctly idealistic complexity of thought. It is not accidental that M. Antiokh has this expression: "baroque of church sings cleverly to me." "The gleam of the candles in church" arouses in the author ecstatic delight.

The vision of the poet's bride, shot by communists during the Moscow invasion of Ukraine in 1920, is recalled in

most of his poems. This vision first appears in the poem "Her Name" (1924), is repeated in "The Songs of the Revenge," and finds its culmination in "The Prayer," which is a genuine example of deeply religious poetry.

The author casts a wrathful curse upon the "low-minded soldiers," and he confirms it by an oath:

Blood shall repay for the blood!

Marko Antiokh is a poet of the new generation of Ukrainian elite. His sonnet "Fatherland" clashes with the commonly accepted philosophy of Ukrainian history:

My Fatherland! I know, to thee
Was meted out through centuries the road.
Thou saw the God, such destiny,
That leaves thee in thy sorrow bowed.
My native land is rich in graves.
I damn all those who are invaders!

In another poem M. Antiokh emphasizes the thought, that Ukraine cannot be free as long as it continues to be exclusively a "peasant country." Thus he volunteers to join the leaders of the Ukrainian intellectual movement in the twenties, Mykola Khvylovy and Mykola Zerov, who also expressed similar progressive thoughts.

Marko Antiokh is still relatively unknown to the average Ukrainian reader. It has never been proved, in fact, that any of his works were published in book form; but his beautiful poems are cherished by lovers of poetry, who value him for his deep idealism and enchanting romanticism. Like Columbus on his ship in great despair, M. Antiokh calls:

Fight 'mong the bloody reefs
Till you will meet the sand,
Until your step achieves
In glory the sought land.

HER PATHWAY

(From "The Songs of the Revenge")

Here are the cliff and the weed.
The wind o'er the sands has blown.
An archangel stepped up his speed;
A star has dropped on the stone.

What can I achieve here around
On steppes where barefoot she went?
My knife and my bullet are bound
To meet a revengeful event.

Blood shall repay for the blood,
That she has shed on the ride.
My God, send down an Elysian bud —
Bliss for my righteous bride.

CONCLUSION

These few selections, we hope, will give the reader some idea of the wealth and variety of Ukrainian poetry, as it flowered during the short period of the Ukrainian Renaissance. It was not a period that was limited to any one style, any one range of ideas, but in full measure it showed all the varying aspects of Ukrainian life as it struggled to shake off the shackles of centuries. The poetry of the period was the most significant work, but this is nothing new.

In the literary history of Ukraine, poetry has always been the most favored medium of expression. Even in the oldest period of Ukraine, the Kievan state of Rus, the genius of the time found its highest expression in the well-known *Tale of Prince Ihor's Campaign* (1187). The energy and symbolism of this one poem have raised it to an undisputed place as the greatest of Slavic mediaeval poems and as one of the great works produced in the Europe of the twelfth century.

Still later in the period of the Kozaks in the XVI-XVIII centuries we find the rich flowering of Ukrainian folklore, folk-songs and the epic *dumy* which reflect all the facets of the bitter struggle of the Ukrainians against the Asiatic nomad tribes of the steppes. It is small wonder then that Johann G. von Herder (1744-1803), in his studies of East European folklore, declared:

"In time Ukraine will become a new Greece; the beautiful sky of these people, their happy mood, their musical nature, their soil, will some day awaken... a nation will come into existence." (*Spirit of Ukraine* by D. Snovyd, New York, 1935, p. 9).

The modern Ukrainian literature, written in the colloquial language of the people and not in the artificial mixture of Church Slavic and ancient Ukrainian, began with the poetical travesty of Ivan Kotlyarevsky on the *Aeneid* of Virgil in 1798. This was in verse and so were most of the following works until Taras

Shevchenko in his *Kobzar* and later poems summed up the Ukrainian genius in unforgettable language and figures.

From that time in the middle of the nineteenth century, it is Ukrainian poetry, whether in the works of Ivan Franko or of Lesya Ukrainka, that has heralded and reflected each new step in the maturing of the Ukrainian artistic character. They have reflected through their original viewpoints all those principles that have won the adherence and the imitation of the more progressive writers of Western Europe. The Ukrainian genius has well shown the old truth that it is the poets and their works who not only respond to the popular currents but who are able themselves to initiate and direct these for the pursuit and attainment of the national goals.

Ukrainian poetry which had assumed this role has never relinquished it. Neither prose nor literary criticism, neither the theatre, music, nor journalism, all of which have made a bid for supremacy, have been able to dethrone poetry from its high position. That poetry has been divided into many schools. Symbolism, classicism, and neo-classicism, impressionism, expressionism, neo-romanticism, etc. have all produced a worthwhile harvest which in its entirety has given the world a worthy picture of the Ukrainian poetic genius. They have placed Ukrainian poetry on a par with that of Western Europe. In that incongruous association called the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian poets, despite the early age at which they have been liquidated, for few have been allowed to live past the age of forty, far outstripped their competitors including the Russians with their governmental support.

The White Ruthenians, the Georgians, the Armenians and the other nations looked with admiration and surprise at this poetic spring in Ukraine. So did the Slavs outside of the Union, the Poles, the Serbs, the Bulgars, the Czechs and Slovaks.

Les Kurbas in the Ukrainian theatre, Mykola Kulish in drama, Oleksander Dovzhenko in the film, Hryhoriy Kosynka, Valeryan Pidmohylny, Arkadiy Lyubchenko and Yuriy Yanovsky in prose were all great artists and spoke for their people. But the greatest representatives of the Ukrainian Renaissance are and will always be the poets Pavlo Tychyna, Mykola Zerov, Maksym Rylsky, Pavlo Fylypovych, Yevhen Pluzhnyk, Todos Osmachka, Mykola Bazhan and Mykhaylo Dray-Khmara. Most

of these men were liquidated physically in the Communist effort to stamp out Ukrainian life. Those who survived by subservience have suffered the intellectual liquidation of their art and have become mere poetasters and shadows of their past.

Yet at the slightest opportunity a new generation of Ukrainian poets has arisen to take the place of those who are gone and to continue to be the national spokesmen in the field of art and thought. Ukraine is not yet perished, as the Ukrainian national anthem so proudly declares, despite the national suffering and oppression.

Ukraine has its contribution to make to world culture — its poetry. The flowering of the twenties, the Ukrainian Renaissance has this message for Europe and the civilized world and it can proudly and honestly offer these writings to world literature, until a new period of freedom comes and prepares the way for the next step forward.

Philadelphia, 1953-1954

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Reshetar, John S., *The Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1920*, Princeton, 1952.
- Ohloblyn, O., *Treaty of Pereyaslav 1654*, Toronto-New York, 1954.
- Ukrainian Resistance*, New York, 1949.
- Martovych, Oleh, *Ukrainian Liberation Movement in Modern Times*, Munich (1951).
- The Ukrainian Insurgent Army in Fight for Freedom*, New York, 1954.
- Roman Smal-Stocki, *The Nationality Problem of the Soviet Union and Russian Communist Imperialism*, Milwaukee, 1952.
- The Black Deeds of the Kremlin, A White Book*, Vol. I, Toronto, 1953.
- Eighth Interim Report of Hearings before the Select Committee on Communist Aggression*. House of Representatives, eighty-third Congress, second session under authority of H. Res. 346 and H. Res. 438, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1954.
- Dobriansky, Lev E., Ph. D., *The Non-Russian Nations in the U.S.S.R.*, Extension of Remarks of Hon. Brien McMahon of Connecticut in the Senate of the U. S., May 15, 1952.
- Kosarenko-Kosarevych, Vasyl, *Analysis of the Essence of the Struggle Between the East and West*, "Independent Ukraine", Vol. VII, No. 11-12, Chicago, 1954.
- The Crime of Moscow in Vynnytsia*, Edinburgh, 1952.
- Bahryany, Ivan, *Why I Do Not Go "Home,"* "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. II — Number 3, 1946.
- Shayan, W., *I Can't Return* (an open letter), Ely, 1950.
- Shayan, W., *The Creation of Humanity*, Bad Woerishofen, 1946.
- Shayan, W., *La mission historique de l'Ukraine*, Bad Woerishofen, 1946.
- Shayan, W., *The Wisdom of Hatred and Annihilation*, Ely, 1950.

- Manning, Clarence A., *Ukrainian Literature*, Jersey City, 1944.
- Manning, Clarence A., *Twentieth Century Ukraine*, New York, 1951.
- Manning, Clarence A., *Ukraine Under the Soviets*, New York, 1953.
- Snovyd, D., *Spirit of Ukraine*, New York, 1935.
- Prince Ihor's Raid Against the Polovtsi*, translated by Rev. Paul C. Crath, versified by Watson Kirkconnell, Saskatoon, 1947.
- The Tale of Prince Ihor's Campaign*, Ukrainian Epic of the 12th Century, Edited by Sviatoslav Hordynsky, Philadelphia, 1950.
- Scherrer, Maria, *Les dumy ukrainiennes* (épopée cosaque), Paris, 1947.
- Andrusyshen, C. H., *The Dumy: Lyrical Chronicle of Ukraine*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. III., Number 2, 1947.
- Livesey, F. R., *Songs of Ukraine* (translation of Ukrainian Songs with notes), New York, 1916.
- Hryhorij Skovoroda, 1722-1794*, der ukrainische Philosoph des XVIII. Jahrhunderts, in "Ukraine in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart," Nummer 2(6), 1953, pages 31-32.
- Tychkevych, M., *La Littérature Ukrainienne*, Berne, 1919.
- Meillet, M.A., *Anthologie de la littérature ukrainienne...*, Paris, Giard, 1921.
- Tisserand, Roger, *La vie d'un peuple. L'Ukraine*, Paris, 1933.
- Coleman, Arthur Prudden, *Brief Survey of Ukrainian Literature*, New York, 1936.
- Hryhorij Kvitka, *Marusia* (a novel) translated by F. R. Livesey, with introduction by Lord Tweedsmuir, New York, 1940.
- Romanenko, D., *H. Kvitka — père du roman ukrainien*, "L'Ukraine libre," No. 7, Paris 1954.
- D. Doroshenko, *Taras Shevchenko*, the national poet of Ukraine, introduction by Geo. W. Simpson, Winnipeg, 1936.
- Shevchenko, Taras, *Selected Poems*, translated with an introduction by Clarence A. Manning, Jersey City, 1945.
- Kisilevsky, V. J., *Charles Dickens, Publication on Taras Shevchenko Seventy Years Ago*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. III — Number 2, 1947.
- Myshuha, Luke, *Shevchenko and Women*, translated by Waldimir Semenyha, Jersey City, N. J., 1940.

- Odarchenko, Petro, *The Struggle for Shevchenko*, "The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.," Vol. III — No. 3 (9), New York, 1954.
- Smal-Stockyj, Stepan, *Shevchenko's Mind and Thought*, "The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.," Vol. II, No. 2 (4), New York, 1952.
- Hryzaj, O., *Ein Prometheus der Ukraine*, Taras Schewtschenko und sein Werk, in "Ukraine in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart.," Nummer 1, 1952, Muenchen.
- Sydoruk, John P., *Ideology of Cyrillo-Methodians and its Origin*, Winnipeg-Chicago, 1954 (in the series "Slavistica," No. 19).
- Yanivsky, B., *Kostomarov's "Books of Genesis of the Ukrainian People,"* Research Program on the U.S.R.R., New York,
- de Boismontant, Denis, *Taras Chevtchenko — héros et poète*, "L'Ukraine libre," No. 3., Paris, 1954.
- Cundy, Percival, *Marko Vovchok*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. III — Number 2, 1947.
- Manning, Clarence A., *Ivan Franko*, New York, 1938.
- Tyshkevych, M., *Ivan Franko*, "L'Ukraine libre," No. 5., Paris 1954.
- Franko, Ivan, *Selected Poems*, translated with a biographical introduction by Percival Cundy, New York, 1948.
- Franko, Ivan, *Moses*, translated by Waldimir Semenyina, Jersey City, N. J., 1938.
- Franko, Ivan, *Zakhar Berkut* (a historical romance), translated by Theodosia Boresky, New York, 1944.
- Hryzaj, Ostap, *Ein Steinbrecher des Fortschritts*, Ivan Franko, in "Ukraine in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart," Nummer 2, 1952, pages 20-26.
- Manning, Clarence A., *The Moses of Ivan Franko*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. II — Number 3, 1946.
- Cundy, Percival, *Lesya Ukrainka*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. II — Number 3, 1946.
- Ukrainka, Lesya, *Spirit of Flame*, A Collection of the Works, translated by Percival Cundy, New York, 1950.
- Cundy, Percival, *An Episode in the Life of Lesya Ukrainka*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. III — Number 2, 1947.
- Odarchenko, Petro, *Soviet Interpretation of a Ukrainian Classic* (L. Ukrainka), "The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of

- Arts and Sciences in the U.S.," Vol. I — No. 2, New York, 1951.
- Buchynskyj, D., *Lesya Ukrainka*, "L'Ukraine libre," No. 1, Paris, 1953.
- Hordynsky, Sviatoslav, *The Fivefold Cluster of Unvanguished Bards*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. V — Number 3, 1949.
- Hordynsky, Sviatoslav, The Case of 28," "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. X — Number 4, 1954.
- H., S., *Ukrainian Writers in Exile (1945-1949)*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. VI — Number 6, 1950.
- Sviatoslav Hordynsky, *Ideas on the Scaffold — Mykola Kulish and his Sonata Pathetique*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. V., Number 4, 1949.
- Boyko, Youriy, *Mykola Koulich*, "L'Ukraine libre," No. 2, Paris, 1954.
- Hirniak, Yosyp, *Birth of the Modern Ukrainian Theater*, New York, 1954.
- Romanenko, D., *Youriy Yanovsky — "le dernier romantiques,"* "L'Ukraine libre," No. 6, Paris, 1954.
- Sherekh, Yuriy, *Trends in Ukrainian Literature under Soviets*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. IV.
- Manning, Clarence A., *The Trials of Ukrainian Communist Literature*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. VI — Number 3, 1950.
- Romanenchuk, Bohdan, *Ten Years of Soviet Literature in Ukraine*, "The Ukrainian Quarterly," Vol. VI — Number 3, 1950.
- Derzhawin, Wolodimir, *Gelb und blau. Moderne Ukrainische Dichtung in Auswahl*, Augsburg, 1948.
- Slavutych, Yar, *Spiegel und Erneuerung*, ausgewaelte Gedichte aus dem Ukrainischen uebertragen von V. Derzhavyn, Frankfurt an Main, 1949.
- Slavutych, Yar, *Modern Ukrainian Poetry, 1900-1950*, Philadelphia, 1950.
- Kottmeier, Elisabeth, *Aus Dichterstuben des ukrainischen Exils* in "Ukraine in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart," Muenchen, 1952.

- Buchynskyj, Dmytro, *La musa ucrainiana en el exilio*, "Poesia Espanola," numero 23, Madrid, 1953.
- Jdanovytsch, O., *Synthèse de Poésie et d'Action*, "L'Ukraine libre," No. 4, Paris, 1954.
- Ukrainian Underground Art*, album of the woodcuts made in Ukraine in 1947-1950, Philadelphia, 1952.
- Ukraine in Pictures*, published by M. Boretsky, New York, 1954.
- Ukrainian Arts*, New York City, 1955 (second edition).
- Bahriany, Ivan, *The Hunters and the Hunted*, a novel, Toronto, 1954.
- Pidhainy, S., *Islands of Death memoirs on the Solovky exiles*, Toronto, 1954.
- Nicholas Prykhodko, *One of the Fifteen Million*, memoirs, Boston, 1952.
- Communist Takeover and Occupation of Ukraine*, Special report No. 4 of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression. House of Representatives, eighty-third Congress, second session under authority of H. Res. 346 and H. Res. 438, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1955.
-

MUSE

IN PRISON

9-50