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## Kulish and the Devil

*Marko Robert Stech*

In my essay on Mykola Kulish's two earliest plays, *97* (1924) and *Komuna v stepakh* (A Commune in the Steppes, 1925),<sup>1</sup> I tried to show how these apparently naïve<sup>2</sup> propaganda plays (or "models of socialist realism in its formative period"<sup>3</sup>) are essentially studies of the psychic processes that shaped the perceptions and actions of peasants, both revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries, in the elemental struggle that flared up in the remote steppe villages of southern Ukraine at the beginning of the 1920s. I demonstrated in what way and due to what underlying psychological causes these people perceived the panorama of revolutionary cataclysms not as an outcome of radical socio-economic transformations (as interpreted by the Marxist critics), but as a battleground of religious forces, namely, the confrontation between the quasi-religious Soviet power and the Christian church for control over people's lives and souls.

The subject matter of these plays and the subsequent development of related ideas in Kulish's later dramas—*Narodnyi Malakhii* (The People's Malakhii, 1927), *Patetychyna sonata* (Sonata Pathétique, 1929), and *Vichnyi bunt* (Eternal Rebellion, 1932)—point to a direct link between the quasi-religious treatment of the revolution and the protagonists' unconscious or semi-conscious desires for personal freedom, self-improvement, and self-realization (individuation in the Jungian sense), which are

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1. Marko Robert Stech, "The Concept of Personal Revolution in Mykola Kulish's Early Plays," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 27, nos. 1–2 (Summer–Winter 2002): 107–24.

2. As described by Iurii Sherekh in his *Ne dlia ditei* (New York: Proloh, 1964), 80.

3. Nataliia Kuziakina, *Dramaturh Mykola Kulish* (Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1962), 190.

projected through the prism of an “insignificant person’s” psyche and worldview onto the external (social) revolutionary processes. These personal aspirations, however, prove to be inherently incompatible with the demands of the actual society (especially in its totalitarian Soviet hypostasis), and the resulting conflict between an individual and his milieu defines perhaps the most essential “existentialist” theme in all of Kulish’s work. The seemingly inescapable tragic fate of his characters is determined not only by external (political, social, and economic) forces, but also by inner psychic traits that are characteristic of both Ukrainian revolutionaries and the Western man of the twentieth century in general, who, having intellectually renounced traditional beliefs and religions, cannot suppress the need to raise new “gods” and “demons” on a pedestal before him and to give them power over his fate.

But could one justify a similar quasi-religious interpretation of the motif of the intrinsic conflict between individual existential needs and aspirations and the all-powerful (and essentially quasi-divine) “machine” of human society in the no longer “naïve,” but biting satirical comedies *Otak zahynuv Huska* (Thus Huska Perished, 1925) and *Khulii Khuryna* (1926)? These plays were written at a time when the brilliant success of 97 throughout Ukraine not only transformed an unknown beginner into the most popular dramatist in Soviet Ukraine, but also precipitated his profound disillusionment with the new regime and prompted him to adopt the path of engaged social criticism.<sup>4</sup>

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4. Kulish’s disappointment with the new order and his general depression, which he revealed in his letters to Ivan Dniprovsky, were caused in part by personal issues. He was greatly upset by the fact that the first director of 97, Hnat Iura, unceremoniously and without the author’s consent replaced the tragic finale of the play, in which all members of the commune died of starvation, with a propagandistic and historically false scene of the triumphal bread delivery from the raion centre to the starving peasants. This revision contradicted the most essential principle of Kulish’s early dramas—to display on stage life’s “naked truth.” He was personally offended by the declaration that the finale of his play was changed because it was “ideologically inappropriate” (Mykola Kulish, *Tvory v dvokh tomakh* [Kyiv: Dnipro, 1990], 2: 513). However, these personal reasons notwithstanding, Kulish’s views on the condition of Soviet society of the mid 1920s were influenced primarily by his observations of the new social and political situation and his direct contacts with the Soviet regime. During his heart-breaking travels as a school inspector of the Odesa Gubernia Committee of Education through the ruined villages of southern Ukraine, he not only saw the terrible destruction of his native land but, on occasion, was also compelled to contribute to people’s suffering by implementing official Soviet orders, such as the order to reduce the staff of rural schools and, as a result,

At first glance the main purpose of the play *Otak zahynuv Huska*, based on motifs of Kulish's Russian-language comedy *Na rybnoi lovle* (While Fishing), written back in 1913 when he was a gymnasium student in Oleshky, is to ridicule the "philistine swamp" of Ukrainian provincialism, the loathsome "bourgeois way of life," which, however, Kulish "himself had not yet outgrown."<sup>5</sup> According to his testimony, in this comedy he wanted "to create a type of petty bourgeois that is frightened to death by the revolution." Originally, the epigraph of the play was to be the unambiguous aphorism "Oh, how I despise you, you rotten, loathsome bourgeois camp,"<sup>6</sup> but, in the end, Kulish did not insert anything like this text into his play.

Savatii Savlovych Huska, or "Huska, his Excellency's collegiate secretary and citizen of the Russian Empire,"<sup>7</sup> is indeed a stereotypical bourgeois and bureaucrat bordering on a caricature. His worldview and mentality are transplanted almost directly from the tragicomic and grotesque imperial offices of Nikolai Gogol's texts. He is truly "frightened to death by the revolution"; in fact, he cannot physically tolerate the new reality and asks his guest, Pierre Kyrpatenko, to give him "such drugs as will put an end to the revolution."<sup>8</sup> Unnerved by a summons to register at the Soviet Committee for Labour Duty, he forgets the name of one of his seven daughters, and this mistake, in his imagination, becomes the beginning of his inevitable downfall. He is convinced that the new authorities take this to be a sufficient reason for persecuting him. It is in this spirit that he interprets the government order to quarter in his house a member of a *hramcheka* (commission

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deprive some teachers of their means of subsistence (see H. Budylo, "Zustrich z M. Kulishem," *Ukainski visti* [Neu Ulm], 16 September 1955). He also worked in the bureaucratic "slavery" of the Odesa Gubernia Committee, which he described as "hustle and bustle, pointless meetings, which are as useful as smoke" (Kulish, *Tvory*, 2: 527), and later briefly lived in the "philistine swamp" (*ibid.*, 530) of Zinovievsk (today's Kirovohrad), where he worked as the editor of *Chervonyi shliakh* (not to be confused with the Kharkiv literary journal of the same name), a "miserable, grey" local paper with a print run of 4,000, which "was hardly ever read but was railed against in the town ... and was used for rolling cigarettes in the villages" (*ibid.*, 530–1). This "philistine swamp" (in *Otak zahynuv Huska*) and absurd treadmill of the new bureaucracy (in *Khulii Khuryna*) became the objects of biting satire in his new comedies.

5. Kulish, *Tvory*, 2: 530.

6. *Ibid.*, 544.

7. *Ibid.*, 1: 243.

8. *Ibid.*, 229.

for the liquidation of illiteracy), whom Huska mistakes for an agent of the “grand Cheka” (an imaginary supreme organ of the Soviet secret police). Driven to despair, he accepts Kyrpatenko’s suggestion to escape to an uninhabited island, but “the revolution” finds him even there. Taking the fishermen he stumbles upon to be agents of the government, Huska finally surrenders to them in a melodramatic fashion, “Arrest me!” and believes that he is doomed.

And yet the fact that this “minor comedy,”<sup>9</sup> which does not appear to be serious at first glance, was not all that straightforward and one-dimensional in Kulish’s imagination is confirmed by his letter to Dniprovsky: “I cannot make up my mind about the ending. Perhaps I should do this: let the audience laugh for two and a half acts and then bulge its eyes in horror when it sees that Huska really hanged himself on a willow in the marsh.”<sup>10</sup> This unrealized final scene would have contrasted sharply with the apparently vaudeville atmosphere of the play and would have been an obvious echo (in the context of the 1920s and the subsequent decades of Soviet rule) of the famous scene in Gogol’s *Revizor* (The Government Inspector, 1835) in which the Mayor suddenly turns to the spectators and cries out in despair, “What are you laughing at? You are laughing at yourselves!”<sup>11</sup> As we shall see eventually, the apparent ridicule of the narrow-minded, frightened bourgeois just barely conceals the author’s own anxious premonition and even horror in the face of the “evil power” that took control over Ukrainian society.

While Gogolian motifs and the influence of his conceptions of the theatre on Kulish are detectable in the deeper layers of *Otak zahynuv Huska*—in the psychological development of characters and the structure of some scenes—in the play *Khulii Khuryna* they lie directly on the surface. In fact, the author’s almost literal copying of the well-known plot of *Revizor* in the comedy’s first act leaves no doubt that Kulish wished to polemicize with Gogol, perhaps even to parody him, or more precisely,

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9. Kulish wrote about *Otak zahynuv Huska* in his usual severely self-critical spirit in a letter to Dniprovsky: “it is a great pity that this minor comedy is not serious. It smells of a young, too merry an author” (Kulish, *Tvory*, 2: 535). He did not try very hard to secure a theatre premiere for the play, and it did not appear on the stage during his lifetime. Its text was first published in 1960.

10. Kulish, *Tvory*, 2: 544.

11. Nikolay Gogol, *The Government Inspector and Other Plays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1926), 120.

to continue his artistic experiment by transferring the “creative laboratory” to the Ukrainian SSR of the 1920s in order to show that the basic philosophical dilemmas of Gogol’s works remained topical and immutable, in spite of the fact that these works depicted a “backward” and, seemingly, very different historical period.<sup>12</sup> According to the familiar scheme of events, two con men, fleeing Odesa after their last job, arrive in a provincial town. The local innkeeper mistakes one of them for Sosnovsky, a correspondent of *Pravda*,<sup>13</sup> and provides the adventurers with an opportunity to change into important public officials (a well-known journalist and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia). In this modernized version of Khlestakov’s story, the two swindlers eventually depart in the car of the local executive committee, which is to be used only for “official purposes,”<sup>14</sup> taking with them the money collected for the *Pravda* airplane in order to “deliver it personally” to Moscow.<sup>15</sup> But before leaving, the false Sosnovsky casually mentions: “They say that Julio Jurenito is buried here....

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12. A similar experiment was undertaken later by Mykola Khvylovy in his short story “Revizor” (1929).

13. During Kulish’s lifetime *Khulii Khuryna* was performed only briefly in a Russian translation under the direction of M. Dyskovsky at the New Theatre in Kyiv. Its premiere took place on 14 December 1926. One of the reasons why the authorities repeatedly banned the staging of this play was that it contained passages about a real *Pravda* correspondent, Lev Sosnovsky, and actual political events, particularly the so-called Dymivka affair. When the innkeeper Khuna Shtilshtein tells Sosnovsky, “When you staged the Dymivka affair, our people’s commissar rolled over” (Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 258), he is referring to a case, well known at the time, in which a group of peasant commune members from the village of Dymivka were sentenced to death for allegedly killing the rural correspondent Malynovsky, although it turned out that the latter had not been a correspondent, but a bandit, and that he had actually been killed by his brother. The case against the peasants was fabricated, and one of the loudest propagandists of this falsification was Lev Sosnovsky, who condemned the “murderers of the rural correspondent” with Joseph Stalin’s blessing. This affair also marked the beginning of Stalin and Lazar Kaganovich’s persecution of Ukraine’s people’s commissar of education, Oleksander Shumsky, who shortly “rolled over,” that is, was fired from his post. Highly placed Communists who were mixed up in the Dymivka affair obviously wanted to prevent the staging of a play that presented Sosnovsky and his writings, especially about Dymivka, in a very ironic light. Another obvious reason for prohibiting the play was its relentless parody of the Soviet bureaucracy, parody that no playwright in the USSR at that time dared to rival.

14. Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 265.

15. *Ibid.*, 264.

Haven't you heard of him? He's Ehrenburg's hero!... A teacher!... Well, what can I say!... You should find his grave, decorate it with flowers, sprinkle sand on it.... It looks bad.... After all he's a hero."<sup>16</sup>

The next two acts are devoted to a frantic, grotesquely comical search for the grave of the fictitious hero, whose name the local bureaucrats twist into the Ukrainianized version Khulii Khuryna. Almost the entire town population participates in this search. When they find a forgotten grave at the cemetery with a cross on which only the letters "Khu" can be decoded, they begin preparations for the solemn celebration of Khulii Khuryna's memory (renovation of the grave, erection of a small monument, and perhaps even the renaming of one of the streets). The Communists take Khulii to be a hero of the revolution, while the parishioners consider him to be a saint. But the festive mood of the celebrations is dispelled by a telegraph from Kharkiv about the arrest of the swindlers, which causes a new wave of confusion and fear. As a new incarnation of Gogol's Mayor, Khoma Bozhy, the chairman of the local executive committee, pathetically laments: "You didn't fire me for delivering a hundred percent of the farm surpluses, or for suppressing banditry at a hundred percent, or at the Polish front. Are you really going to fire me now, comrades of the Central Committee, because of this Khulila?"<sup>17</sup>

Ukrainian literary and theatre critics viewed both plays at their most superficial level, as social satires. Very little has been written about *Otak zahynuv Huska*, and all interpretations of this comedy treat it as a means of "ridiculing philistinism,"<sup>18</sup> "narrow-mindedness, the asinine stubbornness of the bourgeois,"<sup>19</sup> whom the author allegedly considers a class enemy. In her fundamental study of Kulish's dramas, Nataliia Kuziakina interprets Kulish's vacillation on the play's tragic ending as evidence of his hostile attitude toward his protagonist: "Kulish wanted to 'hang' his main character precisely because he had no hopes for him for the future."<sup>20</sup> Even in her thoughtful discussion of the play's psychological

16. *Ibid.*, 266–7.

17. In the original, this barely coherent statement is "Prodravzviorstky 100%—ne znymaly z posady? Bandytiv 100%—ne znymaly? Na polskomu fronti—ne znymaly? Nevzhe teper tovaryshi z TsK ... nevzhe za Khulilu skynete mene?" (*ibid.*, 290).

18. Kuziakina, *Dramaturh Mykola Kulish*, 70.

19. *Ibid.*, 76.

20. Nataliia Kuziakina, *Piesy Mykoly Kulisha* (Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1970), 137.

nuances, Nelli Korniienko—conforming to the “demands of the time”—cannot refrain from stating that the play’s major purpose is to expose the carriers of the “petty bourgeois ideology” who have “learned to adapt to Soviet forms.”<sup>21</sup>

While satire on bourgeois elements (presumably, the “obsolete remnants” of the old system) in the post-revolutionary society was not a new or exceptional phenomenon in Soviet drama,<sup>22</sup> Kulish was undoubtedly the first playwright in the USSR to dare to focus his merciless satire on the Soviet bureaucratic apparatus.<sup>23</sup> The publication of his controversial comedy in book form (1926) provoked a stormy polemic in Ukraine on the permissible limits and forms of satire and even on the genre’s right to exist in the Soviet state.<sup>24</sup> Eventually, in the 1930s, the echoes of this polemic played a role in Kulish’s arrest and execution.<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, in spite of the large number of critical texts devoted to

21. Nelli Korniienko, “Vohon i popil,” *Vitchyzna*, 1968, no. 8: 160.

22. The most interesting example of a fairly similar treatment of this theme in Russian drama is Nikolai Erdman’s *Mandat* (The Mandate), written in 1925.

23. In 1927, when the Moscow Theatre of Satire wanted to produce *Khulii Khuryrna* in a Russian translation, the “political editor” who banned it commented: “For some incomprehensible reason, this play was permitted in Ukraine under the letter A. But in fact, it is an outright defamation of the party-soviet apparatus in Ukraine. The ‘satire’ is without a single saving grace. Soviet Ukraine is [presented as] a total madhouse” (see Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 497–8).

24. One side in the polemic was represented by Mykola Novytsky, who argued that both *Revizor* and *Mertvyie dushi* (Dead Souls, 1842) rejected the surrounding world, while “we do not plan to reject our world in which we are the masters. For this reason *Revizor*, even as vaudeville, is not a work for our time” (“Torba rehotu, abo sto nainovishykh anekdotiv,” *Kultura i pobut* [Kharkiv], 8 January 1927). From this viewpoint, he criticized the (correctly observed) lack of “positive forces” in Kulish’s comedy and stated that contemporary Soviet society generally does not need satire. On the opposite side stood Andrii Richytsky, who did not defend the play itself so much as propagate the idea that precisely “the contemporary period” should be the period of satire (“Deshcho pro epokhu, pro satyru, pro krytyku ta pro klasnu damu,” *Komunist* [Kharkiv], 13 February 1927). A similar discussion on the permitted parameters of satire and even on its right to exist in the USSR took place in Russia, and it was initiated by Vladimir Blium, a staunch opponent of the genre.

25. For example, Ivan Mykytenko, who wrote in 1927: “if the author were not the revolutionary we know him to be, we could accuse him of malicious libel against the periphery of the Soviet regime” (“M. Kulish. *Khulii Khuryrna*,” *Molodniak* [Kharkiv], 1927, no. 2: 106), by 1930 confidently exposed “the oppositional brush of Trotskyism” in *Khulii Khuryrna* (“Na internatsionalnomu fronti,” *Krytyka* [Kharkiv], 1927, no. 11: 1) and launched a premeditated ideological campaign against Kulish and Les Kurbas.

*Khulii Khuryna*, neither the critics in the 1920s and 1930s, nor the authors of later interpretations went beyond the framework of the most superficial reading of the play as a satire on the “functioning of the Soviet apparat under exceptionally stressful conditions in the mid-1920s,”<sup>26</sup> on certain aspects of the Communist cult of heroes in the USSR, or at best on the “slovenly, uncultured, and ignorant”<sup>27</sup> nature of Ukrainian society in the 1920s.

However, the clearly delineated intertextual motifs in both comedies and direct references to works by other authors, which are especially noticeable in comparison to the two former dramas, 97 and *Komuna v stepakh*, in which overt literary quotations (except for parodies of biblical scenes) are virtually absent, hint that these comedies attempt to address more complex and universal problems than it would appear at the first superficial glance. The references to Gogol’s *Revizor* in both comedies, as well as the use of a motif from Ilia Ehrenburg’s novel *Neobychainye pokhozhdeniia Khulio Khurenito i ego uchenikov* (The Extraordinary Adventures of Julio Jurenito and His Disciples, 1922) as the foundation for the plot of *Khulii Khuryna*, should draw the attention of a careful reader and spectator to the body of literary and philosophical issues raised in these two texts and a number of other related works in Russian and Ukrainian literature, primarily from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Certain aspects of these works and, even more importantly, their reception and interpretation in the first decades of the twentieth century point, as we shall see, to religious and quasi-religious ideas and, in particular, to the question of the devil and the actual existence of metaphysical evil in human society.

The devil, demonic power, and mystical fantasy in general were introduced into the realm of Russian literature by Kulish’s countryman, Nikolai Gogol; at first, in an almost concrete form against the background of semi-fantastic Ukrainian landscapes, and later, in a symbolic manner in the ghostly spaces of Saint Petersburg. Thanks largely to Gogol’s tradition, demonic elements appeared in the texts of Russian “Hofmannists” (Aleksandr Veltman, Vladimir Odoevsky, Aleksandr Bestuzhev, and Osip Senkovsky) and in some works of Aleksandr Sukhovo-Kobylin.

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26. Kuziakina, *Dramaturh Mykola Kulish*, 146.

27. Iu[r]ii Smolych, “Dramatychne pysmenstvo nashykh dnev,” *Chervonyi shliakh*, 1927, no. 4: 164–5.

Not without Gogol's influence, the devil entered most of Fedor Dostoevsky's novels, including *Besy* (The Possessed, 1872) and *Bratia Karamazovy* (The Brothers Karamazov, 1880), and their author acknowledged Gogol's importance by stating that "all of us emerged from [Gogol's] *The Overcoat*." From Dostoevsky the devil migrated to the texts of Fedor Sologub and the symbolist poets of the Russian Silver Age, and it was one of the leading figures of the Silver Age, Dmitrii Merezhkovsky—also Kulish's countryman, but completely Russified and assimilated into the imperial culture<sup>28</sup>—who formulated an interpretation of Gogol's work that became predominant in the Russian Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century. The extent to which Merezhkovsky's book *Gogol i chort* (Gogol and the Devil, 1906) determined the general view on Gogol and his work in the first decades of the twentieth century can be gathered from Andrei Bely's disdainful remark of 1934 (made, possibly, under pressure to denounce the émigré and anti-Communist Merezhkovsky, who by then lived in Paris) that "I. Mandelshtam's<sup>29</sup> work (an analysis of Gogol's language), which came out in 1902, was completely overshadowed by D.S. Merezhkovsky's full-throated roar about Chichikov."<sup>30</sup> Kulish, who was intensely interested in the Russian literature of the turn of the century, simply could not have been unfamiliar with this text.

In accordance with his own beliefs and artistic program and on the basis of Gogol's remarks about his texts, Merezhkovsky interpreted Gogol primarily as a mystic and based the main thesis of his book on a sentence from the writer's letter to Stepan Shevirev, written on 27 April 1847 in Naples: "My sole concern has long been that after my work people should have a good hearty laugh at the Devil."<sup>31</sup> However, according to Merezhkovsky, Gogol understood the devil in a peculiar and unconven-

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28. Dmitrii Merezhkovsky's great-grandfather, Fedir Merezhko, was a Cossack officer in the town of Hlukhiv. His son and the writer's grandfather, Ivan, moved to Saint Petersburg at the end of the eighteenth century and, as gentry, enrolled in the Izmailovsk Bodyguard Regiment, changing his Ukrainian surname to the more "respectable" Merezhkovsky. Eventually, he was transferred to Moscow, where the writer's father, Sergei, and Dmitrii himself (1865) were born.

29. Bely refers to the publication I[osyf] Mandelshtam, *O kharaktere gogolevskogo stilia* (Helsinki, 1902).

30. Andrei Bely, *Masterstvo Gogolia* (Moscow and Leningrad: OGIZ, 1934), 291.

31. Dmitry Merezhkovsky, "Gogol and the Devil," in *Gogol from the Twentieth Century: Eleven Essays*, ed. Robert A. Maguire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 57.

tional way: “the Devil is a mystical essence and a real being, in which eternal evil, a denial of God, has been concentrated,” and for this reason the devil is “the denial of the infinite.... The Devil is something that is begun and is left unfinished, but purports to be without beginning or end. The Devil is ... the denial of all heights and depths—eternal planarity, eternal *banality*.” For Merezhkovsky “the sole subject of Gogol’s art is the Devil in just this sense, that is, the Devil as the manifestation of ‘man’s immortal banality’ ... banality *sub specie aeternitatis*.... Gogol was the first to detect invisible evil, most terrible and enduring, not in tragedy, but in the absence of everything tragic; not in power, but in impotence; not in insane extremes, but in all-too-sensible moderation; not in acuity and profundity, but in inanity and planarity, in the banality of all human feelings and thoughts; not in the greatest things, but in the smallest.”<sup>32</sup> From this perspective, the devil’s main task (and talent) is to appear to be what he is not, that is, pretend to be great and powerful. Gogol, according to Merezhkovsky, “was the first to glimpse the Devil without a mask, the first to glimpse his real self, a self that is terrible not because it is extraordinary, but because it is ordinary and banal. He was the first to realize that the self of the Devil is not remote, alien, strange, fantastic, but is, rather, a very common, familiar, real and ‘human, all too human’ self, the self of the crowd, a self such as everyone has, almost our own self at those times when we dare not to be our real selves and consent to be like everyone.”<sup>33</sup>

For Merezhkovsky, the primary incarnations of such a demonic principle in the human form were Gogol’s best-known characters—Khlestakov and Chichikov. They “are two hypostases of eternal and universal evil, of man’s immortal banality.... [B]ehind these two diametrical opposites is a third self which unites them: the self of the Devil ‘without a mask’ ... ‘in his own true form.’”<sup>34</sup> For this reason “Khlestakov is not only a real human being, but a ‘phantom’ as well: ‘he is a phantasmagoric figure,’ Gogol says, ‘who, mendacious deception incarnate, was carried off in the troika Heaven knows where.’”<sup>35</sup> In general, “in both of Gogol’s greatest works—*The Inspector General* and

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32. *Ibid.*, 57–8.

33. *Ibid.*, 59.

34. *Ibid.*, 59.

35. *Ibid.*, 61.

*Dead Souls*—the scenes of a provincial Russian town of the 1820s ... have, aside from the obvious meaning, a certain veiled, eternal, universal, prototypical ... one.... In the ‘slothfulness,’ the emptiness, the banality of man’s world, it is not man but the Devil himself, the ‘father of the lie’ in the form of Khlestakov or Chichikov, who weaves his eternal, universal ‘web of gossip.’”<sup>36</sup>

In their personal life and their literary work, both Gogol and Merezhkovsky were deeply religious. As far as we can judge from his expressions and works, Mykola Kulish was not a religious man (and this, in fact, may be one of the reasons for his profoundly pessimistic worldview). The religious and quasi-religious motifs in his works have a different function.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless the depiction of the nature and manifestations of evil in his plays is strikingly similar to the conceptions of the devil uncovered by Merezhkovsky in the works of Gogol. In both discussed comedies, Kulish turns primarily to the Khlestakov model.

As I have said, the Gogolian devil’s chief weapon is the ability to deceive by simulating or mimicking. The petty official Khlestakov fools the residents of a provincial town by pretending to be an inspector general. In the same way, the con man Sosnovsky in *Khulii Khuryna* takes advantage of the backwardness of the local bureaucrats and impersonates a prominent journalist of *Pravda*.<sup>38</sup> A more interesting and

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36. *Ibid.*, 60–1.

37. In my earlier essay I showed, for example, how the quasi-religious attitude toward the revolutionary struggle reflects a general prism through which Kulish’s characters perceive the world. This is quite evident in the case of the illiterate peasants of his earliest dramas, who have been conditioned to associate the government and its power with the church and the dimension of religious ideology and to treat important events that shape their environment as manifestations of the will of external “higher” powers, which determine their personal fates. But the deeper basis for such an emotional reaction is the fact that the heroes of Kulish’s plays, starting with the commune members in 97 and ending with the individualistic revolutionaries Malakhii (*Narodnyi Malakhii*), Ilko (*Patetychna sonata*), and Romen (*Vichnyi bunt*), project their unconscious aspirations for self-realization and individuation, which, according to Jung, are habitually associated by the human psyche with the numinous and “divine” phenomena (for a more detailed discussion of this, see my “The Concept of Personal Revolution in Mykola Kulish’s Early Plays”), onto external social events. The treatment of quasi-religious motifs in the comedies discussed in this essay sheds light on some further nuances of this problem.

38. But it is important to point out that in both cases the swindlers get the opportunity to assume their fictitious roles not so much through their own active initiative, but thanks to their “victims,” who first mistakenly identify them as an inspector or the journalist Sosnovsky. In a sense, the cheaters too are “victims” of a misunderstanding (the “web of

unusual instance of mimicry and deception is Pierre Kyrpatenko in *Otak zahynuv Huska*. The former revolutionary and even romantic of the revolution,<sup>39</sup> who was linked with the Social Revolutionary Party, but later, adapted to the new circumstances and became a “Red student,” is a less obvious, but nevertheless definite “Khlestakovian type.” Here is how he explains his social position and counsels Huska accordingly: “assume the pose and stand thus, simulating and pretending that you too support the revolution, socialism, etcetera. Do you get my drift? For example, I (*assumes a pose*) declare, ‘Comrades! What did Karl Marx write? Karl Marx wrote that labour and capital are labour and capital, and I have supported this view since long ago.’... The best helm in life is our tongue.... One can sail through any revolution with it, join the RCP,<sup>40</sup> confiscate one’s own building, and rent it out.”<sup>41</sup>

What is important is that Kyrpatenko’s desire “to adapt to circumstances” is connected with the deeper problem of his lack of a definite identity, evident already in his changing political affiliations and his general efforts to blend into society and be “like everybody.” Merezhkovsky stated that “man tries to be something other than what he is, because he does not wish to be, he cannot be, he should not be—nothing,”<sup>42</sup> and Kyrpatenko is precisely a case of inner emptiness and the absence of a definite self, with the resulting inclination to mimick, lie pathologically, and manipulate people in various ways similar to Khlestakov’s. The scene at the peeping hole in the wall through which the Huskas spy on their taciturn lodger may serve as a suitable example of this. At first Kyrpatenko calls the boring of the hole a “vile” act, but upon learning that this was done by Huska, he immediately changes the “truth” of his words and calls it a “noble action.” When Huska, who is struck by this change of opinion, asks, “How are we to understand on your part what you said

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gossip” woven by the demonic power), except that they succeed in exploiting the situation to their own advantage. Besides other things, this confirms Merezhkovsky’s view of “the weak devil,” who only pretends to be powerful.

39. He treats the Bolsheviks with derision, saying: “Are they really revolutionaries? They are usurpers ... demagogues, etc.” (Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 211), and he explains to Huska: “Revolution is like March, like a flood of national feeling, freedom on a golden ship, not like a disheveled overcoat, not like a cigarette in the mouth, not like a bent bayonet.... Oh, if only we had a true, pure revolution!” (ibid., 210–11).

40. Russian Communist Party.

41. Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 229.

42. “Gogol and the Devil,” 62.

before? *That is who exactly are you?*" (my emphasis—M.R.S.), Kyrpatenko can only reply to this by juggling words: "Previously, on my part towards you there was what was on his part towards me. But I handled things on my part in such a way that things on his part towards me turned out as what there is on my part towards you.... But in fact, I on my part am towards you as you on your part are towards me."<sup>43</sup> The obvious purpose of this mind-bending wordplay is to confuse Huska and distract him from the main question—not Kyrpatenko's honesty and truthfulness as much as the reality and integrity of his sense of identity. Under Kyrpatenko's personality yawns an emptiness, which, desiring "not to be nothing," he attempts to cover with a persona "such as everyone has." By contrast, because of his sharply delineated, albeit rather petty and negative, personality, Huska is incapable of "learning how to adapt to Soviet forms." Willy-nilly he remains true to his personality,<sup>44</sup> and his "backwardness, asinine stubbornness"<sup>45</sup> appear quite human and humane against the background of the "demonic" indefiniteness of the Khlestakovian Kyrpatenko.

Kyrpatenko's association with one of the hypostases of the devil is encoded in his rather unusual surname. In Ukrainian folk tradition, the words *kyrpa* or *kyrpata* (pug-nosed) were used to refer to the personification of death, but there is also a direct literary association linking these words to the devil. Etymologically, Kyrpatenko is Kyrpaty's son, and this points to the novel *Zapysky Kyrpatoho Mefistofelia* (Notes of Pug-nosed Mephistopheles, 1917) by Volodymyr Vynnychenko, whose works Kulish read carefully and alluded to in his plays.<sup>46</sup> The undeniable similarity between the biographies and personalities of Vynnychenko's Iakiv Mykhailiuk, known under the nickname of Pug-nosed Mephistopheles,<sup>47</sup>

43. Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 214.

44. On Kyrpatenko's advice to pretend to support the Soviet regime, he shouts, "I cannot pretend to do so...! My tongue is my enemy.... By the way, I talk in my sleep, and asleep I berate the Bolsheviks" (*ibid.*, 229).

45. This is how Huska was labelled by Soviet critics, but Gogol's epithet "a man in his way not at all stupid," originally used for the Mayor in *Revizor*, would certainly be a more appropriate description.

46. For example, in his memoirs, entitled *Rozpovid pro nespokii* (Tale about Unrest, 1968), Iurii Smolych, who was well acquainted with Kulish and his work, states that Kulish borrowed the motif of "reforming man," which became the basis of *Narodnyi Malakhii*, from Vynnychenko (Iurii Smolych, *Tvory v vosmy tomakh* [Kyiv: Dnipro, 1986], 7: 61).

47. In Merezhkovsky's book, the Mephistophelean hypostasis is listed first among

and Kulish's Pierre Kyrpatenko leaves little room for doubt that they were meant to be "spiritual" father and son. Both are former revolutionaries and romantics of the revolution. According to the testimony of a party colleague, Mykhailiuk was "the most honest, the most decent, the most..., the most..., the most passionate and the most dedicated"<sup>48</sup> revolutionary. But having become disillusioned after the defeat of the Revolution of 1905 and "tired of being the night moth,"<sup>49</sup> he converted to a predator-lawyer, who "lives on the carrion of the law and the stupidity, helplessness, and avarice of his victims."<sup>50</sup> He treats not only his former ideals but also the fundamental laws of morality with a contempt and disrespect that are more overt and conscious than Kyrpatenko's, for "what is morality? Morality is a pink cosmetic powder [sprinkled] on the laws of nature."<sup>51</sup> While it would seem that Kyrpatenko persuades Huska to go against his convictions<sup>52</sup> and to pretend to support the new regime out of a justified concern for his security, the real underlying motive of his actions is exposed in the intentionally demoralizing behaviour of his "spiritual father," the Pug-nosed Mephistopheles, who teaches former idealists "to ridicule what they had previously worshiped."<sup>53</sup> Both "Mephistopheleses" treat the concept of truth with a similar cynical relativism. While Kyrpatenko proposes that Huska "join the RCP, confiscate [his] own building, and rent it out," Mykhailiuk induces a former party colleague who has returned from exile "to go to a certain town and persuade a certain man that there is no such thing as absolute truth and that the world is nothing but our imagination. To put it in simple terms, my dear, we need this man to depict certain things at a trial in the way we imagine them."<sup>54</sup> Finally, Mykhailiuk's candid declarations, such as "Isn't

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various demonic forms and is linked, as in Gogol, Kulish, and Vynnychenko, with merciless ridicule and laughter (Merezhkovsky, "Gogol and the Devil," 59).

48. Volodymyr Vynnychenko, *Zapysky Kyrpatoho Mefistofelia* (Kyiv-Leipzig, n.d.), 42.

49. *Ibid.*, 216.

50. *Ibid.*, 26.

51. *Ibid.*, 192.

52. The religious comparisons used by Huska to describe everyday aspects of his former life show how deeply rooted and fundamental his habits and sentiments were and how difficult it was for him to renounce them. For example, "in our institution sat thirty civil servants, and the silence—you could hear the buzzing of the flies. A small lamp burned continuously. We chipped in to pay for the oil. This was not work but a liturgy! One would return home from it as from a church" (Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 211).

53. Vynnychenko, *Zapysky*, 14.

54. *Ibid.*, 9.

it gratifying to induce someone to do a terrible thing?"<sup>55</sup> and "I enjoy enticing a person to the very summit and then pushing him off. And the moment when horror gleams in the eyes widened with hope and excitement is the most rewarding,"<sup>56</sup> shed more light on the deeper motivations of Kyrpatenko's advice to Huska to escape to an uninhabited island, particularly since, irritated by the advances of the latter's daughters, he abandons the family right at the time when Huska is finally filled with "hope and excitement" and, in departing, he curses the Huskas and sends them "to the devil's mother."<sup>57</sup>

Incidentally, the escape to nature also links Kyrpatenko directly with Khlestakov. When Khlestakov confesses his love to the Mayor's wife and she, pretending not to understand, says "but allow me to observe that I am in a certain sense ... married," the cheater instantly finds a solution: "That doesn't matter! Love knows naught of such distinctions; as Karamzin said: 'The laws condemn it.' We will flee to some happy dale beside a running brook."<sup>58</sup> From Merezhkovsky's viewpoint, these words mean that "the laws of man condemn our free love, but we shall withdraw from mankind into nature, where other laws, eternal laws, hold sway."<sup>59</sup> In Kulish's play Kyrpatenko literally urges Huska to flee from the revolution "to some happy dale beside a running brook," that is, "to a quiet, uninhabited, invisible island"<sup>60</sup> in the marshes where the human laws of the revolutionary regime supposedly do not hold sway and, in general, as the unabashed group flirtation scenes indicate, there is little "pink cosmetic powder" of morality sprinkled on "the laws of nature."

However, the fact that the cautious and prudent Huska consents to such an obviously temporary and irresponsible step shows that he is utterly confused and dazed. No less baffled by the unusual situation are the bureaucrats headed by Khoma Bozhy in *Khulii Khuryna*, people who also "in their own way, are not at all stupid." At first Khoma Bozhy resists the *Revizor* scenario. When the false Sosnovsky appears for the first time at the executive committee, Bozhy humiliates his subordinates: "Well, what's happening? Why the commotion? Is he a governor or the

55. *Ibid.*, 52.

56. *Ibid.*, 4.

57. Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 243.

58. Gogol, *The Government Inspector*, 96.

59. "Gogol and the Devil," 66.

60. Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 231.

old regime that you have leaped three metres high?"<sup>61</sup> And yet soon he himself fully succumbs to the collective hysteria. These situations accurately reflect the principles of the "devilish" deception in Gogol's texts. In the finale of *Revizor* the characters themselves cannot comprehend the causes of their former "blindness." "If my life depended on it, I could not say how it happened. It's as though our minds were befogged or *the devil confounded us*"<sup>62</sup> (my emphasis—M.R.S.). In Merezhkovsky's opinion the dynamic of such situations is brought about by causes independent of human beings: a demonic power stuns people and maliciously torments and mocks them.<sup>63</sup> Hence Gogol's characters "have a sense of being enveloped in a stupefying and soporific fog, a fantasy-mirage created by the Devil,"<sup>64</sup> for, as has been said, "it is not man but the Devil himself, the 'father of the lie' in the form of Khlestakov or Chichikov, who weaves his eternal, universal 'web of gossip.'"

Kulish's characters display an analogous reaction of disbelief and confusion, and Kulish clearly shows that it is not so much the lack of knowledge—or at least not only that—but some incomprehensible state of disorientation and the loss of common sense that is the cause of all the misadventures. For example, the editor of the newspaper in *Khulii Khuryyna* knew Ilia Ehrenburg's work and his fictional character Julio Jurenito and should never have become involved in the absurd search for the grave of a non-existing person, and yet, since "his mind was befogged," he surrendered along with others to the collective deception and even "penned a lead article in the paper" about the hero-teacher Khulii Khuryyna. Eventually, he complains, "Some idiot of a writer wrote

61. *Ibid.*, 263.

62. Gogol. *The Government Inspector*, 121.

63. In general, one of the devil's favourite occupations in Gogol's works is to transform people into fools and expose them to ridicule. For this reason Gogol, according to Merezhkovsky, tries to use laughter for the opposite purpose: "Gogol the artist investigates the nature of the mystical essence in the light of laughter; Gogol the man contends with this real being using laughter as a weapon: Gogol's laughter is man's struggle with the Devil" ("Gogol and the Devil," 57). At the end of the 1930s, after Kulish's death, a similar idea was expressed by Dmytro Chyzhevsky, who, besides Merezhkovsky, was perhaps the most perceptive interpreter of the demonic theme in Gogol. In his essay "O *Shineli* Gogolia" (About Gogol's *Overcoat*, 1938) he wrote: "humor is Gogol's special way of struggling against insignificance, against a demonic nothingness" (Dmitry Chizhevsky, "About Gogol's 'Overcoat,'" in *Gogol from the Twentieth Century*, ed. Maguire, 321).

64. Merezhkovsky, "Gogol and the Devil," 71.

the novel *Julio Jurenito* and I read it ... yes, I read it. Then two idiots arrived and stirred things up so that the results.... Well, you can see for yourself what the results were.”<sup>65</sup> We can imagine that Huska, coming to his senses after his misadventure, will also reflect with disbelief and horror on the causes of his incomprehensibly reckless behaviour.

Yet in both Kulish and Gogol the phenomenon of the deceptive “demonic fog,” which transforms people who “in their own way, are not at all stupid” into fools deprived of common sense, is not completely independent of the victims, because it occurs under certain circumstances they themselves create<sup>66</sup> and in an environment of particular feelings and mindset. The essential feeling that allows the devil to deceive and mock a person is the latter’s uncontrolled fear. In his article “Strakhi i uzhasy Rossii” (The Fears and Horrors of Russia) in *Vybranye mesta z perezpiski s druziami* (Selected Passages from Correspondence with Friends, 1847), ostensibly writing about the “Egyptian darkness” of biblical times, Gogol describes some of his contemporaries in the following way: “all feeling, all incentive, all strength perished within them; only fear remained.”<sup>67</sup> The fear of the omnipotence, but, at the same time, complete arbitrariness of the tsar’s power and the anxiety of having to account for their past offences prompt provincial officials in *Revizor* to fall under the spell of a swindler who happens to pass through their town. A similar fear determines Khoma Bozhy’s and his underlings’ behaviour, and the entire personality of Huska, who “is frightened to death by the revolution,” is defined by fear. Besides fear there are other features and attitudes that make people vulnerable to the “demonic fog.” On the one hand, it is a Khlestakovian “extraordinary lightness of thought,”<sup>68</sup> which reduces the most profound dilemmas to primitive egotistic desires (“that’s what life is for—to gather the flowers of pleasure”<sup>69</sup>), and an inclination to lying, gossiping, and misrepresenting reality, which Kulish depicts again and again.<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, it is a Chichikovian aspiration to “a modi-

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65. Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 290.

66. After all, it is the “victims” who first give Khlestakov and Sosnovsky an incentive to assume fictitious identities.

67. Merezhkovsky, “Gogol and the Devil,” 72.

68. As a rule, English translators of Gogol’s play render this line inadequately as “a wonderfully ready wit.” See, for example, *The Government Inspector*, 60.

69. *Ibid.*, 55.

70. To mention just one example, Ptashykha’s hyperbolized interpretation of the

cum of plenty for spirit and body, ‘peaceful prosperity,’”<sup>71</sup> when “instead of felicity,” a man strives for well-being and “instead of nobility, propriety—that is to say, an external and relative virtue;”<sup>72</sup> when he strives for a formal conformity with social norms, but, essentially, renounces his own authentic truth<sup>73</sup> and adopts “a self such as everyone has,” embodying thus “man’s immortal banality.”<sup>74</sup>

In the juxtaposition of the two forces in the finale of *Revizor*—the townsfolk, who are possessed by fear of the coming of a real inspector, and Khlestakov, who “is carried off in the troika into an indeterminate expanse, into the void ... into nothing,”<sup>75</sup>—Merezhkovsky perceived a metaphor of the future fate and unavoidable crisis of imperial Russia. “Can it really be that the petrified Russian polity ... is all of Russia, past and present? That Khlestakov, flying off to the Devil’s domain somewhere, is the Russia to be? Massive heaviness and diaphanous lightness—the actual banality of what is now and the phantasmal banality of what will be—these are two equally lamentable ends that are being pursued by Russia, two equally dreadful roads that lead to the Devil, to emptiness, to nihilism, to nothingness.”<sup>76</sup> As a careful reading of his works shows, Kulish saw the problems of the Soviet society of the 1920s

fragments of conversations she eavesdropped upon convinces the church community that Khulii Khuryna was a holy teacher.

71. Merezhkovsky, “Gogol and the Devil,” 80.

72. *Ibid.*, 81.

73. In Kulish’s plays, especially in *Khulio Khuryna*, the renunciation of their authentic personal traits by the characters is rendered in a masterly way at the level of language itself. Criticizing the comedy from the ideological perspective, Mykola Novytsky correctly observed that “whenever they talk about anything ‘serious,’ the representatives of the Soviet government invariably speak in some kind of idiotic language, which consists of twisted cliché speeches and proclamations” (“Torba rehotu”).

74. In his essay on Gogol’s *Overcoat*, Chyzhevsky points out and discusses two more key traits that make a person vulnerable to the influence of the stupefying “demonic fog.” The first is a concentration on and a strong emotional attachment to the external and material aspect of life, which are transitory and inevitably condemned to destruction. The second is the absence of an inner “immovable anchor,” which for Gogol is equivalent to God and faith in divine providence, and which enables a person to find his one right place in life and to overcome the most severe existential trials (for more detail, see Chizhevsky, “About Gogol’s ‘Overcoat,’” 315–21). Both of these traits undoubtedly coincide with the features of the main characters in Kulish’s comedies.

75. Merezhkovsky, “Gogol and the Devil,” 75.

76. *Ibid.*

largely in the same way, although from a somewhat different vantage point. In his comedies the propitious environment for the confusing “demonic fog” is formed by what Iurii Smolych describes as the “slovenly, uncultured, and ignorant nature” of the “old” Ukrainian society. And at the same time, the prophet of the “new” Ukrainian order, Malakhii Stakanchyk of *Narodnyi Malakhii*, sees in a vision that on his path “in the azure mist glimmers some kind of new Jerusalem and further on azure valleys, azure mountains, again valleys, azure rains, downpours, and finally an azure nothing.”<sup>77</sup>

The correspondence between parallel themes, motifs, and devices in Gogol’s and Kulish’s works and particularly the presence of the “demonic dimension” in the latter’s comedies, closely reflecting Merezhkovsky’s interpretation of Gogol’s “demonology,” raises the question of why Kulish, as an unbeliever (by all indications) writing in an age in which the Bolshevik victory established the apparent hegemony of atheistic materialism, would turn to quasi-religious semantics and symbolism. One reason, already mentioned, is that in this way Kulish, as a master of psychological nuance, intentionally reflects the psychology of his characters, who perceive the world in religious categories. However, there is also another aspect of the problem, which can be brought to light only by a closer examination of the literary process in the 1920s. The approach we find in Kulish and particularly the use of demonic motifs was no coincidence or exception at the time. Although based on a different worldview and creative temperament, a similar transplantation of Gogolian themes into post-revolutionary reality can be found, for example, in the early short stories of Mikhail Bulgakov.<sup>78</sup> The title of his first collection, *Diavoliada* (Diaboliad, 1925) and the content of its texts clearly place the devil at the very centre of action, while one of the stories, “Pokhozhdeniia Chichikova” (Adventures of Chichikov), in which Chichikov flourishes under NEP in the USSR thanks to his imaginative fraudulent schemes, unequivocally (and in accordance with Merezhkovsky’s theories) associates Chichikov with the devil. Before that the devil appeared to Sinebriukhov, a character created by another of Gogol’s

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77. Kulish, *Tvory*, 2: 53.

78. The literary polemic between Kulish and Bulgakov is not surprising even at this early stage. Eventually, in 1929, Kulish will write his masterpiece, *Patetychna sonata*, as a response to the performances of Bulgakov’s *Dni Turbinykh* (The Days of the Turbins, 1926) at the Moscow Art Theatre.

followers, Mikhail Zoshchenko. The phantasmagorias of Vsevolod Ivanov are saturated with the demonic spirit, albeit in a somewhat different atmosphere. In Ukrainian literature of the time, the devil is tacitly present in a string of Mykola Khvylovy's<sup>79</sup> works, including "Pudel" (The Poodle, 1923), "Ja: Romantyka" (My Self: Romantica, 1924), and "Sanatoriina zona" (Sanatorium Zone, 1924). In many respects Kulish's plays are in close harmony with the works of these and other writers who, in spite of their apparent socially engaged tone, did not fit into the framework of the Marxist class theory and used the language of religion or non-canonized mysticism.

This literary trend arose out of the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary moods and attitudes in the Russian Empire and persisted in the USSR well into the 1920s. It is hardly necessary today to remind readers of the mystical foundations of the key works of the Russian Silver Age, beginning with Vladimir Solov'ev's "Kratkaia povest ob antikhriste" (A Short Story of the Antichrist, 1900), through the works of Merezhkovsky, Zinaida Gippius, Maksimilian Voloshin, and others, to Andrei Bely's *Peterburg* (Petersburg, 1911) and Aleksandr Blok's "Dvenadtsat" (The Twelve, 1918), in which the revolution is viewed as a struggle between the archetypes of Christ on the one hand, and Antichrist, Lucifer, and/or Ahriman on the other. At the same time, the crucial importance of various mystical currents in the formation and self-interpretation of the revolutionary processes in the Russian Empire, including Ukraine, in the first decades of the twentieth century remains almost unnoticed and insufficiently studied by literary scholars, culturologists, and historians. The only Ukrainian-language study that analyzes this subject specifically and in detail, and reveals the mystical roots of Khvylovy's worldview is Leonid Pliushch's *Ioho taiemnytsia, abo "prekrasna lozha" Khvylovoho* (His Secret or Khvylovy's Beautiful Lodge, 2006). Pliushch points out that the "psychoideology of the revolutionary period" was saturated with mystical conceptions and that "not only the intelligentsia was spellbound by them." He draws the following picture of the "collective consciousness" of the time:

The intelligentsia's gnosticism of various sorts intermixed with the belief systems of peasant and townsfolk sects in one premonition and anticipation of the coming of the realm of freedom, equality, and

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79. Khvylovy had an immense influence on Kulish, especially on his cultural-political views and his position in the cultural discussions of the 1920s.

brotherhood under the hegemony of a Messiah, Supreme Leader, Prophet, Nation, or Class and under the slogans of the Third Testament, the Fifth Gospel, the Third Rome, the New Jerusalem, or Israel.... The revolutionary, as well as ... the counter-revolutionary psychoideology were a mixture of gnosticism, khlystism, Fedorovism, anthroposophy, theosophy, Nietzscheanism, Marxism, and Christian socialism. Symbolism and post-symbolism merely formulated all the eschatological and chiliastic notions and premonitions in words.<sup>80</sup>

Pliushch shows in his book not only that “these moods of the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary period lie at the very surface of Khvylovy’s works, even his ‘rationalized’ publicist texts in which he had to use the official terminology and argumentation,” but also that his ideological opponents, who certainly were no mystics, often used a language peppered with religious symbols. The Israeli researchers Maia Kaganskaia and Zeev Bar-Sella arrive at analogous conclusions. Pointing out anthroposophical motifs in Boris Pasternak’s poems, they state: “we are not saying that Pasternak was an anthroposophist. On the contrary, Pasternak was not an anthroposophist. However, from the end of the 1910s to the beginning of the 1930s the intelligentsia communicated in the language of anthroposophy, and interpreted and encoded reality by its means.”<sup>81</sup> This shows that, in spite of the victory of Bolshevik materialism, the mystical or quasi-mystical perception of the world remained dominant at a semiconscious level and constituted an essential system of artistic and intellectual communication.

A careful reading of Kulish’s plays, including the two early comedies discussed here, shows that he was very sensitive to these moods of his times even before he met and befriended Les Kurbas, whose interest in mysticism<sup>82</sup> must have had an effect on Kulish later. Like Pasternak, without being a mystic, he used “mystical language” and symbols to encode and, at the same time, to depict and reveal reality, including the reality of evil. Both comedies, and particularly *Khulii Khuryna*, clearly

80. Leonid Pliushch, *Ioho taiemnytsia, abo “prekrasna lozha” Khvylovoho* (Kyiv: Fakt and CIUS Press, 2006), 135.

81. Maia Kaganskaia and Zeev Bar-Sella, *Master Gambs i Margarita* (Tel-Aviv: Kn-vo Moskva-Ierusalim, 1984), 96.

82. In particular, Kurbas was familiar with Rudolf Steiner’s anthroposophy and had some personal contacts with Steiner in the 1910s. For more about Steiner’s influence on Kurbas’s theories of the theatre, see Nelli Korniienko, *Les Kurbas: Repetytsiia maibutnoho* (Kyiv: Fakt, 1998), 16–24.

belong to the wider and specific context of Soviet satirical literature with mystical and demonic subtexts. The first notable work of this kind was Ehrenburg's novel about the "great provocateur" Julio Jurenito, to whom Pliushch refers as "one of the first 'merry Antichrists' in Russian literature."<sup>83</sup> The best-known Soviet "merry Antichrist" of the 1920s was "the great schemer" Ostap Bender in Ilia Ilf (Fainzilberg) and E. Petrov's (Evgenii Kataev's) novels *Dvenadtsat stulev* (The Twelve Chairs, 1928) and *Zolotoi telenok* (The Golden Calf, 1931). Besides its obvious connection with Ehrenburg's novel, Kulish's *Khulii Khuryyna* also has a link with the future works of his compatriots from the Odesa region, Ilf and Petrov, because Sosnovsky can be taken as a precursor of Ostap Bender.<sup>84</sup> Another precursor of this character is Bulgakov's Ametistov in the play *Zoichina kvartira*<sup>85</sup> (Zoya's Apartment, 1925). In Ukrainian literature, Khvylovy created "Gogolian" "demonic" characters of the Khlestakov and Chichikov type in his satirical stories "Revizor" and "Ivan Ivanovych" (1929) respectively. The final chord in this series of virtuoso satirical works in the USSR was Bulgakov's *Master i Margarita* (The Master and Margarita).

There are no doubts about the demonic dimension of *Master i Margarita*. The plot of the novel is built around the arrival of the devil Voland and his hellish underlings in Moscow in the 1920s and 1930s. The mystical or quasi-mystical dimension of the novel is so central that some scholars have named the text "the Gospel according to Michael."<sup>86</sup> The case is somewhat different with Ilf and Petrov's novels and Kulish's

83. Pliushch, *Ioho taiemnytsia*, 797.

84. Nataliia Kuziakina pointed this out at the beginning of the 1960s when she stated that "Sosnovsky in some way reminds one of Bender" (*Dramaturh Mykola Kulish*, 83), and eventually formulated this more clearly, saying that the two con men and the innkeeper Khuna Shtil'shtein "should be seen as the humble precursors of Ostap Bender" (*Piesy Mykoly Kulisha*, 152). In the 1990s, T. Sverbylova added that "M. Kulish not only discovered the theme of the two swindlers who pretend to be party big shots and deceive the whole town before Ilf and Petrov, but also developed it more boldly, for his heroes ... no longer have any respect for the party disciplinary code" (*Istoriia ukrainskoi literatury XX stolittia* [Kyiv: Lybid, 1993], 1: 690).

85. On the possible influence of Bulgakov and his works on the shaping of the character of Ostap Bender, see M[arietta] Chudakova, "Arkhiv M.A. Bulgakova: Materialy dlia tvorcheskoi biografii pisatel'ia," *Zapiski Otdela rukopisei Gosudarstvennoi biblioteki SSSR im. Lenina* (Moscow, 1976), 46.

86. See, for example, I.F. Belza, "Genealogiia Mastera i Margarity," *Kontekst. 1978* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978), 156–248.

two comedies, because, at first glance, we are dealing here with social satire about Soviet fraudsters, albeit of the “Khlestakov-Chichikov” type. According to Merezhkovsky, this indicates a demonic dimension. Maia Kaganskaia and Zeev Bar-Sella’s analysis of Ilf and Petrov’s texts reveals that both of their novels are saturated with mystical and Masonic symbols and that Bender not only exhibits numerous similarities with Voland (which is not surprising given Ilf’s contacts with Bulgakov in Moscow), but is also connected with both the Antichrist and the devil by virtue of his age (thirty-three) and origin (Turkish subject, a hint at Christ’s Syrian roots), through the manifest likeness of his Caucasian travels (in *Dvenadtsat stulev*) to Mikhail Lermontov’s *Demon* (The Demon), his work in the supply office of horns and hoofs, and his involvement in the “apocalyptic” fire of Vorona sloboda (*Zolotoi telenok*).

In Ilf and Petrov’s novels, as in *Master i Margarita* and, to a large extent but not completely, in Kulish’s comedies, we are dealing with so to say “a minor devil” (*diabolus minor*), a playful joker, tempter, liar, and cheater who, however, is sometimes rather positive and likeable, and can bring about the revival of the human spirit. At best this is the Goethian “spirit of denial,” whose importance in life is recognized by God Himself in the “Prologue in Heaven” in *Faust*: “For Man’s activity soon tires, / (A lazy being at the best) / And sting and spur requires. / In indolent enjoyment Man would live, / And this companion, whom I therefore give, / Goads, urges, drives—is devil and cannot rest.”<sup>87</sup> In particular, Bulgakov’s Voland belongs to the tradition of Goethe’s Mephistopheles, who desiring evil, does good, because his influence leads to a string of positive solutions. It is precisely Mephistopheles (related to Voland, Bender, Sosnovsky, and Kyrpatenko) whom God recognizes as the least harmful of the demonic forms: “Of the Spirits of Denial, the pleasan-test.”<sup>88</sup>

The case of Julio Jurenito is somewhat different and needs to be examined more closely because of his direct link with Kulish’s comedy. Although he is the precursor of both Bender and Voland, Julio differs considerably from these “light-hearted” demonic characters. The narrator of the novel recognizes him as the devil in the first scene, for “a pair of small horns rose steeply from the locks above his temples, while the coat

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87. *Faust by Goethe* (London: Harrap, 1985), 33.

88. *Ibid.*

stroke vainly to cover a pointed, pugnaciously upraised tail,"<sup>89</sup> but this first impression is said to be incorrect. Julio denies even the very existence of the devil: "I know who you think I am. But he does not exist."<sup>90</sup> Here is his first essential difference from Voland and Bender. Voland repeatedly confirms the existence of God and the devil, while Bender in the scene of the struggle with the Catholic priests for Adam Kozlovich's soul (*Zolotoi telenok*) restricts himself to the standard demonic denial of God. Julio's denial of the reality of the devil (that is, in light of his undeniably demonic character,<sup>91</sup> the reality of himself) indicates a deeper level of demonic "deception," which I shall discuss below.

Julio's Antichrist features are vividly brought out in the novel: from the role of a teacher with his (albeit only seven) apostles, who comes into the world to cast doubt on the foundations of the established socio-religious order, through his doctrines, which perversely parody Christ's sermons,<sup>92</sup> through the distorted imitations of Christ as He is depicted in the classic works of literature,<sup>93</sup> to the arbitrary self-sacrifice when Julio, who has become "sick of the whole thing, utterly and completely sick of it,"<sup>94</sup> decides (since he "cannot die for an idea"<sup>95</sup>) to die for boots and departs with this purpose for Konotop in Ukraine, and the narrator unambiguously asserts that this trip "was the way of the Cross."<sup>96</sup> Besides this, some of Julio's features are simply degenerate and pathologically criminalistic.<sup>97</sup> And yet this complex character can

89. Ilya Ehrenburg, *Julio Jurenito* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1962), 17.

90. *Ibid.*, 18.

91. Shocked by the nihilism of his views, the narrator soon cries out, "You haven't got a tail, but you are *he* all right!" (*Ibid.*, 19).

92. Here is one of numerous examples: "if you want to learn to hate men as they should be hated, you must love children, love them dearly. Defile the sanctums, break the commandments, laugh, laugh loudly when laughing is forbidden, and with your laughter, your torment, your fire, clear a place for him who is to come, so that there should be emptiness to receive that which is empty" (*ibid.*, 49).

93. I have in mind, for example, Ehrenburg's parody of Dostoevsky's portrayal of Christ in the legend of the Grand Inquisitor in *Bratia Karamazovy*, which takes place in the scene of Julio's conversation with the leader of the Bolsheviks, who is clearly modelled on Lenin.

94. Ehrenburg, *Julio Jurenito*, 295.

95. *Ibid.*, 296.

96. *Ibid.*, 298.

97. Contemporary psychologists would consider the fact that "as a five-year-old boy

hardly be fitted into a narrow, exclusively negative framework. His inflexibly straightforward manner of thought and expression, which, regardless of everything, brings his ideas and actions to their logical culmination, exposes and uncovers, rather than promotes various nihilistic tendencies while his paradoxical philosophy mockingly rejects not only the surrounding world, but also itself, the canons of his own beliefs and deeds.

This “exposing” aspect of Julio’s words and actions is visible, for example, in his relations with the Bolshevik regime. In general, in spite of the narrator’s assurances, Julio can hardly be regarded as “a man without convictions.”<sup>98</sup> In contrast to Bender and even Voland, who, despite their non-conformist behaviour, are essentially opportunists without a clear direction, Julio not only clearly understands the consequences of his deeds but also, by all indications, has a “program” of action.<sup>99</sup> In accordance with this program, in contrast to the other “merry Antichrists” who were directly or indirectly opposed to the Soviet regime, he attempts to establish active cooperation with the Bolsheviks because he sees their “mission” as being consonant with his own in spite of the fact that he assesses their actual activity as insufficiently radical.<sup>100</sup> Facing possible execution, he addresses a Cheka agent and expresses (in 1922) principles that a decade hence will be realized in practice by the diabolical Stalinist regime:

As to the revolution, it’s very near to my heart, and I may say that for 31 years of my life I have occupied myself, by preference, with destruction, subversion, infiltration and other purifying operations.... You are destroying freedom: that is why I salute you.... For the present “freedom” is a counter-revolutionary concept.... If you don’t shoot me I’ll collaborate with you to the full: that is, I shall destroy beauty and

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he sawed off a kitten’s head with a bread knife, wishing to find out the difference between life and death” (ibid., 23), as evidence of a pathological criminal personality. This motif links Jurenito with the demonic Smerdiakov in *Bratia Karamazovy*, who in his childhood also tortured kittens.

98. Ehrenburg, *Julio Jurenito*, 10.

99. The basic postulate of this program becomes known at the beginning of the book when in the polemic on the nature of reality and the purpose of human life, the narrator asks, “but surely it’s possible to destroy the house?” (that is, the world), and Julio replies, “A perfectly legitimate desire. Let’s do it” (ibid., 21).

100. For example, he complains about the Bolshevik supervisors of culture: “O, hypocrites!... They have been called upon to destroy, yet, among the ruins, crowbar in hand, they are playing at being archeologists or, at the very least, antiquarians” (ibid., 232).

freedom of thought, feeling and action wherever I can in the name of a unified, lawful and correct organization of mankind.... Your mission is a great and complicated one: to accustom men to their fetters until they come to regard them as a mother's tender caress. To achieve this ... you must create a new mystique for the new slavery.<sup>101</sup>

Allegedly, this slavery and the period “when thousands of hands are stretching out for a stick, and millions voluptuously prepare their backs for the beating” are the inevitable stage on the road to the day “when no one will need the stick any longer.”<sup>102</sup> As the narrator explains, “Julio Jurenito taught us to hate the present and, in order that our hatred should be strong and hot, he opened before our thrice astonished eyes a chink of the door leading to the great and inescapable tomorrow.”<sup>103</sup> His insightful exposure of the essence of the Bolshevik “mission” is combined with a frighteningly prophetic prediction of their actual future deeds, including the massive extermination of populations,<sup>104</sup> the reduction of the ideas of individual freedom and self-respect to absurdities, and the simultaneous construction of “a new mystique for the new slavery” by means of official propaganda, cynically referred to as “proletarian culture.” Stalinist regime’s actual crimes were also justified as the necessary demands of the road to “the great and inescapable tomorrow,” the road that in Dmitrii Merezhkovsky’s eyes was Khlestakov’s road “to the Devil, to emptiness, to nihilism, to nothingness,” and in Kulish’s eyes, Malakhii’s road into “the azure nothing.”

These aspects of *Julio Jurenito* usher the reader into a different dimension of the demonic, which neither Bulgakov nor If and Petrov directly touched upon, but which appears tacitly in Kulish’s comedies—the frightening dimension of the “great devil” (*diabolus maior*), no longer the playful cheater, prankster, and cunning Mephistopheles, the “pleasantest” of the “spirits of negation.” This is a dimension of a power that does not fit into anthropomorphic personifications,<sup>105</sup> but remains

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101. *Ibid.*, 236–9.

102. *Ibid.*, 218.

103. *Ibid.*, 10.

104. As though foreshadowing (or perhaps inspiring) Stalin’s words, one of Julio’s students declares: “between killing one weak-minded old man and ten million people for the good of mankind there is only an arithmetical difference” (*ibid.*, 199).

105. In the 1920s, the intellectuals who communicated in the language of anthroposophy were inclined to connect the sphere of *diabolus maior* not so much with Lucifer, the well-

concealed while at the same time it is perceptible and very effective.<sup>106</sup> Julio conveys a sense of this sphere of the demonic when he explains to his disciples the outbreak of the First World War: "they are working for a master without a face, without a spirit, unborn yet infinitely cruel in the womb. And you must work for him too!"<sup>107</sup>

The *diabolus maior* is a spirit of profound negation of all aspects of meaning and experience known to man, which the Polish poet Mieczysław Jastrun defined as follows:

The Satan of the twentieth century would need to be the personification of the hell of the concentration camps, of the confutation of all world-views and of the meaning of life; he would need to embody not only the negation of all values, but something much worse and more insidious: an inversion of the meanings of words, along with coercion to enforce public recognition of primary meanings. In other words the Satan of the Apocalypse and the Satan of complete duplicity bordering on the absurd.<sup>108</sup>

The reality that embodies the principles of this "complete duplicity" includes the denial of the reality of evil, that is, the denial, as in Jurenito's case, of the devil's existence, the trivialization of the issue, and the forced persuasion of oneself and others that the profoundly abnormal conditions of evil are perfectly natural and acceptable. Thus, it was precisely during the Stalinist terror of the 1930s, when masses of innocent people were arrested and murdered every day, often on the basis of denunciations by their closest friends or relatives, when millions died during the Holodomor of 1932–33, organized according to the principle

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known bright "angel cast into hell," but rather with the dark Ahriman, whose traits and spheres of influence were more suitable to the description of those dimensions of evil that they actually sensed around them. One may recall the enigmatic line from Khvylovy's programmatic poem "Kliiviatyrte": "*pustit po tyrsi Arimana svii hostryi niukh*" (release your sharp sense of smell in Ahriman's feather-grass) (Khvylovy, *Tvory v piatokh tomakh* [New York, Baltimore, and Toronto: Smoloskyp, 1982], 3: 321). Very often this demonic dimension was associated with the activities of the Soviet regime.

106. Among other things, this is the level of demonic presence that "weaves his eternal, universal 'web of gossip,'" which invisibly creates for the "minor devils" conditions that are conducive to deceiving and mocking people. After all, the "minor devils" in *Revizor* and *Khulii Khuryyna* are also, to some degree, involuntary participants and even "victims" of the devilish "misunderstanding."

107. Ehrenburg, *Julio Jurenito*, 128.

108. Mieczysław Jastrun, "Historia Fausta," *Literatura* (Warsaw), 16 November 1972.

that “between killing one ... and ten million people for the good of mankind there is only an arithmetical difference,” and when Gogol’s vision of society in which “all feeling, all incentive, all strength perished within them; only fear remained” became an actual reality, that the “art” of writing odes to the great and infinitely good leader of the Soviet people flourished most widely, and the word “culture” referred almost exclusively to the enthusiastic descriptions of the happy and life-loving workers and peasants, who were already experiencing the Soviet paradise on Earth.

But, as was the case with the deceptive “demonic fog,” the sources and essence of this terrifying period, this road “to the Devil ... to nothingness,” depended not only on external forces and circumstances, but could also be traced to the depths of individual human psyches, even in those people who, seemingly, fought against it. As befits an anthroposophist and a former friend of Rudolf Steiner, who joined official Soviet culture under the brutal pressure of circumstances, Andrei Bely commented on this individual dimension of demonism using anthroposophical terminology: “We are all Ahrimans, Luciferians ... in ‘mystical’ and ‘sceptical’ perceptions; we are the darkness of material ‘objectivity’ plus the darkness of [our] mystical illusions. Let us recall that the first result of self-knowledge by the main character in Steiner’s *Mystery* is the appearance of Lucifer and Ahriman.”<sup>109</sup> As for concrete examples, one can turn to the experiences of some of the authors discussed in this essay.

In his last days, when his physicians lost all hope of recovery and abandoned Mikhail Bulgakov, his three friends, prominent theatre activists, sent a letter to Stalin’s personal secretary with a humble request that the leader, who ten years before had saved the writer with a telephone call, again take pity on him, call him, and with this gesture of support help him get well. The Polish researcher Andrzej Drawicz commented on this rather disturbing episode in the following way:

Three eminent theatrical figures ... apparently sincerely believed that ... [Stalin’s] voice could prove more powerful than medical science: by administering a jolt to the patient and restoring him to life. There is nothing ridiculous about this, for then and later many tales were told of such conversations and the effects they produced. Thus was the history’s greatest mass murderer, the perpetrator of the greatest crimes against humanity, abjectly implored to deploy the supernatural attributes

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109. Andrei Bely, *Vospominaniia o Shteinere* (Paris: La Presse Libre, 1982), 140.

he was thought to possess and work a miracle. In this calm insanity, dictated by an impulse of devoted hearts and providing clear evidence of the state of their minds, *diabolus major*, the master of inverted meanings, can be plainly seen. This is the devil of silence, of the void, of the minus sign, of the word *nihil*. Stalin duly did what he could be expected to do: he did not telephone.<sup>110</sup>

In a similar way, in the spring of 1937, imprisoned, very ill, and psychologically broken, Mykola Kulish, in an isolation cell at the concentration camp on the Solovets Islands, wrote a confessional letter in which he described in a deeply intimate and lyrical manner the “crimes” he had committed during his life: in early childhood he had “committed grave sins” consisting of childish pranks, and in his youth, as a standard-bearer in the Russian army, for example, he had fired his gun into the air because two soldiers accompanied by girls had failed to salute him. During imprisonment in the 1930s he suffered from hallucinations that this irresponsible action might have killed a human being. Desperately hoping for a humane response and understanding (and even forgiveness), he asked to be pardoned and assigned a job in the camp.<sup>111</sup> He sent his letter to the people’s commissar of internal affairs, Stalin’s effective assistant in carrying out crimes against humanity, Nikolai Yezhov. Kulish’s letter also fell into the emptiness of deadly silence, “the minus sign.” Instead of receiving a reply, a half a year later he, along with Les Kurbas, Mykola Zerov, Valeriian Pidmohylny, Hryhorii Epik (who betrayed Kulish under questioning by the GPU and attributed invented crimes to him), and hundreds of other prisoners, was transported in trucks along the Medvezhegorsk-Povenets highway to the Sandormokh gully, where half-frozen they were laid out face down in a pit and were shot in the nape of the neck by one individual, the commander of the detail, who lived to retire with an honourable pension and spent his old age in comfort until his death in 1974. To make sure they were dead he crushed a skull with a cane from time to time. At this one spot alone, in the course of four days, 1,111 prominent representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia were killed in honour of the twentieth anniversary of “the Great October Socialist Revolution,” and this horrible (demonic) act was swallowed up by the

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110. Andrzej Drawicz, *The Master and the Devil: A Study of Mikhail Bulgakov* (Lewiston, Queenston, and Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 295.

111. See N[ataliia] Kuziakina, *Arkhivni storinky* (Kyiv: Natsionalna asotsiiatsiia ukrainoznavtsiv, 1992), 64–112.

dead silence of the Karelian forests and the secret archives of the NKVD, which, it seemed at the time, would remain closed and inaccessible forever. In Ukraine during this time both Kulish's opponents, such as Oleksandr Korniiichuk, and his former allies, such as Pavlo Tychyna and Mykola Bazhan, strained to convince themselves that the abnormal was normal, sang odes to the wisest and noblest of leaders, and glorified life in the best country in the world—their Soviet fatherland.

It seems that in his two comedies written at the beginning of his creative career, Mykola Kulish encoded symbolically his intuitive premonition of this approaching demonic time. After all, Kuziakina's off-hand remark that "thematically the connection between Kulish's *Khulii Khuryyna* and Ehrenburg's satirical novel is rather theoretical"<sup>112</sup> is correct, except for one important instance. There is an episode in *Julio Jurenito* that is of marginal importance to the overall plot of the novel but is important in relation to *Khulii Khuryyna*. After the outbreak of the war, at a time of passionate patriotic fervour linked with the collective hysteria of "working for a master without a face, without a spirit, unborn yet infinitely cruel in the womb," a half-destroyed statue is found in the yard of a Parisian building. "It represented a person of the male sex holding something like a book in one hand and the remains of a pair of scales in the other."<sup>113</sup> Thanks to Julio's intervention, who considers this provocation a good lesson for his disciples, the statue is recognized as a monument of the "Champion of Civilization" holding a "declaration of human and civil rights" and a scale, the symbol of eternal justice. The concierge's testimony that the statue depicts a deceased storekeeper with his scale and ledger is completely ignored, and Julio organizes a solemn pilgrimage of thousands of people to the statue. It sparks a war-propaganda campaign focused on one of the disciples, the African tribesman Aisha, who has just returned from the battlefield, where he had slain single-handedly several German soldiers.

A corresponding mocking symbol of people's destructive illusions and the "demonic fog" that blinds them (and, perhaps, even of "something much worse and more insidious") can be found in *Khulii Khuryyna*. It consists of the rotten cross at the cemetery with the sign "Khu" at which both Communists and the representatives of the church community

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112. Kuziakina, *Piesy Mykoly Kulisha*, 146.

113. Ehrenburg, *Julio Jurenito*, 142.

gather to pay their respects to the “heroic” or the “saintly” “teacher.” Ostensibly, Sosnovsky—a rather insignificant figure in comparison with Jurenito—is the representative of the demonic dimension in the play, but, in fact, the “great provocateur” himself, in his virtual form, is the subject and the invisible perpetrator of the provocation, and the evident link between this episode and the affair with the statue of the “Champion of Civilization” indicates the dimension of the invisible “master without a face, without a spirit, unborn yet infinitely cruel in the womb,” that is, the *diabolus maior*. The symbol of the rotten, that is, worm-eaten and death-impregnated, cross and the apparently obscene content of the name engraved on it<sup>114</sup> also hint at the devil, as they may well reflect the mocking version of the crucifixion used by certain satanic sects in which Christ is partially or fully represented as a penis. Thus, while in the play 97 the communards and the kulaks were at least apparently divided into two hostile camps, each adhering to its own “god” and religion, in *Khulii Khuryna* the illusion of dichotomy disappears, and it becomes evident that both Communists and Christians—just like the “old Russia” and “new Russia” in Merezhkovsky’s interpretation of *Revizor*—are blinded by the devil’s “fog” and worship one and the same power—the nihilistic delusion of the *diabolus maior*, for both groups and the entire country is headed “to the Devil, to emptiness, to nihilism, to nothingness.” The protagonists of Kulish’s comedy are completely enveloped by the “demonic deception.” From the outside, they encounter Sosnovsky’s lie, which, in reality, reflected the deceptive tactics of the Soviet regime (such as the fabricated Dymivka affair) by which it attempted as early as the 1920s to condition the populace to accept misrepresented and abnormal actions and circumstances as true and normal; and on the inside, they face self-delusion, self-deception, and the powerful pull toward mass hysteria. As Bely aptly remarked: “the darkness of material ‘objectivity’ plus the darkness of [our] mystical illusions.”

Such an interpretation of *Khulii Khuryna* is further confirmed by other motifs of the “invisible” demonic power in Kulish’s plays, which, in spite of its apparent passivity, deeply affects the environment and behaviour of his protagonists. For example, who is Huska’s mysterious tenant, who is never seen nor heard because he remains locked in his room reading books? In the end, it is precisely his silent presence that

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114. “Khu” suggests *khui*, a vulgar word for penis.

proves to be the last straw for Huska and causes him to abandon common sense and agree to escape to an uninhabited island. Ivdia, the maid, insists that the tenant “reads black books.”<sup>115</sup> This enigmatic, invisible character prefigures Malakhii Stakanchyk, who had himself walled up in a pantry and spent two years there reading “Bolshevik books”<sup>116</sup> and who exhibits a number of demonic traits. Furthermore, it is hardly a coincidence that the tenant is a member of a commission for liquidating illiteracy when Jurenito officially travelled to Ukraine with the task to “liquidate illiteracy.”<sup>117</sup> Thus, Huska, who not without reason “is frightened to death,” finds himself between two devils—the “minor” Khlestakovian Mephistopheles, Kyrpatenko, who entices him into the absurd adventure of the escape to an uninhabited island and then abandons him to his fate, and the “great” devil, who has already settled in his house. His situation appears to be truly hopeless and tragic.<sup>118</sup> It is analogous to the circumstances of the protagonists in *Revizor*, who find themselves between the “minor” devil Khlestakov and the “great” one, the inspector general. Many critics believed or believe that the figure of the inspector general is the embodiment of human conscience, fate, or even God, before whom one must account for one’s actions. However, Merezhkovsky rightly points to the ambivalence of this figure: “we do not see him; for us he remains an even more illusive and ghostly figure than Khlestakov. But if we had caught a glimpse of him, then who knows? Perhaps the two ‘officials from St. Petersburg’, great and small, might have borne a strange resemblance to one another after all.”<sup>119</sup>

Eventually, in the terror-filled 1932, the invisible “devil” appears in the finale of Kulish’s *Vichnyi bunt* in a scene in which Romen, after a failed attempt to escape abroad, returns to the plant and tries to rejoin the collective that rejected him previously. The guard, who resembles somewhat the doorkeeper in Franz Kafka’s allegory “Before the Law” in *Der Process* (The Trial), no longer seems to recognize him and telephones an invisible someone who is to decide Romen’s fate. The

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115. Kulish, *Tvory*, 1: 216.

116. *Ibid.*, 2: 11.

117. Ehrenburg, *Julio Jurenito*, 218.

118. It was quite natural, therefore, that in the performances on the small stage of the Moscow Drama Theatre the actor I. Smyskovsky (under the director Silviu Fusu) interpreted Huska’s role as a tragic, not a comic one.

119. “Gogol and the Devil,” 73.

gatekeeper ask three times what he should do with the newcomer, but the play ends before the answer arrives. It is clear that Romen's future is settled, just as Mykola Kulish's fate was sealed by that time.

The contrast between the Mayor's desperate cry at the end of *Revizor*, "What are you laughing at? You are laughing at yourselves!" and the planned but unrealized finale of *Otak zahynuv Huska*, in which Kulish wanted to hang his main character, points to an essential difference between Gogol's and Kulish's creative temperaments and approaches to their art. In Gogol, the direct appeal to the spectators indicates a didactic impulse, a desire to warn and bring about a change in behaviour, and, in the ideal case, to save the real members of the audience from the fate of the characters on the stage. Besides, Gogol believed in the power of divine providence, which in the final analysis should overcome the devil and his "stupefying and soporific fog." As one can surmise from his texts, Kulish did not believe in the existence and the saving power of metaphysical Goodness. He is not a didactic, but a tragic playwright and his plan to hang Huska "on a willow in the marshes" is not an attempt to warn and save anyone but an assertion of man's inescapable position between "two devils" and a third, inner one. Had the comedy with this version of the finale been performed in Ukraine's theatres in the 1920s, many spectators would have had the opportunity to see their own inevitable future in this scene. Although Kulish chose a different ending in 1925, he unavoidably returned to this pessimistic vision in his future dramas. The main characters of his major plays are tragic figures and the tragedy strikes them both from the outside, from the "darkness of material objectivity," and from the inside, from their "mystical illusions," for they themselves often destroy that for which they seemingly strived. Possessed by his desire "to reform man," Malakhii brings unhappiness to those who find themselves in his path, in particular he causes the downfall of his daughter Liubunia (Love). In *Patetychna sonata*, Ilko, a proponent of the ideals of "eternal love" and "universal humanism," executes the embodiment of these ideals, his beloved Maryna. Therefore, the absence of positive heroes and any ray of hope in Kulish's early comedies, which has been noticed by critics, is no coincidence. The culminating expression of this pessimistic worldview is *Maklena Grasa* (1932) of which Iurii Sherekh wrote: "Before Céline with his journey to nowhere, to the land of universal negation for the sake of nothing, Ukrainian literature

embarked on that same path in [Kulish's] *Maklena Grasa*."<sup>120</sup> In this play the demonic motif appears again as the broker Zbrożek in an eloquent "inversion of meanings"—perverse and quite to the point in the context of the demonic 1930s—repeats the Polish phrase "diabeł bóg"<sup>121</sup>—"the devil god."

But at the same time this profound pessimism is not synonymous with capitulation or submission to the unavoidable circumstances of life. As a writer and cultural activist, Kulish displayed a rebellious resistance to the "demonic" forces of his environment, an individualistic "eternal rebellion," particularly against "the devil of complete duplicity." In his dramas, sometimes seemingly contrary to his own wishes,<sup>122</sup> he consistently refused to promote "the inversion of meanings" and "a new mystique for the new slavery" and remained essentially true to his original principle to depict on stage life's "naked truth." The humour in *Khulio Khuryna*, *Myna Mazailo* (1928), and most of his other plays served the same function as Gogol's: it was a weapon in "man's struggle with the devil,"<sup>123</sup> even if he understood the devil not in a metaphysical sense, but in the sense of "a human, all too human" a self.

As I mentioned earlier, the mystical and quasi-religious motifs in Kulish's works cannot be taken as expressions of the author's personal convictions. Most probably, he was neither a believer nor a mystic. The religious symbolism in his dramas is linked primarily with the psychological sphere, with the reflection of reality through the eyes of his heroes who project unconscious or semi-conscious psychic processes onto external events and (as per Jung's theories) perceive their environment in numinous categories. Furthermore, like other Soviet writers in the 1920s,

120. Sherekh, *Ne dlia ditei*, 79.

121. Kulish, *Tvory*, 2: 324.

122. For example, when he began to work on *Patetychna sonata* in 1928, Kulish imagined the play as a compromise somewhat similar to Konstantin Trenov's officially approved and not very imaginative drama. He wrote to Dniprovsky: "I plan to write a play.... The result will be something similar to *Liubov Iarovaia*, but the hell with it.... I'll settle for a little compromise with my dear and familial but not very cultured society" (Kulish, *Tvory*, 2: 557). And yet the final result of his work was one of his best-known masterpieces, which is non-conformist in both content and form.

123. In this sense, one could use Maurice Nadeau's phrase describing Alfred Jarry to characterize both Kulish and Gogol, namely, that humour is "a heroic attitude of those who are unwilling to compromise" (Maurice Nadeau, *The History of Surrealism* [Hardmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1965], 78).

he followed the literary convention of the period in using the “mystical lexicon” “to interpret and encode reality,” and the very nature of this lexicon and its archetypal symbols drew him into the dimension of transcendent concepts and universal philosophical issues. It is from this vantage point that he interpreted the nature of the evil (the devil) that he observed around him. From that same universal (perhaps even metaphysical?) perspective he studied other “eternal” dilemmas, for instance, the inherent incompatibility and conflict between the individual’s authentic desires and aspirations and the immutable laws of human society. His later dramas study the resulting confrontation between the masses, unable to tolerate an individual who refuses to become a cog<sup>124</sup> in the societal mechanism, and a person who does not compromise even in the face of a hopeless situation and, in an act of “eternal rebellion,” staunchly defends his right to choose his own path, even if it proves illusory and self-destructive.<sup>125</sup> Because of this humanistic, individualistic attitude, Kulish, more than most of his Russian and Ukrainian contemporaries, exhibited a characteristically Western mentality, worldview, and temperament. Had he been allowed to live and write and had his works become increasingly known in Western Europe,<sup>126</sup> Kulish could have become one of the important inspirers of existentialism.

Translated from the Ukrainian by Taras Zakydalsky

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124. As a reflection of a general tendency toward the “mechanization” and dehumanization of individuals in the Soviet society, one of the characters in *Vichnyi bunt* (who opposes Romen’s independent position and chooses to conform to societal demands) changes his surname from Hai (“orchard”) to Haika (“screw-nut”).

125. From what we know of him, Kulish tried to follow a similar path in his life. He staunchly defended his non-conformist position in the cultural polemic of the late 1920s and, as illustrated by the reports of E.A. Shteinberg (a plant in his cell who reported their conversation to GPU agents), he refused to change his views even after his arrest (see Kuziakina, “Arkhivni storinky,” 47–63).

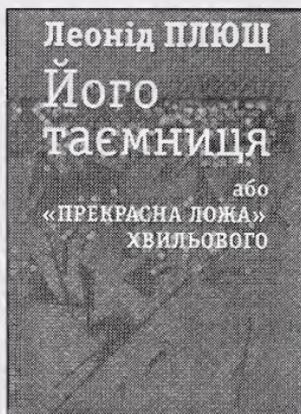
126. Friedrich Wolf translated *Patetychna sonata* into German and gave a superlative assessment of the play, comparing it to Goethe’s *Faust* and Ibsen’s *Peer Gynt*, while Romen Rolland enthusiastically responded to the premiere of the play at the Moscow Chamber Theatre in December 1931, calling it an outstanding achievement in world dramaturgy.

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# Postmodern Approaches to Representation of Reality in Ukrainian and Russian Literatures: The Prose of Yuri Andrukhovych and Viktor Pelevin

*Roman Ivashkiv*

The dissolution of the Soviet Union officially brought an end to the artificial phenomenon of Soviet literature, which had served as a political propaganda tool of the Communist Party for most of the twentieth century. The strong ideological engagement and mythological underpinnings of Soviet literature, as Katerina Clark observes, resulted in an almost complete loss of the aesthetic function of the literary arts.<sup>1</sup> Because Communist repressions of Ukrainian and Russian writers interrupted the natural development of these Slavic literatures,<sup>2</sup> authors who began to regain their right to freedom of expression during the era of glasnost were confronted with an aesthetic void. Although the dissident literature, produced clandestinely to circumvent government censorship, had some aesthetic value, writers who refused to comply with the official paradigm of social hyperconsciousness inadvertently operated along the same socio-political axis. Whereas socialist realism, the dominant style of Soviet literature, praised the Communist regime, the dissident literature

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1. Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 252.

2. For a more detailed account of this topic, see George S.N. Luckyj, *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine, 1917–1934* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990).

defied it. Therefore, younger writers in newly independent Ukraine and Russia, who no longer needed to struggle against the regime or save the nation, found themselves in a post-Soviet aesthetic coma. They were obliged to bridge the gap between the pre-Soviet literary tradition and the present-day, postmodern context. But because the modernist tradition in both countries had been stifled to a large extent, postmodern literature could not develop in response to modernism as it did in the West.

In discussing the situation in contemporary Ukrainian and Russian literatures after the repudiation of socialist realism and tracing the origin of their postmodernism, I shall take a closer look at two major contemporary writers in Ukraine and Russia—Yuri Andrukhovych and Viktor Pelevin. In my opinion, these two prominent authors have compensated for the loss of state-imposed theme and style and have depicted a difficult transitional time of confusion over identity and values in post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia by incorporating into their works postmodern attitudes, which prevail in Western literature. By identifying similarities and differences between Andrukhovych's *Perverziia* (Perverzion) and Pelevin's *Omon Ra*, two essential novels in their oeuvre, I shall argue that the two writers have contributed significantly to revitalizing their national literatures through a postmodern representation of an absurd and carnivalesque reality, using multiple narrative voices, playful onomastics, and irony. The theoretical underpinnings of my analysis consist of Jean Baudrillard's concepts of hyperreality and simulation, Jacques Derrida's deconstruction approach and the idea of *différance*, Jean-Francois Lyotard's principle of "incredulity towards the metanarrative," and Linda Hutcheon's understanding of irony.

In the early 1980s, writers in Ukraine and Russia, driven by the idea of "a rapprochement with Western literature,"<sup>3</sup> began gradually to bring their national literatures closer to Western models by no longer organizing their ideas in binary opposition. In a deconstructionist vein, they made a vital decision to disavow the traditionally tenacious dichotomies of right and wrong, replacing dialectical thinking with "adialectical thought."<sup>4</sup> They became increasingly skeptical of fundamentalist ideas and began to question the accepted ontological values and to incorporate

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3. Raoul Eshelman, *Early Soviet Postmodernism* (Frankfurt am Main and New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 15.

4. *Ibid.*, 21.

quite sophisticated stylistic techniques into their works. As multiple plots unfolded in their stories, Lyotard's main principle of postmodernism, "incredulity towards metanarratives," inevitably came to be reflected in their works. Fresh impetus was also given by Derrida's approach of deconstruction, according to which a work of literature cannot be limited to a single interpretation, because the "dismantling" of the text reveals aporias and the immanent indeterminacy (indetermanence<sup>5</sup>) of meaning. Multiple layers of meaning, together with contradictions and ambiguities typical of language, began to be stressed in Ukrainian and Russian literatures from the mid-1980s. Indeed, for Ukrainian and Russian postmodern writers, deconstruction served as an earthquake, "a force of irruption,"<sup>6</sup> that helped to break up the monotonous regularities of the Soviet literary heritage, as well as an epistemological foundation for Slavic postmodernism.

Unfortunately, there is hardly any unanimity on the use of the term "postmodernism" in relation to any literary work in general and even less so on its application in the Slavic literary context. A certain phobia of postmodernism among more conventional Ukrainian and Russian intellectual circles is not only a consequence of the fluid and contradictory nature of this cultural phenomenon, which persistently resists classification and definition, but also a result of the lack of serious Slavic scholarship on this movement,<sup>7</sup> which led to a transposition of West European and American theoretical principles to the Slavic literary context.<sup>8</sup> Here, it will suffice to mention the famous Ilnytzkyj versus Pavlyshyn debate in *Suchasnist* in 1995, which for the most part revealed the core of the theoretical problem of applying the term "postmodernism" in the Ukrainian context. For the purposes of this article, however, the terms "postmodern" and "postmodernism" appear to be the most

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5. "Indetermanence" is the portmanteau term Ihab Hassan uses in "Toward a Concept of Postmodernism," in *Postmodernism: A Reader*, ed. Thomas Docherty (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 146–56.

6. Nicholas Royle, *Jacques Derrida* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 25.

7. Recently this void has been filled to some extent by such comprehensive studies as Hundorova's *Pisliachornobylska biblioteka: Ukrainskyi literaturnyi postmodern* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2005) and Viacheslav Kuritsyn's *Russkii literaturnyi postmodernizm* (Moscow: OGI, 2000).

8. Naturally, there is opposition to direct and not always justifiable incorporation or even domestication of postmodern theories in the Slavic literary canon, but postmodernism has proved to be a transnational phenomenon and has been absorbed by much more conservative cultures than Ukrainian or Russian culture.

convenient umbrella terms for the plethora of literary influences and the range of assessments of our two authors' stylistic approaches—from avant-garde, conceptualism, and neo-baroque to “sots-art” (socialist art) within one cultural condition.

Slavic postmodernism developed in a different context than postmodernism in the West. According to Ihab Hassan, the term “postmodernism” originally implied “a reaction to modernism.”<sup>9</sup> He claims that postmodernism “evokes what it wishes to surpass or suppress, modernism itself.”<sup>10</sup> The Russian critic Mark Lipovetsky also believes that Western “post-modernism arises from the deconstruction of the monolithic, hierarchical culture of modernism and the canonised avant-garde.”<sup>11</sup> Equating the epoch of socialist realism with modernism in Western culture, however, is hardly feasible. Therefore, according to Lipovetsky, “Russian post-modernism arises from the search for an answer to a diametrically opposed problem: cultural fragmentation and disintegration, as well as the literal (rather than metaphysical) ‘death of the author.’”<sup>12</sup> He asserts that postmodernism in Russia “came into being as the simultaneous expression of two contradictory tendencies. On the one hand, there was the need to return to modernism, to use the aesthetic arsenal of the classics.... On the other hand, there was the gradual recognition of the impossibility of ‘restoring’ modernism after decades of totalitarian aesthetics.”<sup>13</sup> The Ukrainian literary scholar Oksana Pakhlov-ska points out another difference between Western and Slavic postmodernisms, arguing that postmodernism in the West is historicized and diachronic, while in Slavic literatures it is synchronic and situated outside the context. Although Pakhlov-ska cautions against the danger of “cloning postmodernism without rules,” she maintains that “it is quite possible that the epoch of postmodernism in Ukraine and generally in Eastern Europe ... is even a perfectly natural phenomenon after the linear darkness of the

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9. Hassan, “Toward a Concept of Postmodernism,” 147.

10. *Ibid.*, 148.

11. Mark Lipovetsky, “On the Nature of Russian Post-modernism,” trans. Eliot Borenstein, in *Twentieth-Century Russian Literature: Selected Papers from the Fifth World Congress of Central and East European Studies*, ed. Karen L. Ryan and Barry P. Scherr (New York: St. Martin’s Press, LLC, 2000), 321.

12. *Ibid.*, 235.

13. *Ibid.*, 8.

tunnel of socialist realism.”<sup>14</sup> The recognition of the impossibility of restoring modernism along with cultural and informational openness in post-Soviet societies led Ukrainian and Russian literary circles to adapt and synthesize—as proponents of postmodernism would put it—or to clone and transplant—as its opponents would argue—the postmodern principles in their works. Even though cultural contexts in the two neighbouring countries varied to some extent, writers in both Ukraine and Russia turned to the already established postmodern trend in the West for themes, style, and writing techniques.<sup>15</sup>

The Ukrainian writer Yuri Andrukhovych and the Russian novelist Viktor Pelevin have played a paramount role in this shift toward the postmodern. Their works, *Perverziia* and *Omon Ra*, respectively, have heralded a new epoch in Slavic literatures. Despite the fact that some critics, such as John Bayley, place Pelevin in the framework of the Russian tradition going back to Gogol, the postmodern influence on his work seems to be more pronounced. “As for my position in the literary lineage ... I think that my place is about 200 feet below Tolstoy and 48 feet to the left of Gogol,” Pelevin said jokingly in one interview.<sup>16</sup> In another interview, he also denied any direct influence by the Russian tradition, adding that “[t]he only real Russian literary tradition is to write good books in a way nobody did before, so to become part of tradition you have to reject it.”<sup>17</sup> Pelevin mentioned that Mikhail Bulgakov’s *Master i Margarita* (The Master and Margarita) had made a strong impression on him, but as Sally Laird concludes, “he belongs to a generation that has sought philosophical and cultural alternatives outside the traditional Russian canon—in Chinese philosophy, in Buddhism, in the strange perspectives of computer science, the experience of hallucinogenic drugs, or the ‘mystic’ or esoteric works of Castaneda, Hesse, and Borges.”<sup>18</sup> It is also important to note that to some extent Pelevin has

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14. “Sytuatsiia postmodernizmu v Ukraini: kruhlyi stil,” <<http://www.ktm.ukma.kiev.ua/2001/6/postmodern.html>> (accessed 27 December 2006).

15. A more profound explanation of the necessity to incorporate the postmodern discourse can be found in Volodymyr Ieshkilev’s entry “PM dyskurs v suchasni ukrainskii literaturi,” in the online *Entsyklopediia Ukrainskoi Literatury*, at <<http://proza.com.ua/enc/>> (accessed 29 December 2006).

16. Jeff Parker, “A Q&A with Victor Pelevin,” *Salt Hill* 7 (1999): 115.

17. Leo Kropywiansky, “Victor Pelevin,” *Bomb* 79 (2002): 80.

18. Sally Laird, “Viktor Pelevin,” chap. 9 in *Voices of Russian Literature: Interviews*

been influenced by Russian conceptualism. I should point out that the inception of postmodernism in Russia, heralded by Venedikt Erofeev's *Moskva-Petushki* (Moscow Circles), is commonly associated with the emergence of Moscow conceptualism.<sup>19</sup>

Even though Andrukhovych was closely acquainted with the work of the early twentieth-century Ukrainian avant-garde poet Bohdan Ihor Antonych and wrote a dissertation on Antonych's poetry, Andrukhovych's style did not take shape exclusively within his native literary tradition but was considerably influenced by Western literature. The writing of *Perverziia* is directly linked with his first trip to Munich, where he was exposed to the Western cultural heritage. In addition, among his favourite authors Andrukhovych has mentioned Thomas Wolfe, Ernest Hemingway, Thomas Mann, Herman Hesse, James Joyce, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez,<sup>20</sup> the last two of whom are considered by some theorists to be important precursors of postmodernism. Moreover, in one interview, another famous Ukrainian poet, Andrukhovych's friend and member of the literary group Bu-Ba-Bu, Viktor Neborak, has suggested that *Perverziia* is a formal imitation of Joyce's *Ulysses*<sup>21</sup> and defined its style as the Bu-Ba-Bu style, which some critics also vaguely characterize as Ukrainian neo-baroque. Other critics have observed that Andrukhovych might have been influenced also by one of the greatest German-language writers of the twentieth century, Rainer Maria Rilke, and the Jewish-Polish writer born in Drohobych, Bruno Schultz. In addition, Andrukhovych has been working closely with Andrzej Stasiuk, one of the most popular contemporary writers in Poland, with whom he co-authored a book of essays *Moia Ievropa* (My Europe, 2001).

For most Ukrainians Andrukhovych epitomizes avant-garde Ukrainian prose and represents postmodern Ukrainian writing in general. Born in 1960 in the West Ukrainian city of Ivano-Frankivsk, Andrukhovych

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with *Ten Contemporary Writers* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1999), 178.

19. Mark Lipovetsky, "Kontseptualizm i neobarokko," posted on the NG ExLibris Web page on 7 September 2000, <[http://exlibris.ng.ru/kafedra/2000-09-07/3\\_postmodern.html](http://exlibris.ng.ru/kafedra/2000-09-07/3_postmodern.html)> (accessed 27 January 2006).

20. Taras Prokhasko, *Inshyi format: Iurii Andrukhovych* (Ivano-Frankivsk: Lileya-NV, 2003), 57.

21. "Bubabistskyi khronopys Viktora Neboraka: Shche odna intryga z pryvodu suchasnoi ukrainskoi literatury," at <<http://www.ukrart.lviv.ua/poetskr414.html>> (accessed 27 January 2006).

focused his studies on journalism and literature. In 1985, together with his friends Viktor Neborak and Oleksandr Irvanets, he established the literary group Bu-Ba-Bu (roughly translated as Burlesque-Bluster-Buffoonery), which “has forever buried the accepted standards of ‘socialist realist’ poetry, proposing a new poetical quality, dominated by literary game, carnivalism, urbanism, and total aesthetical freedom.”<sup>22</sup> The Ukrainian scholar and literary critic Solomea Pavlychko called the Bu-Ba-Bu trio “the most skillful riders” among the young writers who “fixated on the shattering of taboos in the spheres of language, theme, and form.”<sup>23</sup> In the 1990s Andrukhovych made his first attempts in prose by writing stories about his experiences in Afghanistan as a Soviet soldier. His first three novels—*Rekreatsii* (Recreations, 1992), *Moskoviada* (The Moscowiad, 1993), and *Perverziia* (1996)—won him immediate fame, both in Ukraine and internationally. *Perverziia*, probably the most popular of the three works, has been translated into several languages.

Andrukhovych’s contemporary and one of the most promising post-modern writers in Russia is Viktor Pelevin. Born in 1962 in a town near Moscow, Pelevin graduated from the Moscow Institute of Power Engineering. In 1989 he entered the Maksim Gorky Literary Institute in Moscow, where he never finished his studies. Afterwards, he worked as the prose-section editor on the journal *Den* (Day), run by his college friend. In 1993 Pelevin published his first significant novel *Omon Ra*. His other famous novels include *Zhizn nasekomykh* (The Life of Insects, 1994), *Zheltaia strela* (The Yellow Arrow, 1995), *Chapaev i pustota* (Chapaev and the Void, 1996), and *Homo sapiens*<sup>24</sup> (1999). He is also the author of a collection of short stories *Sinii fonar* (The Blue Lantern, 1991), which won him the Little Russian Booker Prize. In 2000 *The New Yorker* named Pelevin one of the six most prominent contemporary writers of Europe.<sup>25</sup>

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22. Andriy Bondar, “Yuri Andrukhovych,” *Ukraine—Poetry International Web*, trans. Kateryna Botanova, at <[http://ukraine.poetryinternationalweb.org/piw\\_cms/cms/cms\\_module/index.php?obj\\_id=5528&x=1](http://ukraine.poetryinternationalweb.org/piw_cms/cms/cms_module/index.php?obj_id=5528&x=1)> (accessed 5 September 2004).

23. Solomea Pavlychko, “Facing Freedom: The New Ukrainian Literature,” trans. Askold Melnyczuk in *From Three Worlds: New Ukrainian Writing*, ed. Ed Hogan (Boston: Zephyr Press, 1996), 12.

24. Also known under the title *Generation “P.”*

25. Boris Tukh, *Pervaia desiataka sovremennoi russkoi literatury* (Moscow: Oniks 21 vek, 2002), 199.

My analysis of the two novels, *Perverziia* and *Omon Ra*, will demonstrate how Andrukhovych and Pelevin draw on the Western postmodern tradition by exploring themes and applying literary techniques typical of postmodernism. A common characteristic that legitimizes the comparison of the two novels, besides their structural and stylistic similarities, is their new approach to the representation of reality. According to Alexander Genis, “[p]ost-Soviet authors have come to see the world around them in terms of a sequence of artificial constructs, in which man is forever doomed to search for a ‘pure,’ ‘archetypal’ reality. All these parallel worlds are not ‘true,’ without being ‘false’ either, at least while someone still believes in them.”<sup>26</sup> Similarly, in his introduction to Pelevin’s novels, Viacheslav Kuritsyn argues that in his works “the Buddhist thesis ‘the world is only my impression’ is in line with the postmodern statement ‘the world is given only as its description, as one or another way of thinking about it.’”<sup>27</sup> In both Pelevin’s and Andrukhovych’s novels, reality and fiction merge, and the reader is inevitably confused by the disappearing line of demarcation between the two. The conflation of reality and fiction occurs because the latter, as a model of reality, becomes, in Baudrillard’s terms, a simulacrum that constructs our knowledge of reality. “Reality could go beyond fiction: that was the surest sign of the possibility of an ever-increasing imaginary. But the real cannot surpass the model—it is nothing but its alibi.”<sup>28</sup> On the basis of the postulates Baudrillard outlined in his *Simulacra and Simulation*, Mikhail Epstein maintains that postmodern reality in post-Soviet literatures is deeply rooted “in the web of mass communication.”<sup>29</sup> He further cites Baudrillard, who said that “[r]eality itself founders in hyperrealism, the meticulous reduplication of the real, preferably through another reproductive medium.... From medium to medium, the real is volatilised, becoming an allegory of death. But it is also, in a sense,

26. Alexander Genis, “Borders and Metamorphoses: Viktor Pelevin in the Context of Post-Soviet Literature,” in *Twentieth-Century Russian Literature*, 297.

27. Viacheslav Kuritsyn, introduction to Viktor Pelevin’s *Zhyzn nasekomykh* (Moscow: Vagrius, 1997), 16.

28. Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 122.

29. Mikhail Epstein, “The Dialectics of *Hyper*: From Modernism to Postmodernism,” chap 1 of Mikhail Epstein, Alexander Genis, and Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover, *Russian Postmodernism: New Perspectives on Post-Soviet Culture*, trans. and ed. Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover (Providence, R.I.: Berghahn Books, 1999), 7.

reinforced through its own destruction. It becomes *reality for its own sake*, the fetishism of the lost object."<sup>30</sup> In *Omon Ra*, according to Genis, "fiction becomes the instrument for the construction of reality instead of the violation of reality."<sup>31</sup> However, while Omon, the protagonist of *Omon Ra*, lives in the Soviet Union, he first needs to escape from Soviet reality before he can construct his own. Stakh Perfetsky, the protagonist of *Perverziia*, on the other hand, lives in a post-Soviet Ukraine, but was supposedly born in the former Soviet Union. Therefore, his old reality disappears with the dissolution of his country of origin, but his new reality still needs to be created. Quoting a fictional Ukrainian philosopher, Perfetsky, he shares his understanding of reality as follows:

Truly no reality exists. There exists just the boundless quantity of our versions about it, each one of which is erroneous, but all of them, taken together, are mutually contradictory. For the sake of our salvation it remains for us to accept that each of the countless versions is the true one. We would do it if we were not sure of the fact that the truth must be and is a single one, and its name is—reality.<sup>32</sup>

This paradoxical statement not only serves as a central philosophical premise of the novel, but it also offers an important insight into the work's title. *Perverziia* can mean either a distorted version of reality or the idea, suggested by the Latin expression *per versio* 'by version,' that reality differs depending on whose version it is. In the story Perfetsky, who epitomizes the postmodern Ukrainian artist in the broadest sense of the word, travels throughout Europe. His final destination is Venice where he participates in a multinational conference to save the world from absurdity. "On the way he becomes a Ukrainian Orpheus descending into the decadence of the West, navigating through surrealistic adventures and no less surrealistic seminar topics as he charges head up (and pants down) toward his fate."<sup>33</sup> Throughout the novel, Andrukhovych investigates the mysterious disappearance of the protagonist, who is his close friend. The author himself tries to track down Perfetsky's complicated itinerary,

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30. Ibid.

31. Genis, "Borders and Metamorphoses," 297.

32. Yuri Andrukhovych, *Perverzion*, trans. Michael Naydan, ed. Andrew Wachtel (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2005), 223.

33. *Perverzion* by Yuri Andrukhovych, Web page of Northwestern University Press at <<http://nupress.northwestern.edu/title.cfm?ISBN=0-8101-1964-1>> (accessed 1 November 2004).

which leads from Lviv through Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Austria, and Germany to Italy.

Conversely, *Omon Ra* reads like an autobiographical account of a Soviet teenager who was admitted to a clandestine space-exploration program only to have his fondest dream of becoming an astronaut shattered by the absurdity of the Soviet system. According to Kuritsyn, "Until the last pages, *Omon Ra* unfolds as a story about a mystification: the Soviet government deceives its people and the international community, launching space shuttles [that are doomed to destruction]. Only at the end is it revealed that, in fact, these shuttles were not even sent into space. The idea was to leave the victim with an impression of having landed on the Moon. Having flickered momentarily, the truth of reality disappears."<sup>34</sup> As a teenager living in an isolated country, Omon is disgusted by the mundane reality of Soviet life. Introduced to alcohol in a dilapidated garage by his friends, he is unpleasantly struck by the sharp contrast between reality and its representation by a simulacrum. Omon says:

I suddenly felt disgusted to think that I was sitting in this lousy little closet that smelt like a garbage-tip, disgusted by the fact that I'd just drunk cheap port from a dirty glass, that the entire immense country in which I lived was made up of lots and lots of these lousy little closets where there was a smell of garbage.... And it all seemed particularly painful in comparison with the beautiful American flying machine in the magazine.<sup>35</sup>

Soon afterwards, when Omon enrolls at the air force academy, he realizes another gruesome fact: the reality of his life up to this point is not only disgusting but also generally doubtful. "I suddenly understood anew the long-lost meaning of the words I was so fed up with seeing staring at me every morning from the wall of the training hall: 'Life always has room for heroism,'" he says. "It was not just romantic nonsense but a precise and sober statement of the fact that our Soviet life is not the ultimate instance of reality but only, as it were, its anteroom."<sup>36</sup>

Ironically, the plots of the two novels that question both the perception and existence of reality might have been taken partly from real life. As the authors themselves have suggested, the two stories are largely

34. Kuritsyn, introduction to Pelevin's *Zhyzn nasekomykh*, 16.

35. Victor Pelevin, *Omon Ra*, trans. Andrew Bromfield (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996), 22-3.

36. *Ibid.*, 61.

autobiographical. Andrukhovych's numerous personal talents as a writer, performer, translator, scriptwriter, essayist, and literary activist, are clearly projected onto Stakh Perfetsky. Both Andrukhovych and his protagonist, also a gifted writer, travel across Europe: the former tries to popularize Ukrainian literature in West European countries while the latter has a secret assassination mission. In his turn, Pelevin openly confesses that *Omon Ra* is autobiographical. "I was born in a military town near Moscow.... I am taken aback when people say this book is about the Soviet space exploration program." "This book is about a child who matures into a grown-up man."<sup>37</sup> Thus, in both Andrukhovych's and Pelevin's works the identities of the authors and the protagonists commingle, obscuring the line between reality and unreality, consciousness and the subconscious, and the true and the imaginary. As the two writers create simulacra of what they believe constitutes "real" reality, their protagonists invent simulacra of their fictional realities. In other words, while Andrukhovych and Pelevin, respectively, model the realities of post-Soviet life in Ukraine and life in the Soviet Union, Perfetsky and Omon invent their own imaginary worlds to escape from the original setting in which they have been placed by the authors.

Conveying the diffuseness of reality, both authors pay special attention to the impact it has on the protagonists' identities. After being Soviet (in Russian *soviet* means council or advice) for so long, neither Perfetsky nor Omon seems to know exactly who he is and where he comes from. Self-identification, which turns out to be quite an illusory notion, comprises one of the most recurrent themes in the postmodern novel. According to Antlitz, "[i]dentity ... is not some solid, identifiable thing; rather, the 'self' is a mosaic of the different context, roles, and experiences the individual encounters."<sup>38</sup> Identities become increasingly fluid in *Perverzija* and *Omon Ra*, since the protagonists are only vaguely cognizant of their search. For them the evolution of their personal feelings and their relationship with the outside world acquire greater significance, although they continue to be driven by an irresistible force to explore their personal, social, and national identities. Interestingly enough, neither Pelevin's nor Andrukhovych's hero has a real proper name.

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37. Tikh, *Pervaia desiataka sovremennoi russkoi literatury*, 211.

38. Susan Antlitz, "Postmodernism," at <<http://www.wiu.edu/users/musea2/pomo.htm>> (accessed 1 May 2006).

Portraying the quest for identity, Andrukhovych and Pelevin artfully play with proper names. For example, Perfetsky's last name is derived from the Latin root for the word "perfect" and implies that the hero seeks perfection in his actions. The female protagonist's first name, Ada, contains the ancient Slavic word *ad*,<sup>39</sup> while her last name, Zitrona, based on the Ukrainian word *tsytryna* 'lemon,' links her with sourness. Perfetsky's multiple identities are brought out through his various names; hence, according to the English translator, Michael Naydan, "naming and names are quite significant in the novel, particularly with a hero with forty nicknames in search of his true self." Naydan was confronted with the problem of interlingual translation involving more than just the source and the target languages, for "many of the other characters in the novel have meaningful names from a number of different languages."<sup>40</sup> He believes that "the multinational, multilingual mishmash of names comprises strong reinforcement of the fact that the Ukrainian poet Stakh Perfetsky is not an isolated provincial, but a citizen of the world."<sup>41</sup>

In *Omon Ra*, Pelevin's use of playful onomastics is even more pronounced. Omon received his name from his father, who named the boy after Russia's special law-enforcement squad. Omon's brother's name, Ovir, is an acronym for the registrar of civil acts. In this way Pelevin ridicules the Soviet tradition of naming people after Soviet leaders, historical events, and organizations. In addition, Omon decides to take the name of the Egyptian sun god, believing that it is the most suitable name for a man who is on "a vitally important" mission of space exploration.

The speaking names of Omon and Perfetsky, however, are just two of the most vivid examples of playful onomastics. Both novels are replete with proper names that at first sight look absolutely improbable but at the same time sound quite natural and portray the ironies and ambiguities of real life. For instance, the name of the town in which Omon's military academy is based is Zaisk, which means roughly beyond paradise in Russian. The deep irony of this toponym lies in the fact that for the cadets the academy in Zaisk is hell. Zaisk, however, is also a real

39. Derived from the Greek *hades*, *ad* means hell in modern Russian and old Ukrainian.

40. Michael Naydan, "Translating a Novel's Novelty: Yuri Andrukhovych's *Perverzion* in English," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 16, no. 2 (2003): 457.

41. *Ibid.*, 458.

town in the Moscow region, even though in the story it is fictional. Other examples of playful onomastics can be found in the names of the academy's officers. The officer in charge of the space mission is Pkhadzer Vladilenovich Pidorenko. His patronymic is a combination of the initial letters of *Vladimir Ilich Lenin*, and his last name consists of the stem of the pejorative Russian term for a gay (*pidor*) and a typically Ukrainian suffix *enko*. The two other colonels who instruct Omon have last names that indicate their character traits: Urchagin (from *urchat* 'to grumble') and Burchagin (from *burchat* 'to mumble'). Pelevin describes them as almost identical twins: both graduated from the same institution, take turns in using the same wheelchair, and resemble each other in appearance. Moreover, Pelevin makes their last names sound almost identical in Russian: the two words are derived from the Russian verb *vorchat* 'to growl' and reflect one of the qualities of these two characters. Through antonomasia Pelevin not only ridicules the preposterous reality of the Soviet system, but also underscores the peculiarity of how people and things are named. Interestingly, in some instances Pelevin alludes to the classics of Russian literature and by doing so transforms the story into what Roland Barthes referred to as "a tissue of quotations."<sup>42</sup> For example, Urchagin and Burchagin may remind us of Dobchinsky and Bobchinsky in Gogol's *The Inspector General*. Another example is Omon's and his brother's real last name, Krivomazov, which echoes Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. By using these multiple simulations of and allusions to fictional characters, Pelevin deliberately obfuscates the sense of reality.

For Andrukhovych, on the other hand, onomastics is more symbolic as an effective means of revealing the contradictory nature of language. Creating puns, he revels in linguistic "jouissance" and zeroes in on the paradoxical nature of proper names. In *Perverziia* one finds toponyms such as Chortopil 'Devilopolis' or 'Demonopolis,'<sup>43</sup> which designates Perfetsky's birthplace, and Dachovy Posranec, the name of a Czech bar, which amounts to a fascinating interlingual pun. In Czech it means pigeon and in Ukrainian, something like roof shitter.<sup>44</sup> These instances of paronomasia emphasize the ambivalence of the linguistic code that

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42. Richard Lane, *Jean Baudrillard* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 85.

43. Naydan, notes to *Perverzion*, 315.

44. *Ibid.*, 316.

human beings use to describe reality. Consciously or subconsciously, throughout the novel Andrukhovych continuously plays with what Derrida would refer to as “différance”<sup>45</sup> and by doing so makes the point that not only reality but also language is paradoxical. As the story unfolds, the ambivalent feeling about reality only intensifies. Andrukhovych pays scrupulous attention to the description of cities, neighbourhoods, and streets in various European countries and sprinkles them with proper names. Captivated by the wealth of detail, the reader almost feels like checking the information on a map but in the end is left confused and uncertain as to what is actually real. In fact, both Perfetsky and Omon create their own realities: the former does so in his “inebriated” wandering throughout Europe, while the latter aspires to transcend his humdrum existence by space travel. “I think the first glimpse of my true personality was the moment when I realized I could aspire beyond the thin blue film of the sky into the black abyss of space,” Omon says.<sup>46</sup>

There is, however, one important difference between the two protagonists. Whereas Omon is just an ordinary boy with an extraordinary dream, who fantasizes about space, Perfetsky is a bohemian poet with a clearly narcissistic nature, who deliberately creates his own illusory world. Perfetsky’s world is probably the world that the noted Swiss psychologist and philosopher Carl Gustav Jung once described as “a real world of delusion” created by the human psyche.<sup>47</sup> According to Tamara

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45. “Différance, a term coined by Jacques Derrida, both signals how language works and is also another term for the manoeuvres and movements of deconstruction. As a descriptive term, Derrida uses it to illustrate ... how any word always depends for its meaning not on its natural bond with the real, as if it were its stand-in, but on its association with other words along a whole chain of significations, to which it refers but also from which it is different, thus indicating perpetual movements as well as potential slippages of meaning in language” (Stuart Sim, ed., *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism* [London and New York: Routledge, 2005], 198).

46. Pelevin, *Omon Ra*, 8.

47. “Far from being a material world, this is a psychic world, which allows us to make only indirect and hypothetical inferences about the real nature of matter... Indeed there is no ‘real’ thought that cannot, at times, be thrust aside by an ‘unreal’ one, thus proving that the latter is stronger and more effective than the former. Greater than all physical dangers are the tremendous effects of delusional ideas, which are yet denied all reality by our world-blinded consciousness. Our much-vaunted reason and our boundlessly overestimated will are sometimes utterly powerless in the face of ‘unreal’ thoughts. The world powers that rule over all mankind, for good or ill, are unconscious psychic factors, and it is they that bring consciousness into being and hence create the *sine qua non* for

Hundorova, the author of one of the most comprehensive studies of Ukrainian postmodernism, Perfetsky “sees the world only in his own mirror reflections through which he wanders as in a maze. The whole world, which is being constantly transformed, has been created by the hero’s imagination. The other characters appear to be projections of his own phantasms and other people’s words (quotations).”<sup>48</sup>

Since both heroes, although for a different purpose, try to escape from their present reality, the travel theme is crucial in the two novels. Although not specifically postmodern, it symbolically reflects the confused transition to a democratic form of governance in Ukraine and Russia. It is no coincidence that Andrukhovych’s Stanislav Perfetsky travels throughout Europe. This is Andrukhovych’s way of asserting Ukraine’s intention to become part of Europe, where it traditionally belonged. Marko Pavlyshyn believes that Andrukhovych does not necessarily choose Europe, and more specifically the European Union as a political institution, but rather “a Europe which allows him to view his native landscape—the foothills of the Carpathians—and his favourite city L’viv ... as part of a continuum that stretches to Venice and Munich, encompassing much that is picturesque and visually comfortable.”<sup>49</sup> Pavlyshyn insightfully concludes that Andrukhovych’s “choice of Europe implies withdrawal into an aesthetic, artificial realm that offers the reader no socio-political challenges or exhortations.”<sup>50</sup>

While Perfetsky’s complicated itinerary eventually brings him to Venice, Pelevin’s Omon Ra goes on a mission of space exploration. Here Pelevin openly pokes fun at the preposterous and seemingly perpetual rivalry between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world in space exploration. The theme of travel acquires particular significance in light of Frederic Jameson’s view that in contemporary postmodern writing the notion of space is even more essential than the notion of time.<sup>51</sup> In

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the existence of any world at all. We are steeped in a world that was created by our own psyche” (Carl Gustav Jung, *The Real and the Surreal*, at <[http://www.quoteland.com/topic.asp?CATEGORY\\_ID=318](http://www.quoteland.com/topic.asp?CATEGORY_ID=318)> [accessed 20 October 2005]).

48. Hundorova, *Pisliachornobylska biblioteka*, 58.

49. Marko Pavlyshyn, “Choosing a Europe: Andrykhovych, Izdryk and the New Ukrainian Literature,” *New Zealand Slavonic Journal* 35 (2001): 43.

50. Ibid.

51. See Alison Russel, *Crossing Boundaries: Postmodern Travel Literature* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 14.

*Omon Ra* the representation of time and space takes an interesting twist at the end of the novel as the reader discovers that the anticipated chronology and the unity of place have been considerably distorted. While the reader is led to believe that Omon is actually in a spacecraft and about to land on the moon, he suddenly wakes up in the Lenin Library in Moscow. The entire story appears to have been just a dream, or rather a nightmare full of absurd images. Similarly, the final scene in chapter thirty-one of *Perverziia* depicts Perfetsky ready to jump out of his hotel window into the Grand Canal in Venice. According to one interpretation, Perfetsky is escaping from his enemies and chooses the other, fictional reality of the carnival. Andrukhovych does not explain Perfetsky's reasons for suicide and questions its occurrence. He strongly suggests that Perfetsky is still alive and even attributes the authorship of *Perverziia* to him. According to another interpretation, Perfetsky is confronted with a choice similar to that of Camus' Sisyphus. But he chooses suicide over absurd reality because his attempt to create his own carnivalesque reality is apparently doomed to failure.

Thus, in both novels absurdity appears to be an inseparable component of reality. In *Perverziia*, for instance, Perfetsky is invited to participate in a conference on "The Postcarnival Absurdity of the World: What Is on the Horizon?" *Omon Ra* is also confronted with the absurd at every step. According to Pelevin, the absurd nature of the Soviet system itself made the lives of common people living under its constraints, such as Omon, absurd. Pelevin expresses this in unrealistic images such as the sealed airplane toy with no escape hatch for the pilot and the legless cadets at the air force academy whose legs were amputated to make them similar to the school's patron, who continued to fly after losing his legs in the Second World War. These absurd images can be interpreted in a number of ways. The sealed airplane may symbolize the Soviet Union's isolation from the rest of the world or the individual trapped in Soviet society. The amputations point to a fanatical submission to Soviet leadership, as well as unflinching readiness to sacrifice human beings for the sake of an idea. Omon and Perfetsky have different strategies in handling the absurd. Omon is totally involved in and concentrated on his mission, although deep inside he probably understands how preposterous it is. Until his closest friend is ruthlessly murdered, Omon blindly obeys absurd orders. Only later does he uncover the incredible fraud to which he was exposed. Perfetsky, on the other hand, finds escape by reveling in the arts and partying, which in literary theory are called

carnival (*karnivalizm*). According to Hundorova, for Andrukhovych, as well as other postmodern writers in Ukraine, the carnival means primarily “a great game, youth, and an illusion of freedom.”<sup>52</sup> The carnival, of course, is not a postmodern invention. Going back to ancient times, in literary criticism it is most commonly associated with François Rabelais, whose works served as the foundation for the Bakhtinian concept of the carnivalesque. In postmodern writing, specifically in the case of the Bu-Ba-Bu writers, the carnival becomes particularly important as it epitomizes a new understanding of post-totalitarian reality. In addition to creating a reality of “endless festivities,” which was so appealing to post-Soviet societies after years of monotony and routine, the carnival with its parody and play, Hundorova believes, revealed the unrealistic nature of the existence of a totalitarian human being.<sup>53</sup> Along with parody, grotesque, and kitsch, carnivalesque writing, she points out, is largely premised on irony.

In both *Perverziia* and *Omon Ra* irony serves as a dominant expressive device. A closer examination of irony in the two novels shows that it is an effective way of fighting the absurd and a stylistic tool that accurately reflects the ambivalence of postmodern reality. Generally understood as a contradiction between the stated and the implied, irony is, in fact, a disguised form of questioning dogmas or instilling a skeptical attitude towards universal meaning. It serves as an indispensable epistemological procedure in the postmodern agenda, which “questions centralized, totalized, hierarchized, closed systems.”<sup>54</sup> According to Milan Kundera, irony also “denies us our certainties by unmasking the world as an ambiguity.”<sup>55</sup> Indeed, attempts to grasp the postmodern world in its vastness and complexity, as well as efforts to classify things into structures or paradigms, have repeatedly failed. Andrukhovych and Pelevin successfully employ irony, which in Linda Hutcheon’s terms “works to demystify and subvert authority.”<sup>56</sup> All the ironic papers

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52. Hundorova, *Pisliachornobylska biblioteka*, 81.

53. *Ibid.*, 82.

54. Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 41.

55. Milan Kundera, “Key Words, Problem Words, Words I Love,” in *The Art of the Novel*, trans. Linda Asher, at <<http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/05/17/specials/kundera-words.html>> (accessed 1 May 2006).

56. Linda Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 27.

delivered at the conference on the absurdity of the world in which Perfetsky participates dispel many dogmatic stereotypes and make fun of fundamentalist ideas. One example of this is the paper of Liza Sheila Shalizer, a radical feminist from the United States, who speaks “about sex and about the male organ, as well as about the liberation of female structures from under it.”<sup>57</sup> By introducing her as an insane woman who is “sexually liberated” but still enthralled by men, and especially by Perfetsky, Andrukhovych directs a scathing irony against a radical version of the feminist movement and mocks the obsession of some feminists with “phallogocentric culture.” Similarly Pelevin pokes fun at fundamentalist Soviet propaganda. Brainwashing Omon about his mission, the flight commander makes the following ironic statement: “The paradox—another piece of dialectics—is that we support the truth with falsehood, because Marxism carries within itself an all-conquering truth, and the goal for which you will give your life is, in a formal sense, a deception.”<sup>58</sup> Another interesting example in *Omon Ra* is a quotation from Lenin, which during Soviet times was obligatory in the preface to any lecture or published work. Lieutenant Colonel Kondratiev in the introduction to his course on “The General Theory of the Moon” says:

Dear friends! Let us recall the historic words of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, written in 1918 in a letter to Inessa Armand. “Of all the planets and heavenly bodies,” Lenin wrote, “the most important for us is the Moon.” Many years have passed since then, and the world has changed in many ways, but Lenin’s assessment has lost none of its acuteness and fundamental relevance: time has confirmed its correctness, and the fire of these words of Lenin’s still illuminates today’s page in the calendar.<sup>59</sup>

The highly ironic connotation of the word “relevance” in this quotation can hardly escape notice. Thus, *Perverziia* and *Omon Ra* vividly exemplify irony as a “survival skill, a tool for acknowledging complexity, a means of exposing or subverting oppressive hegemonic ideologies, and an art for affirming life in the face of objective troubles.”<sup>60</sup> In addition, irony is directed at the audience since the readers do not only encounter instances of verbal and structural irony, but they also become “victims”

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57. Andrukhovych, *Perverziia*, 138.

58. Pelevin, *Omon Ra*, 44.

59. *Ibid.*, 71–2.

60. Michael Fisher, “Ethnicity and the Post-Modern Arts of Memory,” at <<http://www.haussite.net/haus.0/SCRIPT/txt2000/08/memo.html>> (accessed 1 May 2006).

of irony, left with a feeling of being mocked. Andrukhovych and Pelevin mock their heroes, themselves, and their readers, while Stakh Perfetsky and Omon Ra, in their turn, mock the authors who invented them and the readers, who, together with the narrator, struggle to solve the mysteries of Perfetsky's disappearance and Ra's mission.

Referring to Umberto Eco's witticism that "irony is the only way one can be serious today," Hutcheon argues for a questioning of closed systems, hierarchies, and commonly accepted values and points to the astonishing contradiction between the subversion of dominant discourses and the simultaneous dependence on them.<sup>61</sup> The two novels can also be discussed in the light of Hutcheon's conception of postmodernism as contradictory and anti-totalizing by nature. The contradiction Hutcheon speaks about can be brought out by considering how *Omon Ra* and *Perverziia* are anti-totalizing. Pelevin's story debunks Soviet ideology, but at the same time it is based and thus dependent on Soviet reality.<sup>62</sup> Andrukhovych's work subverts the dominant discourse through a technique new to Ukrainian literature. *Perverziia* not only questions the accepted life values of a post-Soviet Ukrainian citizen, but also rejects the validity of a master narrative through multiple or polyphonic narrations. In *Perverziia* reality blends with fiction as a result of a vast number of intertwined motifs and subplots. Andrukhovych achieves the effect of multiple narrations by using a plethora of communication media, including a newspaper article by Bilynkevych in memoriam of Perfetsky, audio recordings by Perfetsky, Perfetsky's diary, a letter of invitation to the conference, Ada Zitrone's and Dr. Riesenbock's regular dispatches as they spy on Perfetsky, Fr. Delcampo's testament, interviews with Liza Sheila Shalizer and Perfetsky, the "linguo-cabalistic expressions" of John Paul Oshchyrko's reggae, Liza's paper at the conference, Perfetsky's and Ada's exchanges of notes during the speech, the play *Orpheus in Venice*, an interview with the opera's producer Matthew Kulikoff, clippings from the Venetian press, Perfetsky's and other participants' conference papers, an obituary for Leonardo di Casallegra, the Carnival Memorandum, a videotape transcript, Perfetsky's testament, the final conversation, marked by various font formatting, between Perfetsky, Ada, and Dr. Riesenbock

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61. Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, 39.

62. In addition to its Soviet setting, Pelevin's novel makes a satirical allusion to a classic of Soviet literature—Boris Polevoi's *Povest o nastoiashchem cheloveke*, in which Aleksei Maresev is the protagonist.

as a voyeur, and Andrukhovych's epilogue. In *Perverziia* Andrukhovych perfects this technique, which he also used in his earlier novel *Rekreatsii*, where "the sense of confusion is exacerbated by the text's complex polyphonic construction: switching between the first, second and third person, the narrative follows the perspective of six different characters—four poets, the wife of one of them, and a local prostitute."<sup>63</sup> By using so many different genres of narration or "versions" Andrukhovych not only reinforces the symbolic meaning of the title, but also frustrates the expectation of one, coherent story. Even though Andrukhovych tries to recreate Perfetsky's itinerary and the events that happened to him in a chronological fashion, the pastiche of multiple genres disrupts the linear narrative. In fact, every report, interview, article, speech, or recording can be read as an independent piece. In other words, the composition of *Perverziia* invalidates the metanarrative and leaves the reader in doubt about the ultimate truth: either it does not exist or it is extremely hard to grasp.

Even though *Perverziia* and *Omon Ra* are explicitly postmodern in demonstrating that reality is very obscure and beyond reason's grasp, it is wrong to maintain, as many critics of postmodernism do, that the movement rejects all values. In the two novels values are questioned rather than negated. The axiological foundation of *Perverziia* is the freedom of choice, which the hero, Stanislav Perfetsky, and the author, Yuri Andrukhovych, fully enjoy. *Omon* also makes a crucial choice when he refuses to obey the criminal order of his superiors and decides to navigate the space shuttle as he himself knows best. According to Catherine Burgass's research on postmodern values, "[c]olluding with poststructuralism, postmodernism has invalidated the metanarrative and dissolved the autonomous subject, thus apparently disabling the construction of any new object- or subject-centered ethics, aesthetics or axiology."<sup>64</sup> In fact, *Perverziia* and *Omon Ra* are in line with what Burgass calls "the programme ... to retrieve some sort of status for value without asserting an absolute or truth value for their own claims."<sup>65</sup> Moreover, Andrukhovych and Pelevin involve the readers in their works,

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63. Vitaly Chernetsky, review of *Recreations*, by Yuri Andrukhovych, trans. by Marko Pavlyshyn, *The Slavic and East European Journal* 55, no. 3 (1999): 543.

64. Catherine Burgass, "Postmodern Value," in *Postmodern Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed. Lucy Niall (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 347.

65. *Ibid.*

leaving it up to them to decide what the heroes choose to do in the end, thus reinforcing the value of free interpretation. In *Perverziia*, Perfetsky attempts to commit suicide, but the reader never learns whether he succeeds. There are hints that he does but also rumours and the narrator's intrusions at the end that put this into question. Andrukhovych ends the novel with: "spring has just started and half of your life is ahead."<sup>66</sup>

Pelevin's conclusion is also open-ended. Omon faces a dilemma when he escapes from the library to end up in the Moscow subway: "I had to decide where to go. I looked up at the metro diagram on the wall beside the emergency-stop handle and began to work out where exactly on the red line I was."<sup>67</sup> Through the metaphor of the subway, Pelevin conjures up many images and analogies: underground life in isolation, the absence of light at the end of the tunnel, the multiple subway lines, and the tunnel-visioned passengers, to mention but a few.

Any representation of reality in *Omon Ra* and *Perverziia* would be incomplete without an account of language as a tool that human beings use to shape and reflect reality. According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativity, language, to a greater or lesser degree, influences human consciousness and determines our perception of reality. But perception may be distorted because language is to some extent deceitful, since it violates through tropes and figurative speech the distinct links between the signifier and the signified. Many postmodern theoreticians derived the above idea of language from the post-structuralist school, represented mainly by Jacques Lacan. He stated that metaphor and metonymy break the connections between real objects and the words used to signify them.<sup>68</sup> Without such links language cannot convey any definite meaning. That is why the most conspicuous stylistic features in postmodern writing are wordplay, violation of norms, and ambivalence of meaning. According to Richard Harland, postmodernists pay more attention to language than previous writers. "No longer is it sufficient to clear out the mediating passages so that the subject may gain better knowledge of the object.... [F]or Postmodernists, both subject and object are caught up within the passages, and knowledge in the traditional sense is out of the question."<sup>69</sup> "[T]he text," Harland continues, "is a mere

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66. Andrukhovych, *Perverziia*, 290.

67. Pelevin, *Omon Ra*, 154.

68. See Sim, ed., *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, 256.

69. Richard Harland, *Literary Theory from Plato to Barthes. An Introductory History*

collection of marks upon the page until the reader makes it signify—and makes it signify through the channels of her/his own prejudices and desires.”<sup>70</sup> This statement is illustrated by both Andrukhovych and Pelevin, in whose novels language often becomes a priority, overshadowing the plot and the protagonists’ actions and feelings. In an interview Andrukhovych said the following about language and reality: “As the years pass, I have reached the conclusion that writing and literature ... are in fact a substitute for something that should be in reality.”<sup>71</sup>

Andrukhovych’s protagonist believes that because people always deal with individual words, they rarely know the language well. In addition, Perfetsky always carries an audio recorder with him. “So the idea with this Dictaphone came up,” he says. “Always to have it with me. To speak, to be silent, to speak again. To cram into it equally as much of everything as is crammed in our language. It’s clear that even [the language] won’t save us. But it can intimate, give something, without knowing it itself. Oh, fuck, such wise thoughts, I hate myself!”<sup>72</sup> Although Andrukhovych’s idiolect may not save literary Ukrainian, it definitely explores its potential more deeply by introducing into the novel West Ukrainian dialectal words, taboo expressions, and neologisms. Pelevin, on the other hand, prefers to keep his language simple. His novel reads very smoothly and naturally. He skillfully manipulates different registers and conveys the linguistic subtleties of Russian puns, rude expressions, and youth and military slang. Yuri Machkasov, one of the English translators of *Omon Ra*, says the following about Pelevin’s prose:

It is not only uniquely Russian, utilizing the abundant capacity of the language, of both civilized and obscene variety ... no, it’s also inextricably Soviet, in fact post-Soviet, processed-and-condensed-Soviet. Pelevin explicitly counts on ... the popular culture icons and images, pounded since early childhood into anyone who experienced the ultimate brain-laundering (washing is too mild a word) of the Communist education-indoctrination system.<sup>73</sup>

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(New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), 238.

70. *Ibid.*, 242.

71. Prokhasko, *Inshyi format*, 11.

72. Andrukhovych, *Perverziia*, 25.

73. Yuri Machkasov, translator’s notes to *Omon Ra* by Viktor Pelevin, at <[http://lib.ru/PELEWIN/omon\\_engl.txt](http://lib.ru/PELEWIN/omon_engl.txt)> (accessed 10 September 2004).

Both Andrukhovych and Pelevin undoubtedly have something extremely energizing in their style. Even Pelevin's most adamant critic admits that "there is in Pelevin something barbarically refreshing,"<sup>74</sup> while "Andrukhovych's voice is distinguished by its delicate balance of lyricism and cynicism."<sup>75</sup> What Wachtel says about Andrukhovych's early prose is also true of *Perverzija*.

Since both novels posit that reality is overwhelmingly diverse and heterogeneous, one of the most conspicuous aspects of style in *Perverzija* and *Omon Ra* is eclecticism, which in a typically postmodern manner negates the literary unity of the text. Andrukhovych and Pelevin mix lofty and colloquial registers and produce a comic effect when they discuss important subjects using colloquial language or, conversely, talk about mundane matters using an exquisitely elaborate style. By inversion and pastiche they mix the popular with the elitist and erase any clear-cut borderlines between the two to convey the vagueness of agency and authority in postmodern society. For Andrukhovych quotations from Umberto Eco are as important as those from Jim Morrison. *Perverzija* is both a detective story, which is a popular genre preferred by the masses, and a philosophical work, touching upon important ontological issues. Naydan defines *Perverzija* as a philosophical mystery novel that "comprises a pastiche of different genres" and abounds in "linguistic and stylistic complexities."<sup>76</sup> He also points out another important postmodern quality of *Perverzija*—its performative nature. *Perverzija* "is a performative novel, with rap, reggae, opera, and many other performance elements comprising an integral part of its composition."<sup>77</sup> This view is shared by Mark Andryczyk, who in his study of the concept of performance in the works of the Bu-Ba-Bu literary group, pointed out that performance is "a key element of its creative philosophy."<sup>78</sup> By introducing performance into a literary text Andrukhovych invigorates Ukrainian literature and attracts young audiences, which find elements of

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74. Pavel Basinskii, "The Pelevin Syndrome: A 'New Writer Is as Old as the World,'" *Russian Studies in Literature* 37, no. 3 (2001): 95.

75. Andrew Wachtel, review of *From Three Worlds: New Writing from Ukraine*, ed. Ed Hogan, *Comparative Literature Studies* 36, no. 3 (1999): 271.

76. Naydan, "Translating a Novel's Novelty," 455.

77. Naydan, "Ukrainian Literary Identity Today," 26.

78. Mark Andryczyk, "Bu-Ba-Bu: Poetry and Performance," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 27, nos. 1–2 (2002): 257.

performance appealing. But more importantly, by having Perfetsky accidentally perform in a play he inadvertently creates another version of simulated reality. Thus the boundary between performance on stage, in the text, and in real life is blurred.

Although Pelevin does not explicitly use performance in *Omon Ra*, his arsenal of stylistic devices is similar to Andrukhovych's. According to Lipovetsky, "Pelevin combines the traditions of Soviet science fiction and Zen Buddhist mysticism with the techniques of postmodernist metafiction, and the result is an ambiguous absurd style that is uniquely Pelevin's."<sup>79</sup> Cynthia Simmons calls Pelevin's devices "decidedly postmodern."<sup>80</sup> Among others, she mentions "subversion of his own narration, representation of the postmodernist concern with repetition and mirroring that leads to meaninglessness (a world of simulacra), and observations on the vulnerability of all paradigms of existence."<sup>81</sup> Pelevin also uses pastiche by incorporating into his works a myriad of different topics, ranging "from politics, Western pop culture, computer games, advertising ... to his generation's fascination with mind-altering experiences, Eastern religions, and the occult."<sup>82</sup> In addition to its eclecticism, *Omon Ra* is permeated with parodic intertextuality, which is typical of postmodernism. According to Anthony McGowan, "[p]ostmodernism embraces an extreme notion of intertextuality, in which the play of meaning is infinite, in which anything goes. The limits of interpretation are set only by the boundaries of the imagination."<sup>83</sup> Following the concept of intertextuality developed by Julia Kristeva, who in her *Semiotike* argued that all new texts are basically produced as an incorporation of intertwined quotations from previous texts, both Andrukhovych and Pelevin add special flavour to their novels by numerous allusions to different literary works, songs, and movies. The instances of intertextual copying, eclectic pastiche, and improvised bricolage create a reality in simulation, which becomes fluid, ephemeral, unspecified, but most importantly, spontaneous. Hundorova points out the

79. Lipovetsky, "On the Nature of Russian Post-modernism," 296.

80. Cynthia Simmons, "Fly Me to the Moon: Modernism and the Soviet Space Program in Viktor Pelevin's *Omon Ra*," *The Harriman Review* 12, no. 4 (2000): 8.

81. *Ibid.*

82. Joseph Mozur, "Viktor Pelevin: Post-Sovism, Buddhism, & Pulp Fiction," *World Literature Today* 76, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 66.

83. Sim, *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, 244.

importance of spontaneity, particularly in the language of *Perverziia*. "Language can swoon, transform into hybrid distortions, flow like a river, personify, in a nutshell, autonomize as a language-simulacrum."<sup>84</sup> Antonina Berezovenko develops this argument further in her insightful study of Andrukhovych's language.<sup>85</sup> One of her key statements is that Andrukhovych does not simply play with language, as most critics observe, but also establishes a new discourse and thus a new world. By making up a new linguistic reality for his heroes and himself, Andrukhovych subsequently engages his readers in this process as many of his innovations become accepted usage.

In conclusion, this article has shed some light on the situation in Ukrainian and Russian literatures that occurred in the aftermath of almost a century of state-imposed ideological literature. While modernism was a predominant literary movement in Western countries, socialist realism impeded the development of national literatures in the newly independent post-Soviet countries and deeply affected their aesthetic systems. Hence the turn to the Western literary tradition, particularly to the postmodern movement, has led to a new approach to writing. Both Andrukhovych and Pelevin have liberated their novels from the confines of social values and opened up various exciting possibilities of interpretation by presenting reality as ambivalent and contradictory in nature. As one of the most typical features of Slavic postmodernism, fictional absurdity has merged with the absurdity of real life to puzzle the reader and to create an impression of fluidity, constant change, and doubt in any universal meanings. By exploiting the potential of playful onomastics and multiple narrative voices in their novels, Andrukhovych and Pelevin have not only reinvigorated Ukrainian and Russian literatures, but also enriched the respective languages. In fact, they have invented an exquisite new style—full of playfulness, mystery, and burlesque. The techniques that Andrukhovych and Pelevin use to represent reality have had a liberating and stimulating influence on the younger generation of writers in Russia and Ukraine.

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84. Hundorova, *Ukrainskyi literaturnyi postmodern*, 87.

85. Antonina Berezovenko, "The New in the Prose of Jurij Andrukhovych," *Die Welt der Slaven* 52, no. 1 (2007): 57–82.

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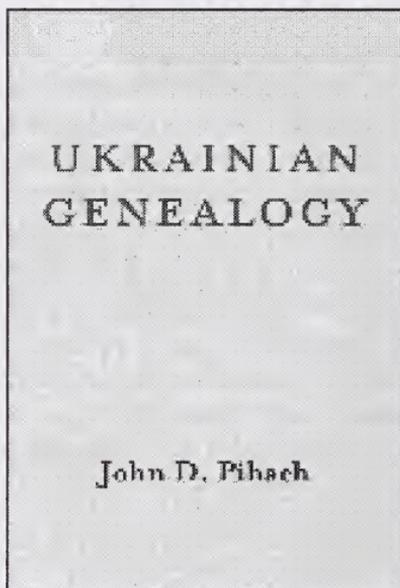
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## Geopoetic Models in Postmodern Ukrainian and Czech Prose

*Alexander Kratochvil*

In this paper I examine three different geopoetic models by writers such as Milan Kundera, Yuri Andrukhovych, Jáchym Topol, and Serhii Zhadan. Geopoetics, which contains an obvious allusion to geopolitics, has an affinity with cultural studies, where there is an increasing interest in the conceptualization of space, spatial practices, and the so-called spatiality of discourses. There is no consensus on what the spatiality of discourses means: is it a “topographical turn”<sup>1</sup> or a “spatial turn?”<sup>2</sup> The fact that this question affects different disciplines, such as history, cultural studies, cultural geography, philosophy, sociology, and media science, makes it all the more difficult to answer it. The term “geopoetic” localizes the discussion on the spatiality of discourses in literary studies. The Literature Department at the Humboldt University of Berlin, for example, has undertaken a large research project on the “topography of pluralistic cultures in Europe.” Related to this project is a cycle of lectures titled “Geopoetics: Literature as Topography.” Within the framework of this project, geopoetics is the analysis of the complex relations of literature and geo-referenced space, particularly, of the relations between discursive and aesthetic procedures and cultural projections of space. The analysis focuses on literary texts from different epochs, texts that are related explicitly to geo-referenced space and, therefore, on the construction of imaginary territories.

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1. S. Weigel, S. “Zum ‘topographical turn,’” *Kulturpoetik* 2 (2002): 151–65.

2. Karl Schlögel, *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit: Über Zivilisationsgeschichte und Geopolitik* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 2003).

Another research field that is related to the “spatial turn” in cultural studies is borderland studies. In her doctoral dissertation “US-Mexico Borderland Narratives: Geopoetic Representations from the Mexican American War to the Present” (Air Force Institute of Technology, 2000), Rosemary A. King shows the close connection between geopoetics and borderland narratives. According to the abstract, she analyses the “relationships between literary constructions of space and artistic expressions of conflicts, characters, and cultural encounter.... Concomitant with close attention to the conceptualization of space in border literature is a foregrounding of the genres that border writers employ, such as historical romance and the Hispanic *Bildungsroman*, as well as the literary traditions from which they draw, such as travel narratives or utopian literature.”<sup>3</sup> She demonstrates that “the various ways in which characters respond to cultural encounter—adapting, resisting, challenging, sympathizing—depends on artistic rendering of spaces and places around them. Thus, the central argument of this project is that character responses to cultural encounters arise out of geopoetics—the artistic expression of space and place—from the earliest to the most recent border narratives.”<sup>4</sup>

Thus the geopoetics of Central and Eastern Europe deals with the literary topographies and changing political spaces of that cultural region. In the German-speaking countries, the term “geopoetic” was spread and, to a certain degree, promoted by Yuri Andrukhovych and Andrzej Stasiuk. In this connection it first appeared on the jacket text of the German translation of Stasiuk and Andrukhovych’s *Moia Ievropa: Dva eseï pro naidyvnishu chastynu svitu* (My Europe: Two Essays on the Most Astonishing Part of the World, 2001). Surprisingly enough, it was in Moscow that Andrukhovych discovered the first literary circle devoted to geopoetics. In a recent interview Andrukhovych stated: “I came to Moscow in 1998 and got an invitation from a geopoetic club ... the Crimean Club. It organized various events under the label of geopoetics. The purpose of the club, and in particular of the organizer, Igor Sid, is to bring writers from various regions to Moscow to try to uncover the relations between creativity and geographical places.... Crimea is a region with major tensions to which the Russian side always made territorial

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3. <<http://www.stormingmedia.us/30/3027/A302773.html>> (accessed 12 March 2007).

4. Ibid.

claims. Igor Sid's idea was to de-politicize this theme with a strong aesthetic treatment. This was his response to the word geopolitics."<sup>5</sup> *Entsyklopediia Ukrainskoi Literatury* (Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Literature) provides some information about the club.<sup>6</sup>

To sum up, geopoetics can be defined in a preliminary way as the study of creative relations between individual literary constructions and cultural topography, resulting in a literary chronotopos. Writers express such chronotopoi, of course, in different ways: according to Andrukhovych, for example, a geopoetical image consists of a McDonald's beside a historic ruin.

This conception of geopoetics is an expression of the postmodern aesthetic in Central and Eastern Europe, which is a response to the Soviet version of the "project of modernity," as Theodor W. Adorno described it. For example, in the Soviet narrative, the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant, which was built in the ancient forested marshes of Polissia, was a metaphor of modernity, progress, sophisticated technology, and control over nature. As Tamara Hundorova pointed out, the power plant, which used to symbolize progress, has become "the fundamental signature symbol of Ukrainian literature at the end of the twentieth century."<sup>7</sup> Today it represents the steady decline of the Ukrainian language,

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5. Magdalena Marszalek and Sylvia Sasse, "Antonyčs Geist: Ein Interview mit Jurij Andruchovyč," *Novinki*, 2006, at <[http://www.novinki.de/html/zurueckgefragt/Interview\\_Andruchvyc.html](http://www.novinki.de/html/zurueckgefragt/Interview_Andruchvyc.html)> (accessed 7 January 2007).

6. "A happening-salon founded by Igor Sid and Anna Brazhkina in Moscow in 1995. The founding of the club was preceded by three Bosphoran poetic forums (1993–95) in the Crimea and on Tuzla Island, which were initiated by the poetic grouping Peninsula (Poluostrov). The club's curator is Igor Sid, its honorary president is Vasilii Ansonov, and its cultural hero-director is Maksimilian Kirienko-Voloshin. Since 1998 one of the club's activities was supporting and researching contemporary Ukrainian literature. It focused attention on the work of Yuri Andrukhovych, Iurii Izdryk, Volodymyr Ieshkiliev, Halyna Petrosaniak, and Serhii Zhadan. In May–June 1999 the Southern Accent literary festival was held in Moscow, in which the representatives of two contemporary literatures—Ukrainian and Russian—took part. In the humanistic arena the club manifests itself as 'a leading proponent of geopoetic ideas, the doctrine of the Parisian culturologist Kenneth White, in the Slavic-Turkic geopolitical nerve node.' Its 'Crimean version'—practical geopoetics—asserts that humanity is passing from the age of ambitions to power to the age of creative ambitions (Sid)" (Oleksandr Kats, "Krymskyi heopoetychnyi klub," at <<http://www.proza.com.ua/enc/index.php?keys=%E3%E5%EE%EF%EE%E5%F2%E8%EA%E0>> [accessed 23 February 2007]).

7. T. Hundorova, *Pisliachornobylska biblioteka: Ukrainskyi literaturnyi postmodern* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2005), 17.

literature, and culture in the second half of the twentieth century. In postmodern literary discourse, this metaphor of progress has changed into a metonymy that, like a kaleidoscope, shatters the Soviet version of the modern master narrative into fragments. Hundorova captures this in an image: the Chornobyl catastrophe “has combined post-industrial reality, which is embodied in the stately beauty of the Chornobyl Power Plant reflected in the waters of the nuclear lake, and medieval, pre-modern reality.”<sup>8</sup> The explosion of its nuclear reactor marked the end of the ideological effluence of the Soviet regime in Ukraine.

We can understand Chornobyl not only as a metaphor, metonymy, symbol, or apocalyptic text but also as a concretization of a chronotopos, and thus as one concretization of Ukrainian’s geopoetic landscape. Interestingly enough, Polissia was a geopoetic landscape even before the nuclear accident; for example, it was the setting of Lesia Ukrainka’s *Lisova pisnia* (The Forest Song). The area around Chornobyl, with its unique cultural traditions, which attracted the attention of historians, linguists, and anthropologists, had long been a symbol of archaic cultural. The construction of the power plant and its infrastructure, including the bedroom town Prypiat, had a lasting impact on the cultural and natural environment of the region. The Chornobyl disaster transformed the region into a different kind of geopoetic landscape. It would be interesting to compare the two. I suggest that in contemporary texts about the “zone,” we shall find a real postmodern geopoetic landscape, in which all the achievements of modern times are discredited, and in eclectic texts, revived folklore and myths. This is hardly surprising, since the region became postmodern not only in a literary or discursive sense, but also in reality. I would go even farther than Hundorova: the Chornobyl zone not only returned to the medieval, pre-modern age, but became an eclectic chronotopos that fell out of time. It is a unique phenomenon: the simultaneousness of the unsimultaneous exists only there. The abandoned villages exist in the primeval age, prior to human settlement; the settlements inhabited by returnees (“illegal immigrants”) are colonies in pre-modern time; the still functioning reactors of the power plant work in modern time; and Chornobyl tourism and its media coverage operate in postmodern time.

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8. Ibid.

According to this schema, there are different representations of the Chernobyl chronotopos in literature. Along with intellectual reflections in essays, recollections, collections of documents, and novels, there are stories about Chernobyl in the popular literature—tragic stories of individuals or families, which are accepted as authentic.<sup>9</sup>

There is another geopoetic zone in Ukraine. It is related to a very productive feature of postmodern literature, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, namely, the reflection of history, often in a playful manner. From the Ukrainian national angle, Ukrainian history appears as a heroic tale of woe. Part of the woe lay in the fact that Ukraine was absent from European history (with some exceptions) from the beginning of the eighteenth century until almost the end of the twentieth century. It was treated as a colonial satellite of Poland or Russia and was assigned to Polish or Russian history. While most Ukrainian writers who depict the past construct anti-colonial, heroic narratives, some writers, such as Vasyl Kozheliianko and Dmytro Bily, deal with the past in a playful post-colonial manner. In their novels they invent virtual history and geography. The central character of Kozheliianko's novel *Defiliada v Moskvi* (The Military Parade in Moscow), Ensign Dmytro Levytsky, reflects on recent events as follows:

Time has judged them. Where are the Bolsheviks now? Suffering in agony beyond the Urals. It turned out as he had thought. In six days in defeated Moscow, in their Red Square, Führer Adolf Aloisovych himself and the leaders of the countries allied with the Reich will review the military parade of the victorious armies. The day was selected deliberately: the Bolsheviks celebrated November 7 as their day of accession to power in 1917. Great men, the overmen of Europe, the builders of the new order—Adolf Hitler, il Duce Mussolini, Marshal Antonescu, Admiral Horthy, and another dozen heads of state of the anti-Comintern pact—will stand on the tribune of the mausoleum of the first Bolshevik premier, whose mummy on the Führer's orders has been interred somewhere in St. Petersburg (Adolf the Great was afraid of unburied corpses). But the main thing is not that the Spanish leader, Franco, will embrace the emperor of Japan with the Cathedral of Saint

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9. For a bibliography, see Larysa Zaleska Onyshkevych, "Echoes of Glasnost: Chernobyl in Soviet Ukrainian Literature," in *Echoes of Glasnost in Soviet Ukraine*, ed. Romana M. Bahry (North York, Ont.: Captus University Publications, 1989), 151–70; Hundorova, *Pisliachornobylska biblioteka*, 24, n. 7; and Anna-Halja Horbatsch's anthology *Stimmen aus Tschornobyl* (Reichelsheim: Brodina Verlag, 1996).

Basil the Blessed in the background. What is most important for Dmytro and, as he thinks, for Ukraine is that on the mausoleum, as an equal among equals, legitimately and with full rights will stand the leader of the Ukrainian state—Stepan Bandera.<sup>10</sup>

....

In Europe everything seemed to be all right. Having set foot on the territory of the USSR on 22 June 1941, Hitler without any special efforts captured Moscow in October. Of course, the dear little allies, especially the Ukrainians, helped, but he had so many problems with these allies. Romania was the most troublesome. They also planned to create their own empire from the Danube to the Dnieper, and he had to use many arguments to convince the Romanians that there would be no empire. There can only be one empire in Europe—the Third Reich. Let little brother Benito play at the Roman Empire for a while, but that was ridiculous. Sooner or later these games at being Caesar will be stopped.

....

The questions of Belarus and Russia remained unsolved. Although the Ukrainian Reichstag, or as they call it, Rada, is ready to recognize Belarus as a part of the Ukrainian state, we should give some thought to merging them with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into a Balto-Slavic protectorate with the capital in St. Petersburg.

The Russian state will look nice within the borders of the Moscow principality of the fourteenth century. True, the president of the Russian provisional government, General Andrei Vlasov, begs to include Siberia, but I told him, Adolf the Great recalls, that first your Russian Liberation Army should liberate Siberia from the Bolshevik bands, which still march under red flags, then we'll talk. The Far East with Vladivostok I'll have to give up to the yellow-skinned ones—they're allies, the damned swine. Until together we crush the USA, I have to play along with them.<sup>11</sup>

Of course, this is geopolitics rather than geopoetics. Tamara Hundorova commented on texts of this kind: "At the general cultural level, Ukrainian postmodern thought was not so much an ironic as a revisionist attempt to inscribe its own history in the already present text (narrative) of a 'great' culture. Thus it is an attempt to rewrite its culture (literature), and this desire is not without resentment (insult), nostalgia, and even revanshism."<sup>12</sup>

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10. <<http://exlibris.org.ua/defilada/r01.html>> (accessed 12 March 2007).

11. <<http://exlibris.org.ua/defilada/r05.html>> (accessed 12 March 2007).

12. *Pisliachornobylska biblioteka*, 57.

As far as Kozheliianko is concerned, I do not agree with Hundorova, because his virtual history has nothing to do with revanchism or ultra-nationalism. His text even unmasks the rhetoric of extreme Ukrainian nationalism and oversimplified anti-colonialism, which only reverse the plus and minus signs in a totalizing modern reference system. By imitating various modern totalizing discourses his novel *Defiliada v Moskvi* often seems to be provocative in what it exposes, but it is always recognizable as fiction, particularly as fiction that deconstructs very ironically the former Soviet and the contemporary anti-Soviet discourses.

The spreading ideological pluralism in post-totalitarian countries is accompanied by geographical pluralism in literature, as well as in other fields such as local history. The former cultural centre, Kyiv, has lost its controlling and unifying power. The replacement of the hierarchical structure of the cultural space by the well-known rhizome allows unknown or forgotten cultural areas to develop and makes previously blocked historical periods accessible. The deconstruction of Soviet cultural topography, with its focus on industrialization, colonization, and cultural unification, has paved the way for the reconstruction of the Central European cultural space.

Czech and Polish writers began to think about Central European culture as geopoetic space in the 1960s with Czesław Miłosz's *Rodzinna Europa* (Native Realm: A Search for Self-Definition) and Milan Kundera's "The Tragedy of Central Europe."<sup>13</sup> They focused on the multicultural heritage of Central Europe, which was suppressed and even disappeared because of the master narratives of modernity in the twentieth century. In the mid-1980s Kundera said that in geographical terms Central Europe is situated at the centre, in cultural terms in the West, and in political terms in the East. Using Edmund Husserl's idea of Europe as an intellectual realm, he denied that Central Europe could be defined geographically.

The question arises: Was [Central European culture] just a coincidence of geography? Or was it rooted in a long tradition, a shared past? Or, to put in another way: Does Central Europe constitute a true cultural configuration with its own history? And if such a configuration exists, can it be defined geographically? What are its borders?

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13. M. Kundera, "The Tragedy of Central Europe," trans. Edmund White, *The New York Review of Books*, 26 April 1984: 33–8.

It would be senseless to draw its borders exactly. Central Europe is not a state: It is a culture or a fate. Its borders are imaginary and must be drawn and redrawn with each new historical situation.<sup>14</sup>

It is clear, however, that Kundera is referring to the territory of the Habsburg Empire: a territory without internal borders, which provided an intellectual home for intellectuals of various nationalities. This entity was quite distinct from the Soviet-made Eastern Europe. This concept of Central Europe was not without nostalgic overtones. Taras Vozniak, the editor of the Lviv journal *Ī*, states that Ukrainian dissidents in the Soviet period readily adopted this idea and eagerly disseminated Kundera's article.<sup>15</sup>

Kundera's concept of Central Europe applies perfectly to West Ukrainian literary discourse. Central European traditions and heritage, updated as geopoetic chronotopoi, appear not only in Andrukhovych's texts but also in Taras Prokhasko's, Iurko Prokhasko's, and Tymofii Havryliv's works. Andrukhovych, for example, writes:

"Central Europe is a special state of the soul, a special attitude to the world," my friend Krzysztof Czyzewski says. And I am so bold as to add: it is the kind of province in which everyone knows that he is really at the very centre, for the centre is nowhere and everywhere at the same time, and for this reason from the heights and lows of his own workshop, he can look with complete equanimity at everything else, including New York and backward Moscow. Here it is—the absence of any axes, here is the human chaos of life, whole "nodes of communication" of the vertical with the horizontal and vice versa.<sup>16</sup>

Andrukhovych shows how stimulating it can be to have at the same time the privileges of the centre and the periphery. This is achievable, of course, only in fiction and geopoetics. Andrukhovych displays fragments and remainders that stimulate him to recreate a Central European chronotopos. But this is a projection from the present into the past and does not pretend to be a true representation. Compared to Kundera's view of the past in which individuals become merely objects, not to say

14. Ibid., 35.

15. Taras Vozniak, "Děja-vu in Osteuropa," at <[http://www.geographie.uni-marburg.de/parser/parser.php?file=/deuframat/deutsch/6/6\\_4/vozniak/start.htm](http://www.geographie.uni-marburg.de/parser/parser.php?file=/deuframat/deutsch/6/6_4/vozniak/start.htm)> (accessed 19 May 2007).

16. Iurii Andrukhovych, "Chas i mistse, abo Moia ostannia terytorii," in *Dezori ientatsiia na mistsevosti: Sproby* (Ivano-Frankivsk: Lileia-NV, 1999), 121.

victims of historical space and time, Andrukhovych assumes the role of a creator or “demiurge,” as he and Ieshkiliev put it in their *Entsyklopediia Ukrainskoi Literatury*. History itself becomes an object now. We find this not only in Andrukhovych’s essays but also in his poetry dealing with Galicia’s past. The works of BuBaBu recreate Galicia as a chronotopos full of grotesque spectacles and adventures. The pluralistic base of these “recreations” is built of episodes and anecdotes from different cultural and historical discourses (narratives).<sup>17</sup> Andrukhovych’s complex chronotopos is reflected best in the image of the Austro-Hungarian railway network:

For us [Austria-Hungary] opened new geographical possibilities and taught us to regard the West in its gentle decline with love. Just think of it—there even was a time when my city [Ivano-Frankivsk] belonged to the same state formation *not* as Tambov and Tashkent, but as Venice and Vienna! Tuscany and Lombardy lay within the same boundaries as Galicia and Transylvania. At the beginning of the century I would not have required a visa to meet with Rilke or say Gustav Klimt, and to get off the train in Cracow, Prague, Salzburg, or Triest I would have needed only a ticket for the right train. I invite anyone who doubts this to look at a map of the royal railway connections.<sup>18</sup>

The railway network is a metonymy for Central European cultural topography. As a geopoetic space it can be found in the Internet project *Potiah76* (Train76), run by Andrukhovych. *Potiah76* is basically an Internet journal dedicated to a virtual cultural topography of Central Europe. There are various stations on the route, such as “Czernivці,” “Станіславów,” “Lwiv,” and “Прзemyśl” (Chernivtsi, Stanyslaviv, Lviv, and Przemyśl). The spelling of the station names indicates a mystical parallel space called Central Europe. This space provides Andrukhovych with a screen for deconstructing the “Europe-related narrative” or the Ukrainian myth of Europe, which originated in the 1920s with Khvylovy’s concept of psychological Europe and was not laid to rest until the mid-1990s. The “central-eastern review,” as Andrukhovych calls this

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17. It would be interesting to compare Andrukhovych’s works with the works of Central European writers such as Kundera, Pavel Kohout, Györđy Konrad, and Peter Estherhazy. I believe that we would find many parallels between them. While these will reduce Andrukhovych’s uniqueness and originality, they will place him squarely in the Central European literary tradition.

18. Andrukhovych, “Chas i mistse,” 8.

deconstruction, is not an expression of nostalgia for the Habsburg Empire, which is often attributed to him,<sup>19</sup> but rather playing with nostalgia. There is no serious desire to revive the past. This would be anachronistic and disastrous, as Kundera demonstrated in his novel *L'Ignorance* (Ignorance). Andrukhovych is aware of this and never loses ironic distance. Asked about the nostalgia in Ukraine and other Central European countries for the cultural heterogeneity of the Habsburg state, he replied that "It would be one-sided to look only for the traces of Habsburg Austria. Today Austria is no longer Central Europe. I would rather refer to the post-totalitarian and post-Communist reality. This is a unifying momentum. Thus the territory of the former GDR belongs to that reality, but not Austria."<sup>20</sup>

The ambiguity of a pretended nostalgia for one empire (Habsburg) and the demonizing of another (Russian) dissolve in postmodern contingency. Andrukhovych is aware that Europe does not (and did not) count on Ukraine and that all discussions about Ukraine's European dimension are belated, even if the so-called Orange Revolution demonstrated—unintentionally, in my view—Ukraine's Central Europeanness. By Central Europeanness I have in mind what Kundera described in the following words: "In dramatic content and historical impact, nothing that has occurred in 'geographic Europe,' in the West or in the East, can be compared with the successions of revolts in Central Europe. Every single one was supported by almost the entire population. And, in every case, each regime could not have defended itself for more than three hours, if it had not been backed by Russia."<sup>21</sup>

This statement about late-modern (from the 1950s to the mid-1980s), not postmodern, Central European culture is echoed by Andrukhovych. He agrees that the myth about Central Europe is out of date:

Every Ukrainian, like the "typical" Hungarian in 1956, the "typical" Czech in 1968, and the "typical" Pole in the 1980s, stood up in defence of his own dignity.

In 2004 a miracle happened in Ukraine: a society that for a whole decade appeared indecisive, passive, and divided suddenly managed to mount a united, peaceful, and powerful protest. "Typical Ukrainians"

19. For example, Hundorova states: "Ideologically it (the [Central European] topos) includes nostalgia for the Empire, of course, for the western Austrian Empire, not the Muscovite Empire" (*Pisliachornobylska biblioteka*, 143).

20. "Antonyčs Geist."

21. Kundera, "The Tragedy of Central Europe," 33.

turned out to be very untypical, more than the government—and not only the government—ever thought. Banal geopolitics turned into creative geopoetics.

The Orange poetics is an exceptionally strong argument against the “monotonous zone of greyness” that, according to Ukraine’s not very competent or sympathetic leaders, was to absorb Ukraine for more than a decade.<sup>22</sup>

I agree with Andrukhovych’s view that the Orange Revolution indeed belongs to the tradition of Central European revolutions, but not with his interpretation of that event as a conscious expression of Ukrainian Europeanness, an interpretation he and other “Galicians” promote in the West. Oksana Zabuzhko recently wrote a thought-provoking essay on Ukraine and Europe in which she said:

European commentaries that treated the Orange Revolution as a result of our supposedly recent “pro-Western orientation” always brought a smile to my lips. As a live witness I can assure you that the “orientation” of all those millions of people who in November 2004 came out into the streets demanding honest elections was essentially “Ukrainian.” That autumn we thought about the West no more than the West thought about us. It was simply that the values for which people, without any exaggeration, were ready to sacrifice their life—freedom, the equality of everyone before the law, and the right to choose one’s country’s future—“happened” to coincide with the fundamental values of “old” European democracies. In other words, it turned out that our whole intellectual tradition of the nineteenth to twentieth centuries, which stubbornly (in spite of prisons and Gulags) asserted that Ukrainians belong to the European cultural continent, was right after all.<sup>23</sup>

Her suggestion that the European values defended by the Orange Revolution are considered to be obsolete in countries of the European Union brings to mind Kundera’s comment about what the Hungarian Uprising of 1956 revealed about contemporary Europe:

The real tragedy of Central Europe, then, is not Russia but Europe: this Europe that represented a value so great that the director of the Hungarian News Agency was ready to die for it, and for which he indeed died. Behind the Iron Curtain, he did not suspect that the times

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22. Jurij Andruchowycz, “Ukraińska geopoetyka,” in *Sny o Europie*, ed. Ola Hnatiuk (Cracow: Nimrod, 2005), 11.

23. Oksana Zabuzhko, “Welcome to Ukraine: Kommentar zu einem ‘no comments,’” *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 2007, nos. 8–9: 4.

had changed and that in Europe itself Europe was not longer experienced as a value. He did not suspect that the sentence he was sending by telex beyond the borders of his flat country would seem outmoded and would not be understood.<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, both Kundera and Zabuzhko are right that Europe's core of cultural values is contingent. All the current discussions on a European constitution confirm this in a very colourful way. Instead of a single cultural core, there is a great diversity of cultural provinces, all of which are miniature European cultural centres, provincial and central at the same time.

This hybrid phenomenon, of course, corresponds to the (to modify Marshall McLuhan's term) "globalized" village, which has two distinctive features—cultural syncretism and "cocacolonization." A common trait of this hybrid phenomenon is the popular consumer culture (mass-culture). In light of this fact let me pose the question: do not European consumption patterns and European culture, with all its trends, styles, and media, serve to manipulate behaviour and produce virtual reality? On this background Andrukhovych presents the globalized exterritorial narration of refugees in his novel *Perverziia* (Pervezion):

all around something really grand was happening—a unified ritual of all the wronged of the whole world. They had to invent another god for themselves. They were murdered by hunger and bombs, epidemics, AIDS, and chemicals. The polluted wells and the cheapest bordellos were filled with them. Weapons and tortures were tested on them. Their forests were set on fire and their deserts were flooded. As soon as they were born they were forced out from every place. How did they respond—with jazz, marijuana, a hundred methods of making love?... I walked among the refugees, half-poisoned with the aromas, with the green and red flashes, the songs, it's easy to poison me—with everything devised by these passportless searchers for the rich German god, the Sovereign of the German Gate, to which they managed to force their way at the last minute.<sup>25</sup>

This exterritorial narration brings us to a third realization of geopoetics, which we find in the Jáchym Topol's texts and in Serhii Zhadan's books of poetry *Tsyatnyk* (Book of Quotations, 2005) and *Istoriia kultury pochatku stolittia* (A History of Literature at the Beginning of the Century, 2003) and in his prose *Anarchy in the UKR* (2005) (the title refers to the Sexpistols' "Anarchy in the UK") and *big mak* (2003). Here Central Europe's cultural

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24. Kundera, "The Tragedy of Central Europe," 38.

25. Iurii Andrukhovych, *Perverziia* (Ivano-Frankivsk: Lileia-NV, 1997), 28.

topography is completely different from Kundera's, Stasiuk's, or Andrukhovych's. It is a European topography of refugees, migrants, and outsiders. These marginalized people are migrants from Central and Eastern Europe. They occupy a parallel topography, which Jáchym Topol describes in very colourful terms in his novel *Sestra* (Sister, 1994):

I look who nabbed us, Kopic goes on reconnaissance. Before me stands a little man, black as a boot, with a tusk through his nose that shines in the dark. Ungara, Bulgara, Polisha, Rumana ... he probes. Nearly guessed. It's in my mug. Ich bin Chekoslovakiya! I beat my breast. Ich weiss, kommunisten, nix gut! says the little man, his teeth're shinin too. Ja, ja, I chime in, grosse scheisse, nix gut, führers! Blah-blah-blah ... sure, guy. Und you? I ask, Angolak, Congan, Ugand ... eh? Nein! Nein! Ich Kanak! he pounds his tiny chest with his fists. Gut? I say. Nix gut! Kommunisten? I try. Nix, he says. Banditen. Nix essen, kein vitaminen, grosse problem. Aha! I get it... The Kanak tugs at my elbow. We go into the back. My eyes bug. There's some mine or something back there, lotsa nimble little black guys. Diggin up dirt an cartin it off in wheelbarrows.

Kopic comes runnin up, gaspin for breath, air's clean, he reports, his eyes bug too. My Kanak friend explains: Tullers, ch, pa! Essen heer grosse, grosse, bik! Kanakland keine! He curls his fingers and scoops his hand toward him in the international gesture for stealing. We chime in. Tunnelers! Nach Kanakland! Aha, Kopic understands. They're diggin home. Globe, I say. Globe, thru? Ja, nach globe, the Kanak says gleefully. Essen konzerv und joos supermarket Doychland nach Kanakland fur kindern und fraulen Kanak und nix problem! Grosse und grosse gut. Frishten sie? Ya, says Kopic, nach Kanakland thru globe wieviele kilometers? Kimtr? the Kanak is stumped. Kopic, an old hand when it comes to language, shows him how long ein metr is. Wieviele metr nach Kanakland? Ja, our rescuer catches his drift. He draws a number in the sand. Hey, I say to Kopic, if you look from this side it's 60, an the other way it's 90, that's doable. The Kanak rubs the numbers out. Keine problem! Kimter nix problem.<sup>26</sup>

It is interesting that Central Europe occurs in this cultural topography in another writers besides Topol, in writers such as Jaroslav Rudiš (*Nebe pod Berlínem* [Sky over Berlin, 2002]) and Serhii Zhadan. Their chronotopos of Central Europe is of the twenty-first century, after the decline of the master narratives. Zhadan's first novel *big mak* and his book of poetry *Istoriia kultury pochatku stolittia* describe an urban, even

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26. Jáchym Topol, *City Sister Silver*, trans. A. Zucker (North Haven, CT: Catbird Press, 2000), 228–9.

metropolitan Central Europe. This is not an enchanted urban topography like that in Topol's *Sestra* or Rudiš's *Nebe pod Berlínem*, but a totally disenchanting space of metropolises such as Berlin, Vienna, Munich, and Prague. These cities seem to have fallen out of time and are presented from the margins by outsiders and migrants, who are concerned with their own stories, not with the stories of the cultural space in which they find themselves. They change cities as they change their clothes. Approached from their standpoint, cultural space loses its distinguishing characteristics and becomes as interchangeable as the migrants themselves. Zhadan's indifference is very clear in his depiction of Vienna, which played a key role in the construction of Western Ukraine's Central Europeanness:

I could speak with excitement about those melancholic romantics who continue to find the last, albeit rare yet such intoxicating joys behind the parade facades of civilization. I could tell many interesting things about them, particularly since they are probably the only social group that I do not find repugnant, but then how would I look singing hymns and making speeches in honour of all the outsiders of unified Europe.<sup>27</sup>

The geopoetics of Central Europe in Zhadan's text is a collection of globalized villages, inhabited mostly by outsiders and migrants. They are the true Europeans. This is confirmed by Topol:

Yep, says Kopic. Kanaks ... hey, we're Kanaks too! Oh yeah! I realize. In a blink. That was the important identity sentence. The holy ghost musta come over you, Kopic, or're you from the clan of Elijah the prophet? Could be, Kopic said solemnly. He was right. We were all Kanaks. The megarace of the tunnel. That whole crew in Berlun on the way back to Europe.

....

Vasiš, he's a Kanak, slept around the clock, scared of lethal traffic, perforated sleeper, brother of the needle ... Petrak, Czech as a log, always drawin maps, knows everything, never goes anywhere, he's a psycho too ... but Kopic, your woman an lawful wife is Doych, she can be our language bridge ... till she took my splendid name, Kopic smirked, she useta be Yablunkovskaya ... that's old Ukrainian. Heh, Kanak to the core! Kopic's kids're Kanaks, we're all Kanak. Maybe even the good Lord is ... basically...? [...] We were a Kanak kingdom, boys solid as birches, girls sweet as virgins, eurotrash for the most part. Mark was a Brit, at home he'd been hit, ended up in Berlun. A Kanak.

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27. Serhii Zhadan, *big mak* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2003), 133–4.

Then there was a Dutch foursome straight outta Breughel: professional Kanaks [...] And slowly the most important thing of all came into being, the secret and open tongue of the Kanak kingdom.<sup>28</sup>

And not only kingdom, one could add, but also one of the possible versions of Central European geopoetics. Unlike Andrukhovych and Stasiuk's *Moia Ievropa* and the large project at Humboldt University, this geopoetics does not move Central Europe farther east. The starting point of Andrukhovych's and Zhadan's geopoetics is the same: it is the Europe of rejected master narratives, a post-totalitarian space. Andrukhovych's geopoetics seems to be palimpsestic and recreational: through fragments and remainders it uncovers his old pluralistic, Central European homeland—Galicia. By comparison Zhadan's and Topol's geopoetics displays a Central Europe in which the former cultural centres seem to be globalized villages. This geopoetic version of Central Europe is, of course, pluralistic but, unlike Andrukhovych's and Stasiuk's geopoetics, it is not a projection from the present into the past. Its background is not the historicity of cultural pluralism, but the globalized present.

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28. Topol, *City Sister Silver*, 229–30.

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# The Evolution of the Party System in Ukraine after the Orange Revolution

*Michał Wawrzonek*

The problematic of Ukrainian parties has a rich literature and constantly attracts the attention of many researchers and analytical circles.<sup>1</sup>

This article deals with three basic questions about the evolution of the Ukrainian party system after the Orange Revolution: the transformation of the state system (political reform), the process of the institutionalization of the political parties, and the political structuralization of Ukrainian society and its significance for Ukrainian parties.

## Political Reform and Its Impact on the Development of the Party System

The Orange Revolution led to important constitutional reforms in Ukraine that changed the conditions governing the development of the party system. In this article I shall draw attention to the general fact that in the framework of these transformations the centre of power has shifted from the President to the Supreme Council and the Cabinet. This gave rise to

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1. R. Gortat, *Ukraińskie wybory* (Warsaw: Fundacja Polska Praca, 1998); Iurii Shveda, *Partii ta partiina systema Ukrainy* (Lviv: Astroliabiiia, 2001); Iurii Shaihorodsky, *Politychni partii Ukrainy* (Kyiv: Ukrainskyi tsentr politychnoho menedzhmentu, 2005); Mykola Tomenko and Volodymyr Oliinyk, *Partiina elita Ukrainy—2000* (Kyiv: Lohos, 2000); *Politychna dumka*, at <<http://www.politdumka.kiev.ua/>>; Ukrpartinform, at <<http://www.ukrpartinform.com/>>; Tsentr politychnykh doslidzhen, at <<http://cpd.itgo.com/>>; The Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies Named after Olexander Razumkov, at <<http://www.uceps.org.ua/>>; Komitet vybortsiv Ukrainy 1999–2006, at <<http://www.cvu.org.ua/>>; and Ahentstvo modeliuvannia sytuatsii, at <<http://www.agency.org.ua/>>. Much analytical material can be found in the weekly *Zerkalo nedeli*, at <<http://www.mw.ua/>>.

the formal, constitutional preconditions in which the parties and their factions in Parliament can gain real influence on the form and operation of the executive branch.

To gain and maintain power today it is necessary to have a majority in the Supreme Council. Under normal conditions the natural way to form a majority is coalition building. Unfortunately, it became clear by the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007 that the government coalition began to build a majority that would make it completely independent of the President by using prohibited methods—"political corruption."<sup>2</sup> It became obvious that political reform did not cure party life in Ukraine of existing pathologies. In previous convocations of the Supreme Council the deputies often "wandered" from faction to faction.<sup>3</sup> But today, after the political reform of the new constitutional order, the President reacted very decisively to such undemocratic practices and on 3 April 2007 decided to dissolve the Supreme Council. This measure taken by Viktor Yushchenko may prompt deputies, party factions in Parliament, parties, and voters to begin finally to plant together the seeds of a healthy party system in Ukraine.

The constitutional transformations introduced in the framework of political reform, primarily the new proportional election system, should have a fundamental impact on the evolution of the party system. Undoubtedly, in the long run it can entrench pluralism in Ukrainian political life.

The new election system has led to the consolidation of the fragmented political elite. It has supported a single riding that encompasses the whole country. This encouraged and will continue to encourage Ukrainian parties that have a very limited territorial range to come together and form transregional groupings. An additional inducement to forming electoral blocs is the three percent threshold for entering

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2. This mechanism is described vividly by Serhii Leshchenko and Mustafa Naiem in "Vid opozytsii do Ianukovycha: Tekhnolohiia popovnennia bilshosti," *Ukrainska pravda*, 29 March 2007, at <<http://www.prawda.com.ua/news/2007/3/29/56482.htm>>. Only after the rise of "the anti-crisis coalition" did some observers suspect that in BYuT itself up to thirty deputies could be found who for various reasons were close to the "anti-crisisists" (Yulia Mostovaya, "Experimenting with Options," *Zerkalo nedeli*, 15–21 July 2006, at <<http://www.mw.ua/1000/1030/53994/>>).

3. Many deputies switched factions three times in the course of a single convocation, and some did so ten times (Serhii Rakhmanin, "Z chym idiat imperatyvnyi mandat?" *Dzherkalo tyzhnia*, 3–9 December 2005, at <[www.zn.kiev.ua/nn/show/575/51984/>](http://www.zn.kiev.ua/nn/show/575/51984/>)).

Parliament.<sup>4</sup> I should point out that so far no agent in the election process of 2006 had an all-national character; that is, every party can count on voter support only in some electoral districts.

Under the current law on elections, bloc building by the parties is a natural process. The dissolution of some blocs is also natural. But we can expect that the process of dissolution will affect primarily formations that are least internally integrated. In the end the entities that will survive will be those that can eventually become monolithic, well-organized and deeply institutionalized parties.

It seems to me that these conjectures are supported by the present state of the two “Orange” blocs—Our Ukraine (Nasha Ukraina) and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (Blok Yulii Tymoshenko, or BYuT). The bloc headed by Tymoshenko has a relatively simple structure. The main role in it belongs to the All-Ukrainian Alliance Fatherland (Vseukrainske obiednannia Batkivshchyna). The other two partners were the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (Ukrainska sotsialdemokratychna partiia) and the Apple Party (Partiia Iabluko), which in March 2005 merged with the Fatherland alliance.<sup>5</sup> We can expect that BYuT will eventually give rise to a monolithic party.

Our Ukraine has a much more complicated structure. This bloc emerged as an alliance of six parties: the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Ukraine (Partiia promyslovtsiv i pidpriemtsiv Ukrainy), the People’s Movement of Ukraine (Narodnyi rukh Ukrainy), the Ukrainian Republican Party “Sobor” (Ukrainska respublikanska partiia “Sobor”), the People’s Union Our Ukraine (Narodnyi soiuz Nasha Ukraina), the Christian-Democratic Union (Khrystiiiansko-Demokratychnyi soiuz), and the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists (Kongres ukrainskykh natsionalistiv). It is no coincidence that the future of this bloc is very uncertain.<sup>6</sup>

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4. In all forty-five entities, including seventeen blocs, took part in the elections to the Supreme Council (“Partii ta vyborchi bloky partii u vyborchomu protsesi,” at <<http://www.cvk.gov.ua/pls/vnd2006/W6P001>>).

5. The Ukrainian Republican Party “Sobor,” which in 2002 won seats in the Supreme Council as a part of BYuT, joined the Nasha Ukraina bloc in December 2005.

6. This became clear at least after Anatolii Kinakh joined Yanukovych’s Cabinet, and the party headed by Kinakh, the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Ukraine, was expelled from the Our Ukraine faction in the Supreme Council.

The Orange Revolution accelerated the democratization process in Ukraine. This fact should be noted because “the democratic institutions of a political regime” have an essential influence on the development of political parties.<sup>7</sup> In theory political reform has provided the tools that enable Ukrainian political parties to approach the standards of West European democracy. But the question arises how these democratic institutions, such as the proportional electoral system and the parliamentary-presidential system, will work on Ukrainian soil. It seems that the crisis that at the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007 paralyzed the executive branch in Ukraine arose from the fact that the said reform was too great a challenge to Ukrainian parties, mostly because they lacked suitable cadres and a developed infrastructure.<sup>8</sup> In other words, today’s party system in Ukraine is not mature enough to tackle the tasks that the new, post-reform reality places before it. Thus the answer to the question what are the fundamental weaknesses and shortcomings of current parties is of critical importance.

## The Question of the Institutionalization of Ukrainian Parties

The number of officially registered parties in Ukraine exceeds one hundred.<sup>9</sup> But many of them exist only on paper and how many others exist is unclear. In fact no Ukrainian party, including the most important ones, which have seats in the Supreme Council, is capable of performing all the functions that would be required of it in a normal democratic system.

The basic reason for this situation, it seems, is the low level of party institutionalization. This is also true of the most powerful parties, that is, the parties that in the 2006 elections won representation on the Supreme Council: the Party of Regions (Partiia rehioniv), the Socialist Party of Ukraine (Sotsialistychna partiia Ukrainy, or SPU), the Communist Party of Ukraine (Komunistychna partiia Ukrainy, or KPU), and the blocs Our

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7. Ryszard Herbut, *Teoria i praktyka funkcjonowania partii politycznych* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2002), 65.

8. “Tendentsii rozvytku ukrainskoi partiinoi systemy na etapi pidhotovky do parlamentskykh vyboriv: Otsinky ekspertiv,” at <<http://www.tomenko.kiev.ua/cgi/redirect?url=pc01-2005-06.html>>.

9. The Central Electoral Commission provides information about 127 subjects on its Web pages, at <<http://www.cvk.gov.ua/paty/paty.htm>>.

Ukraine and BYuT. From now on I shall concentrate on these five groupings. My thesis is that in the immediate future at least some of them will co-create the Ukrainian party system.

Different authors describe the process of the institutionalization of political parties in different ways. There are also different criteria for evaluating the development of this process.<sup>10</sup> I shall assess the level of the institutionalization of parties in Ukraine through the prism of the following factors: (1) the progress in building party structures, (2) "culture in the wide sense," that is, "ideas, beliefs, and prejudices"<sup>11</sup> on which a party is built, and (3) the formation within the party organization of a "concrete system of norms, rules, principles, and procedures manifesting the organization of the collective forms of activity."<sup>12</sup>

As to the first factor, the data provided by the parties themselves may be surprising. The Party of Regions proudly informs us that it is "one of Ukraine's most massive parties," and that "in twenty-seven regions there are 11,600 registered party organizations."<sup>13</sup> Yulia Tymoshenko's Fatherland party declares that it has developed dynamically and that its party network "branches out to all oblasts, cities, and raions of Ukraine." According to its data, the party has 250,000 members.<sup>14</sup> The Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Ukraine asserts that it has a membership of 150,000 and 720 territorial organizations in all regions of Ukraine.<sup>15</sup>

The People's Union Our Ukraine informs us that it has 195,000 members and that their number is constantly increasing.<sup>16</sup> And yet during its party convention, which took place at the end of October and the beginning of November 2006, one could hear that in the oblasts and raions Our Ukraine is turning into more of a virtual than a real phenomenon. Among others, Mykola Martynenko, the head of the Kyiv party organization, spoke about the decline of local structures of Our Ukraine.<sup>17</sup> The honorary

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10. Herbut, *Teoria i praktyka*, 47.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., 48.

13. <<http://www.partyofregions.org.ua/meet/42b2beed0cb06/>>.

14. <[http://www.byut.info/ukr/about\\_a\\_party/history](http://www.byut.info/ukr/about_a_party/history)>.

15. <[www.pppu.com.ua/index\\_.shtml](http://www.pppu.com.ua/index_.shtml)>.

16. <<http://www.razom.org.ua/ua/static/nsnu/>>.

17. M. Martynenko, "Our Ukraine (regenerated)?" *Zerkalo nedeli*, 28 October–3 November 2006, at <<http://www.mw.ua/1000/1030/54932/>>.

head of the party, Viktor Yushchenko, said in his speech, “in very many oblasts we have party organizations that exist essentially on paper.”<sup>18</sup>

We may assume that other parties also compile such “creative party statistics.” Official declarations about the number of party members are all the less credible in view of the steady decline in party membership around the world. This phenomenon occurs in countries in which democracy and civil society are much more developed than in Ukraine.<sup>19</sup> While it is true that the task of building a civil society falls on all the countries of the former Communist bloc, we should not forget that the situation in Ukraine, most of whose territory was part of the Soviet Union for seventy years, is much more complicated than in Poland, the Czech Republic, or Hungary.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the process of building a civil society was slowed down significantly under Leonid Kuchma.<sup>21</sup>

18. “Vystup Prezydenta Ukrainy Viktora Iushchenka na III zizdi politychnoi partii ‘Narodnyi soiuz ‘Nasha Ukraina,’” at <[http://www.president.gov.ua/news/data/11\\_11218.html](http://www.president.gov.ua/news/data/11_11218.html)>.

19. W. Sokoł and M. Żmigrodzki, eds., *Współczesne partie i systemy partyjne: Zagadnienia teorii i praktyki politycznej* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie Skłodowskiej, 2005), 135.

20. Volodymyr Polokhalo described this situation quite accurately: “Ukrainian society emerged from the seventy-year period in the former USSR without any prerequisites for a civilized, democratic development: without signs of a civil society, without a democratically disposed national elite, without a full-fledged national culture, and without being conscious of itself as a nation. For this reason the Ukrainian type of post-Communism appears not as a transition to democracy but as a consequence of the evolution of the former Soviet political system, as a certain logical and natural inertia of Communist history. And there is nothing surprising in the fact that Ukrainian post-Soviet society (in contrast, for example, to Polish society) preserves to a large extent the essential features inherited from the past, which have a decisive influence on the changes that are taking place today” (V. Polokhalo, “Poniattia ‘nehromadianske suspilstvo’ i typu postkomunizmu,” *Politychna dumka*, at <[http://www.politdumka.kiev.ua/index.php?old\\_site=1&aid=40&BEGIN\\_ROW=20](http://www.politdumka.kiev.ua/index.php?old_site=1&aid=40&BEGIN_ROW=20)>).

21. The above-mentioned circumstances shape the specific conditions for the development of the party system and political life in general in Ukraine. It seems that researchers and analysts do not always take this into account. As a result, one can find very surprising theses in the literature. For example, some authors write that Ukraine’s so-called indicator of social participation (which is based on the number of party members and their participation in elections) is twice as high as Poland’s (Sokoł and Żmigrodzki, eds., *Współczesne partie i systemy*, 139). Ignoring the reliability of the data on which this statement is based, it should be pointed out that this relatively high social involvement in Ukraine did not have a significant influence of the real course of political life in the capital. Political events at the centre were determined by closed, shadowy oligarchic-

If we examine the process of institutionalization through the prism of the second factor (“ideas, beliefs, and prejudices” on which the party is built), we arrive at the conclusion that among the most important Ukrainian parties two stand out: the KPU and the Party of Regions. The program of Petro Symonenko’s party is based on the clearest and transparent complex of ideas and beliefs. But, paradoxically, the KPU’s ideological-programmatic transparency leads to degeneration and decline. All this takes place because of its anachronistic views and the style in which Symonenko’s party propagates them.<sup>22</sup> They are too remote from reality. We may surmise that this is one of the reasons for the party’s steady fall in the ratings and loss of support among the voters.

Today the Party of Regions is the leading party in the oblasts in which the KPU once enjoyed the strongest support.<sup>23</sup> This has come about because the Party of Regions proposed the same things as Symonenko’s party but did so in a modernized form. It rejected the Marxist-Leninist baggage and became the vehicle of the regional identity of its electorate, whose mentality is determined by a special nostalgia for Soviet times. We can assume that the population of the Donbas and the southeastern regions of Ukraine wants above all to preserve the sense of security under Moscow’s protection that has been instilled by many centuries of Russification. Its feeling of alienation from the centre in Kyiv and from Western Ukraine is based on its pro-Russian sympathies.<sup>24</sup>

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business structures, not by the level of social participation. This in turn did not further the process of the institutionalization of political parties in Ukraine.

22. The program of the KPU contains phrases such as “being a party of political action, the Communist Party places the highest importance on its members mastering the rich experience of Bolsheviks-Leninists, the art of political work among various strata of the population,” and “the social base of the Communist Party of Ukraine consists of working people in industry, agriculture, and the sphere of services, science, and culture—workers, peasants, the working intelligentsia, young people who are studying, veterans of war and labour, pensioners, and the unemployed” (<http://kpu.net.ua/program/>).

23. Mykola Riabchuk has described the cultural and spiritual landscape of eastern Ukraine in a very interesting way: “People here speak a different language, which they consider to be Russian, attend different churches (if they attend them at all), watch different TV channels, listen to different music, and vote for completely different political parties” (M. Riabchuk, *Dvi Ukrainy: Realni mezhi, virtualni viiny* [Kyiv: Krytyka, 2003], 20).

24. “Skhid i Zakhid Ukrainy v konteksti vyborchoi kampanii-2006: Vidminnosti, protyrichchia, perspektyvy iednannia,” at <[http://www.uceps.org.ua/img/st\\_img/table/803/UCEPS\\_2006-03-17.pdf](http://www.uceps.org.ua/img/st_img/table/803/UCEPS_2006-03-17.pdf)>, 40.

Moreover, let me point out that this pro-Russian attitude should be treated more as an expression of local identity. Those who identify with it very rarely defend the idea of a real separation from Ukraine and unification with Russia.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, values such as democracy, freedom of speech, and market economy are much less popular in this milieu than in other regions of Ukraine. Hence the supporters of the Party of Regions are inclined to accept the presence of oligarchs in public life (for the same situation holds in Russia) and the absence of a clear line between politics and business.

Even though Viktor Yanukovich's party does not directly propose estrangement from the centre in Kyiv and ties with Moscow and Russian culture, these values are implicit in the logic of the party's activity. The appointments to the highest offices in Yanukovich's government show that the prime minister depends on people who are connected with only one region—the Donetsk region.<sup>26</sup>

The ideological-programmatic identity of the other leading Ukrainian parties is much less clear and defined. The SPU can be viewed as a representative of the social democratic tendency. But the problem is that practically all the important parties in Ukraine claim in their programs and declarations that they are attentive to social problems such as unemployment and poverty. After 2004, it seems, a party's identity and image can be built on its relation to the Orange Revolution, which has defined a concrete complex of ideas and values that is understood by society in general and supported by a considerable part of society. But the head of the SPU, Oleksandr Moroz, one of the participants in the anti-Kuchma opposition, squandered this opportunity to set out in a clear fashion the principles and values he defends when he joined the anti-crisis coalition. Nor did Viktor Yushchenko and the leadership of Our Ukraine take advantage of the opportunity. His bloc assumed power with the slogan of fidelity to the ideals of the Maidan, but after the parliamentary elections of 2006 it encountered serious problems in defining its orientation: an Orange union or a "broad coalition" with the Party of Regions. On this background BYuT stands out in a positive light. Yulia Tymoshenko consistently told the voters that she is ready to uphold the

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25. Ibid.

26. "Analiz uriadovykh pryznachen V. Ianukovycha: Vysnovky," at <[http://www.agency.org.ua/index.php?mod=demo24\\_3](http://www.agency.org.ua/index.php?mod=demo24_3)>.

cause of the Orange Revolution. However, the names on BYuT's electoral list cast some doubt on her declarations. The names of some odious figures connected with the former President Kuchma appeared on the bloc's list.<sup>27</sup> For this reason alone one may assert that the process of constructing a permanent ideological image for BYuT is not yet finished.

As I have pointed out above, the third indicator of the level of the institutionalization of Ukrainian parties that I shall consider is the development of the internal rules and norms that govern the functioning of party organizations. The process of drawing up the electoral lists, which took place before the 2006 elections, provides us with much material on this issue.

Since the elections took place in one electoral district, each party (bloc) presented one all-Ukrainian list of candidates. The lists were determined at party conventions and meetings.<sup>28</sup> The order of the names on the lists was decided at the same time.<sup>29</sup> One would expect that the mechanism of selection would internally strengthen the entities participating in the election process. In any case every bloc and party that ran in the elections had to develop an appropriate procedure for selecting candidates for deputies. Since the electoral laws will not change in subsequent elections, we can expect that these procedures will become permanent and will play a role in promoting the process of the institutionalization of Ukrainian political parties.

Unfortunately, there were some aspects of the selection process that are cause for concern. First, the party centres were dominant, and the opinions of local party organizations were dismissed.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, after the experience of the last elections, we may speak of a serious threat to intraparty democracy. In fact there is no mechanism that would force the leading organs of the parties to consult lower-level structures in the selection of candidates for deputies. This can lead to the

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27. For example, Bohdan Hubsy, Serhii Buriak, Taniel Vasadze, Oleksandr Feldman, Andrii Verevsky, and Ievhen Sihalo ("Spysok bloku Tymoshenko: Khto ie khto?" *Ukrainska pravda*, 11 January 2006, at <<http://pravda.com.ua/news/2006/1/11/37507.htm>>).

28. "Zakon Ukrainy 'Pro vybory narodnykh deputativ Ukrainy,'" art. 57, sec. 4, at <[http://www.cvk.gov.ua/laws/zn\\_vybory\\_dep\\_ua.htm](http://www.cvk.gov.ua/laws/zn_vybory_dep_ua.htm)>.

29. *Ibid.*, art. 57, sec. 5.

30. A.S. Romaniuk and L.S. Skochylias, *Politychni partii na Lvivshchyni naperedodni vyboriv-2000: Dovidnyk-posibnyk* (Lviv: Tsentr politychnykh doslidzhen, 2005), 8.

“petrification of the party elite” and to a state in which “the changes in personnel will be minimal” and will take place “not on the basis of qualitative criteria ... but on the basis of the subjective criteria of the party/bloc leadership.”<sup>31</sup> In his speech at the convention of Our Ukraine that I mentioned above, Yushchenko stated bluntly, “I do not want the party to change into some kind of closed joint stock company in which the principal shareholders can monopolize decisions on what the party needs, but in fact make decisions that serve their own interests or interests close to them.”<sup>32</sup>

It is important that the phenomenon described by Ukraine’s president appears not only at the highest level in connection with the elections to the Supreme Council but also in local elections. An analysis of the way in which the lists of candidates to oblast and local councils are drawn up indicates this. One of the Ukrainian analytical centres investigated the candidate lists in the territory of Lviv Oblast<sup>33</sup> and uncovered several negative tendencies.

First of all it should be stressed that there is a close link between economic structures and political parties. Directors of companies and businessmen account for only five percent of Lviv residents and three percent of the population of Lviv Oblast, but they constituted from thirty to forty percent, depending on the party, of the candidates to the city council and ten to seventy percent of the candidates to the oblast council.

At this point let us note a unique paradox. Although the business milieu is so heavily represented, no party except for the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Ukraine declared the promotion of business interests to be among its priorities. On the contrary all of them devoted much attention to social issues. In view of the current political culture in Ukraine the words of a Ukrainian analyst who participated in the mentioned analysis sound quite probable. He asserted that, taking into account the European experience, we might doubt that the councils, which are elected on the basis of these lists, will be able to reconcile the interests of business with the interests of all the other citizens.<sup>34</sup>

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31. *Ibid.*, 9.

32. “Vystup Prezydenta Ukrainy.”

33. A. Romaniuk, “Analiz spyskiv kandydativ v deputaty oblasnoi ta misykykh rad u Lvivskii oblasti,” at <[http://cupol.brama.com/newsite/cupol/index.php?&id=28&backPID=1&tt\\_news=16779&&cHash=c92b3e1920](http://cupol.brama.com/newsite/cupol/index.php?&id=28&backPID=1&tt_news=16779&&cHash=c92b3e1920)>.

34. *Ibid.*

Other phenomena investigated during the local elections in Lviv Oblast that must raise concern are nepotism and the closed nature of the electoral lists, which is partly linked with it. The lists were practically closed to people from the outside, to non-party people.<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately, there is no reason to assume that the situation is any better in other regions of Ukraine.

So far the process of the institutionalization of political parties in Ukraine displays many features that are characteristic of the “unstable democracies,” which exist in Asia and Africa. In particular what is at issue here is the specific disparity between theory and practice, between the principles and aims recorded in the charter and the real rules that determine the course of party life.

It is worth noting that a divergence between theory and practice in party activity is the norm in Ukraine. It can be observed in all the parties that are represented in the Supreme Council as a result of the elections in March 2006. These real internal rules, and particularly the role played by oligarchic circles, are not recorded anywhere, but they are sufficiently stable and entrenched in practice. It is they that have a decisive influence on party life.

A good example of this is the Party of Regions and Renat Akhmetov. He appeared only in the seventh slot on the candidates list of Yanukovich's party, but according to conservative estimates no fewer than thirty-six of the 186 of the party's deputies are appointees or dependants of the Donetsk oligarch.<sup>36</sup> In the literature this phenomenon is called an informal institutionalization.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps the pathological nature of this process is most striking in the Party of Regions, but undoubtedly we shall find it in all five parties (blocs) that are seated on the Supreme Council.<sup>38</sup>

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35. Ibid.

36. Leonid Amchuk, “Orbita ‘oliharkhiv’-2006: Koho vedut na vybory Akhmetov, Surkis, Pinchuk?” *Ukrainska pravda*, 13 February 2006, at <<http://pravda.com.ua/news/2006/2/13/38656.html>>.

37. Herbut, *Teoria i praktyka*, 66.

38. It is enough to recall the misunderstanding over the election of the deputies of Yulia Tymoshenko as head of the Fatherland party in the first half of November 2006. Mykola Tomenko was recommended, but he declined and justified his decision by the fact that “the decision on electing deputies was approved as a package and was not discussed. I am for internal party democracy and oppose the adoption of such decisions as a package. Besides, I believe that the principle of separating business from politics should

## The Question of the Political Structuralization of Ukrainian Society

During the struggle for the presidency between Viktor Yanukovich and Viktor Yushchenko, three centres were formed on the political stage. The two largest ones were connected with the two presidential candidates. Beside them appeared a third centre, a “neutral,” “third force” that did not support either candidate but declared its loyalty to the victor whoever he might turn out to be. This third centre was supposed to be the grouping around the speaker of the Supreme Council, Volodymyr Lytvyn. According to some forecasts, this configuration of three centres was to become entrenched in Ukrainian political life in the next few years.<sup>39</sup> But the 2006 elections refuted these speculations. Lytvyn’s popular bloc, contrary to expectations, received very little support (2.44 percent)<sup>40</sup> and, as a result, did not enter Parliament. Therefore, one may say that in the latest convocation of the Supreme Council, the original division from the period of the presidential elections of 2004 into the “Blues” and the “Oranges” has been recreated. And this configuration will have a decisive influence on the formation of the party system in Ukraine in subsequent years.

If this thesis is true then there is a very strict division according to political sympathies in Ukrainian society. Yet, not so long ago Ukrainian analysts very readily talked about the lack of a clear social structure in Ukraine and fluid political divisions in Ukrainian society. For example, in Iurii Shveda’s opinion Ukrainian society constantly lacks “the social structures of a society with strictly defined social groups that are conscious of their social interests.”<sup>41</sup>

If by the political structuralization of society one understands the connection between a social group with a concrete identity and a party that represents this group on the political stage, then at first glance the

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also apply to the party” (“Tomenko prosyt anuliuvaty ioho obrannia zastupnykom Tymoshenko,” *Ukrainska pravda*, 14 November 2006, at <<http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2006/11/14/50746.htm>>).

39. S. Khomenko, “Prezydentska vyborcha kampaniia iak chynnyk zminy struktury partiinoi systemy Ukrainy,” at <[http://fprr.net.ua/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=24&Itemid=35](http://fprr.net.ua/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=24&Itemid=35)>.

40. “Rezultaty holosuvannia — Po kozhnii partii (bloku),” at <<http://www.cvk.gov.ua/pls/vnd2006/W6P001>>.

41. “Tendentsii rozvytku ukrainskoi partiinoi systemy.”

opinions of analysts appear to be confirmed by the facts. The KPU, which in 1994 dominated in Parliament and was still the third largest faction in the Supreme Council of the preceding convocation, just managed to cross the electoral threshold. In 2002 Yushchenko's party led the anti-Kuchma opposition. It received 23.6 percent of the over-all vote and won forty-one seats in single-mandate districts.<sup>42</sup> Yushchenko himself won the presidency a little over a year ago. But Our Ukraine suffered a crushing defeat in the elections of March 2006 (less than fourteen percent of the vote), and its future is unknown. The Party of Regions, which in the previous Parliament was only one of several members of the pro-presidential bloc For a United Ukraine (*Za iedynu Ukrainu*), today boasts the largest faction in the Supreme Council. In 2002 BYuT won the support of only 7.3 percent of the voters and did not win a single seat in single-mandate districts.<sup>43</sup> Today it is the largest representative of the Orange camp (22.29 percent of the vote in 2006).

After the events that were connected with the presidential elections in 2004, it may have seemed that the factor that governs the Ukrainian political scene, the special axis of the party system should have been the relation if not to Kuchma himself, then to the values that are associated with the Maidan. But if this problem is viewed from the perspective of party elites, through the prism of the candidates lists of the last elections, the division into "Kuchmists" and anti-Kuchmists" is no longer that obvious. On every electoral list, including BYuT's, one could find oligarchs and people of the "pre-revolutionary regime," who were often accused of corruption and law breaking, as well as people who were dependent on them. In this connection some commentators proposed the thesis that the division into supporters and opponents of the "Kuchma legacy" is no longer relevant and has no significant influence on the formation of the political system.<sup>44</sup>

However the results of the 2006 elections indicate that for Ukrainian society the relation to the period of Kuchma's presidency and to the people connected with the former president's circle was one of the key

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42. "Rezultaty holosuvannia v odnomandatnykh okruhakh" and "Rezultaty holosuvannia po partiiakh (vyborchykh blokakh partii)," at <<http://www.cvk.gov.ua/pls/vd2002/webproc0v>>.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Yulia Mostovaya, "An Unlimited Liability Parliament," *Zerkalo nedeli*, 10–16 December 2005, at <<http://www.mw.ua/1000/1030/52049/>>.

criteria for deciding how to vote. It is no coincidence that the “blue” Party of Regions and BYuT, whose leader tried to become the symbol of uncompromising struggle to realize the postulates and slogans of the Orange Revolution, were the clear winners.

Contrary to widely held opinions, one can point to some permanent divisions in Ukrainian society that may become the basis for a relatively stable (at least for East European conditions) party system. In other words, in Ukrainian society there are groups with a well-established identity. The problem lies in a shortage of parties that want and know how to build permanent ties with these social groups.

Research conducted as early as in 2005 showed that adult Ukrainians were dividing into two basic ideological groups: sympathizers of the national-democratic idea and supporters of a close relation between Ukraine and Russia. The first consists of fourteen percent of the people, the second of thirteen percent.<sup>45</sup> The results of the 2006 elections largely confirmed the conclusions of this research.

We should remember that a party system consists not only of the parties themselves but also of “the concrete structure of organizational and corporative behaviour.”<sup>46</sup> And this structure depends to a large extent on the “social environment.”<sup>47</sup> Until the fall of 2004 the party system and political life were connected very tenuously with this “social environment.”

By the way, the peculiar nature of the Orange Revolution lies in the fact that, perhaps, for the first time since the referendum on independence Ukrainian society realized its own power. What is important is that this social upheaval came about without any involvement of the parties that were active at the time. Their role, particularly in the most important first

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45. Yurii Yakimenko and Oleksandr Lytvynenko, “Elections 2006: Portraits of the Runners,” *Zerkalo nedeli*, 10–16 December 2005, at <<http://www.mw.ua/1000/1030/52045/>>. On the basis of other sociological surveys, one can arrive at the conclusion that the division into supporters of the “independentist” (twenty-four percent) and “Soviet” (thirty-one percent) orientations is entrenched in Ukraine (I. Konechna, “Ukraina pislia pomaranchevoi revoliutsii: Shcho zminylosia v pozytsiakh ta tsinnostiakh suspilstva,” at <[www.osw.waw.pl/files/Raport\\_spoleczny\\_Ukraina.pdf](http://www.osw.waw.pl/files/Raport_spoleczny_Ukraina.pdf)>, 30.

46. Andrzej Antoszewski and Ryszard Herbut, eds., *Demokracje Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w perspektywie porównawczej* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1997), 126.

47. *Ibid.*

stage, was insignificant.<sup>48</sup> It was then that for the first time society did not have to adapt to the political parties but, on the contrary, the parties were forced to take into account the wish of the voters and to compete for their favour.

Unfortunately, after the last presidential elections the role of “the social factor” in the Ukrainian party system again declined significantly. However, as one perceptive commentator noted, the elections of 2006 showed that it is the Ukrainian political elites, not society, that are unstructured.”<sup>49</sup>

The instability of the Ukrainian political scene and the resulting fluidity of the party system arise from the fact that the parties keep striving to create the mentioned structure of organizational and corporate behaviour while ignoring Ukrainian society, that is, their electorate.

To be more precise, the controversies that structuralize the Ukrainian polity today correspond only partly to the real political divisions in Ukrainian society. The events connected with the so-called “Universal natsionalnoi iednosti” (Universal of National Unity) indicate this. This solemn act was to bring about an “all-national reconciliation.”<sup>50</sup>

Sociological surveys have shown that it is possible to draw up a catalogue of social problems that are as essential to Ukrainians in the Donbas as they are to residents of Kyiv and Lviv. These Ukraine-wide issues are: the improvement of the living standard for all residents of Ukraine and “equal rights and co-existence within the framework of one state (Ukraine).”<sup>51</sup> One might have expected that they would be the basis for reconciling “Ukraine with Ukraine.” The preamble of the “Universal” states that among the priorities of “national development” is “the citizens’ high standard of living.” But in the list of priority tasks the issue of the welfare of Ukraine’s inhabitants ranked no higher than fifteen. The mentioned document leads one to conclude that its promoters were concerned much more with the issues of religious faith (including the

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48. Oleksandr Derhachov, “Politychni partii za rik do vyboriv,” at <<http://www.tomenko.kiev.ua/cgi/redirect.cgi?url=pc01-2005-03.html>>.

49. Serhii Rakhmanin, “Afterglow of the Passing Epoch,” *Zerkalo nedeli*, 1–7 April 2006, at <<http://www.mw.ua/1000/1030/53028/>>.

50. “Universal natsionalnoi iednosti: Tekst, pidpysanyi na kruhlomu stoli,” *Ukrainska pravda*, 3 August 2006, at <[www.ppravda.com.ua/news/2006/8/3/45537.htm](http://www.ppravda.com.ua/news/2006/8/3/45537.htm)>.

51. “Skhid i Zakhid Ukrainy v konteksti vyborchoi kampanii-2006,” 14.

unity of Orthodoxy), language, and the territorial integrity of the state.<sup>52</sup> Sociological surveys show that for most Ukrainians, both in the east and the west, these questions are of secondary importance.<sup>53</sup>

## Conclusion

At first glance, party life in Ukraine is beset with the same main problems that we observed prior to the Orange Revolution: the influence of informal oligarchic structures, the absence of internal democracy, a low level of institutionalization, and estrangement from society.

So far political reform has created only the theoretical and legal foundations for the further development of the party system according to European democratic models. It seems that much more time is required to embody the basic principles in practice. Nevertheless the process of radical change in the party environment has begun. First of all the new constitutional order, in spite of shortcomings and imperfections, has begun to transform parties into primary subjects of political life. Secondly, Ukrainian society has undergone (and is undergoing) far more important transformations. After the Orange Revolution it will be difficult in the long run to conduct an effective policy while neglecting the importance of society. Further changes in the Ukrainian party system will depend first of all on the course of the process of transformation of Ukrainian society from the Soviet to the civil-society model.

We may assume that a subject representing the mentality and moods of Donetsk Ukraine will be a part of the Ukrainian party system for a long time to come. Is there any chance that parties (blocs) of an all-Ukrainian character will also play a permanent role in this system? We can reply to this question with cautious optimism that this is possible. It seems inconceivable that such a power could be built on pro-Russian slogans. If such a party (grouping) arises, we can expect it to be oriented towards national-democratic ideas. An increasing number of Ukrainians both in Galicia and in central Ukraine whose mentality was disfigured by the "Little Russian" brand are attracted by themes such as democracy, the building of a civil society, and national sovereignty. Today two blocs—Our Ukraine and BYuT—potentially identify with these values. But Yushchenko and his milieu are allowing themselves to be isolated from "the social environment." So far everything appears to indicate that

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52. "Universal natsionalnoi iednosti."

53. "Skhid i Zakhid Ukrainy v konteksti vyborchoi kampanii-2006," 16.

Our Ukraine will remain in this indefinite state.<sup>54</sup> For this reason we may assume that BYuT will become the vehicle for the views and aspirations of the Ukrainians oriented towards national-democratic ideas. The relatively even distribution of the support for this bloc in the western and central oblasts indicates this.

Undoubtedly, the Party of Regions and BYuT have considerable advantages: they are headed by colourful personalities—Yanukovich (Akhmetov) on the one side and Tymoshenko on the other. This is a crucial factor, for “in post-Communist countries when one wants to vote in a relatively stable way, it is better to place one’s political sympathies in individual politicians than in parties formed by them.”<sup>55</sup> BYuT and the Party of Regions have made the greatest effort, at least in the verbal, external sphere, to adapt to the political divisions in society. Therefore, we can expect that in the natural course of events these two groupings will become the “footings” on which the party system in Ukraine will continue to take shape.

Translated from the Ukrainian by Taras Zakydalsky

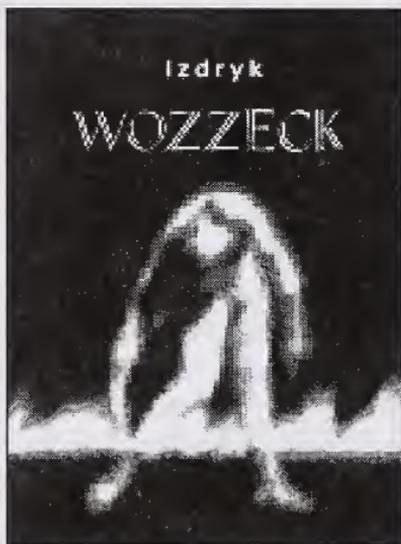
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54. I have in mind the party convention at the end of 2006. At the end of February and the beginning of March 2007, Our Ukraine finally assumed the position of the opposition to the government coalition and demonstrated its fidelity to the principles of the Orange Revolution. I have in mind the renewed alliance with BYuT. For more information on this question, see Ihor Zhdanov, “Our Ukraine and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc: From Strategy of Self-Destruction to Joint Strategy for Victory,” *Zerkalo nedeli*, 8–16 March 2007, at <<http://www.mw.ua/1000/1030/56092/>>; and “Tekst zaiavy BYuT ta ‘Nashoi Ukrainy,’” *Ukrainska pravda*, 13 March 2007, at <<http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2007/3/13/55573.htm>>. But there are two reasons for doubting that this alliance will be durable: first, there is a danger that BYuT will dominate over Our Ukraine, which will become not a partner but a vassal. Secondly, one should not forget that just three weeks before BYuT and Our Ukraine signed the joint declaration, Yulia Tymoshenko’s faction supported the “anti-crisis coalition” in the struggle with the President over the new law on the Cabinet of Ministers.

55. K. Sobolewska-Myślik, *Partie i systemy partyjne na świecie* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2004), 135.

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## Memories of the Second World War in Recent Ukrainian Election Campaigns\*

*Bohdan Harasymiw*

The myth of the Great Patriotic War (*Velyka Vitchyzniana viina*), celebrating victory over Nazi German, has remarkably outlived the polity that gave it birth, shaping not only Soviet but also post-Soviet politics.<sup>1</sup> In the same way that it legitimated the Soviet Union, it now serves to legitimate post-Soviet Russia as the USSR's successor. Ukraine, which saw a great deal of the action on the Eastern Front in the Second World War, shares this myth. But during the war, on the territory of Ukraine, a third actor—the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (Ukrainska povstanska armiiia, or UPA), the military wing of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Orhanizatsiia ukrainskykh natsionalistiv, or OUN)—was engaged in battle against both Soviet and Nazi German forces in the cause of an independent Ukraine. The historical place of the OUN and UPA in the struggle for Ukraine's independence is problematical in the context of the dominant myth of the war and the legitimacy it rendered to the USSR

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\* A previous version of this article was presented as a paper at the Workshop on World War II in Ukraine: Collective Memory in the Light of History, at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, on 29 November 2006. I am indebted to the participants of the workshop for their comments and observations. In particular, I thank Bohdan Klid for reading and critiquing the paper in detail.

1. Amir Weiner, "The Making of a Dominant Myth: The Second World War and the Construction of Political Identities within the Soviet Polity," *Russian Review* 55 (October 1996): 639; idem, "In the Long Shadow of War: The Second World War and the Soviet and Post-Soviet World," *Diplomatic History* 25, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 447–50; and Wilfried Jilge, "The Politics of History and the Second World War in Post-Communist Ukraine (1986/1991–2004/2005)," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 54, no. 1 (2006): 50–2.

and Soviet Ukraine, and continues to render to their offspring, Russia and independent Ukraine. It is problematical because the UPA was not an arm of any state: it fought against the Red Army, the German Wehrmacht, Polish partisans, and Narodna Armija, and it engaged in attacks on civilians—Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews.

Just as in the days of the Roman Empire all roads led to Rome, so today all questions on the Second World War lead to Moscow. Any re-evaluation of the history of the war, any re-imagining or alteration of the historical memory in Ukraine eventually and inevitably, it seems, involves Russia. But does this mean that the myth of the Great Patriotic War as it exists in Ukraine is unlikely to change before the Kremlin reassesses and revises its history of the war? At the same time, Ukraine today is not Russia, a fact that even President Putin acknowledges from time to time, so for purposes of its own legitimation, integration, and nation building Ukraine, and particularly its polity, requires some myth other than the one it acquired as part of the USSR. This intriguing political problem of “the myth of war and the war of myths,” has been adequately addressed by Vladyslav Hrynevych.<sup>2</sup>

The present article focuses only on the three elections occurring at the national level between 2002 and 2006. In one form or another, of course, the issue of the OUN and UPA has been a part of Ukrainian politics even before independence.<sup>3</sup> A resolution of the Supreme Council’s Rukh caucus in June 1991, for example, called for the political rehabilitation of the OUN and UPA, pursuant to which an expert opinion from the historian Viktor Koval, contrary to expectations, basically demolished not only the myth of the Great Patriotic War but also the legitimacy of the whole Soviet period. This was overtaken by events consequent to the putsch against Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow in August 1991. Subsequently, there was much controversy over the passage of legislation touching on members of the OUN-UPA in 1992–94, but official recognition of UPA veterans was not achieved. During his two terms in office President Kuchma generally evaded the question, but in 1997 he establish yet another commission to investigate the OUN-UPA. The

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2. Vladyslav Hrynevych, “Mit viiny ta viina mitiv,” *Krytyka* 9, no. 5 (May 2005): 2–8.

3. Jilge, “The Politics of History,” 56–9, and 74. Most of this paragraph is based on this article.

commission reported in 2000 and again in 2005.<sup>4</sup> This lengthy, drawn-out process of official reconsideration of the meaning of the war for an independent (as opposed to Soviet) Ukraine has polarized rather than unified the Ukrainian public. It has caused a split even in the veterans' organization, and it has impelled some western oblasts of Ukraine to go their own way in recognizing the OUN and UPA. The national government, as Hrynevych points out, remains stuck between Scylla and Charybdis.<sup>5</sup> Between elections, two times a year—on Victory Day, 9 May, and the anniversary of the UPA's formation on 14 October, when the UPA veterans take to the streets—the question of revising the history of the Second World War is brought to public attention without being resolved.

Actually, the Great Patriotic War itself has never been an election issue in independent Ukraine, but it has been used in elections, usually by leftist parties and candidates, who used it as a political football or mudball to distinguish themselves from their "nationalist" opponents. In pre-election platforms a direct reference to the war and hence an appeal to patriotism was probably last made in 1998, when the Communist Party of Ukraine (Komunistychna partiia Ukrainy, or KPU) described itself in the closing slogans of its platform as going into that year's parliamentary elections "under the Red Banner of socialist construction and Victory over fascism."<sup>6</sup> By 2002 there was no such reference in the party's program.<sup>7</sup> Naturally, minor political parties, such as the Party of Defenders of the Fatherland (Partiia Zakhysnykiv Vitshyzny, or PZV), which described itself as composed of "former servicemen, from privates to generals, who have gone through the severe school of the military," also made allusion to the war in 1998, but this was not enough to win them any seats in Parliament. In the 2002 parliamentary elections references to the war were only implicit in various actions and incidents in which Communists or veterans were pitted against "nationalists."

In March 2002, for example, after his candidacy for a seat in the legislature of Crimea was suddenly cancelled by a Simferopol district court, Leonid Hrach, the assembly's speaker and the leader of the KPU

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4. For the interim report, see Stanyslav Kulchytsky, *Problema OUN-UPA: Poperednia istorychna dovidka* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NANU, 2000).

5. Hrynevych, "Mit viiny ta viina mitiv," 7.

6. *Uriadovyi kurier*, 24 February 1998.

7. *Holos Ukrainy*, 22 February 2002.

in Crimea, blamed it on "Ukrainian nationalists." His protest was aided by a member of the electoral commission who took it upon herself to transfer the registration documents of about 900 candidates for Parliament to the offices of the local Second World War veterans' council. Hrach's case was taken up by several prominent Russian politicians in Moscow, who appealed to President Kuchma to restore justice. To guarantee him a seat in the national parliament Hrach was placed at the same time in slot no. 14 on the KPU's election list to the Supreme Council in Kyiv. This illustrates the close collaboration between the Communists and the official war veterans in opposing the "nationalists" in Ukrainian politics.

When it was reported in March 2002 that the Ivano-Frankivsk City Council had granted combatant status, with the accompanying pension and other benefits, to twenty-four veterans of the Galician Waffen-SS Division, the Russian Foreign Ministry, no less, quickly responded with a harsh condemnation.<sup>8</sup> The act was also condemned by leaders of the Jewish community in Ukraine, as well as by Andrii Derkach, a member of Parliament.<sup>9</sup> In reality, the Ivano-Frankivsk motion was only debated, never passed, but this did not prevent the media from reporting the adoption of the motion as a fact.<sup>10</sup> In a live television debate shortly thereafter, Petro Symonenko, the leader of the KPU, accused his opponent, Prime Minister Anololii Kinakh, and the government of supporting fascism in the Ivano-Frankivsk incident, as well as in an allegedly forthcoming presidential decree that would rehabilitate the UPA. Kinakh responded by pointing to the need for reconciliation.<sup>11</sup>

Thus the UPA issue typically arose at the local, rather than the national level, and bubbled up from the bottom. In the 2002 election campaign, instead of being addressed and debated directly, the war experience was used as a weapon by the establishment party For a United Ukraine (*Za iedynu Ukrainu*, or *ZaIedU*) to denounce its opponents as "nationalists." This shibboleth was not susceptible to debate. Thus in Kharkiv fake posters ostensibly in favour of Our Ukraine (*Nasha Ukraina*) depicted its leader, Viktor Yushchenko, as a linear descendant of numerous "infamous" nationalist chieftains, including Stepan Bandera,

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8. RFE/RL Newswire, 19 and 21 March 2002.

9. *Ibid.*, 25 March 2002.

10. *The Ukraine List (UKL)*, no. 171, 11 April 2002.

11. *Ibid.*, 29 March 2002.

head of the “terrorist” OUN(Bandera faction).<sup>12</sup> ZaLedU was supported in this smear campaign by the Russian media, authoritative spokesmen in Moscow, and even by the Russian ambassador to Ukraine, Viktor Chernomyrdin.<sup>13</sup> As Nigel Pemberton noted at the time, “Dmitrii Rogozin, the head of the Russian State Duma’s International Relations Committee, has used Soviet-era rhetoric to reintroduce allegations that ‘Ukrainian nationalists’ who are members of Our Ukraine were involved in ‘criminal activities’ during and after World War II,” and the “Russian presidential administration chief Aleksandr Voloshin has admitted that Moscow backs ZaLedU, the SDPU(O), and the KPU, and is hostile to Our Ukraine.”<sup>14</sup>

The Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine (United) (Sotsial-Demokratychna Partiiia Ukrainy [Obiednana], or SDPU[O]) attempted to use the issue of the OUN and UPA in 2002 not to reopen the question of the Great Patriotic War, but to gain votes.<sup>15</sup> Its leader, Viktor Medvedchuk, it was revealed, was the son of a repressed OUN member, and the party was preparing to draft a law on the rehabilitation of the OUN-UPA. The motion proposed in the Ivano-Frankivsk City Council had been put forward by an SDPU(O) member. In Lviv Oblast the SDPU(O) was also active in commemorating locally well-known OUN and UPA figures in the hope, no doubt, of electoral pay-off.<sup>16</sup> Whether any of these measures really paid off is unknown.

To Taras Kuzio it appeared that the furore over the Ivano-Frankivsk incident was meant, if anything, to discredit Our Ukraine in the eyes of eastern Ukrainian voters by tarring it with the “nationalist” brush. Apparently, this was also the purpose of the assassination of the deputy governor of Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Mykola Shkribliak, who was also the leader of the oblast SDPU(O) organization. Shkribliak was a candidate in the constituency formerly held by Iaroslava Stetsko, widow of the well-known OUN(Bandera faction) leader, Iaroslav Stetsko. Up to her death she was the leader of the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists (Kongress ukrainsiv natsionalistiv, or KUN), a part of the Our Ukraine election alliance. Shkribliak’s main opponent was Roman Zvarych of Our

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12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. RFE/RL Newslines, 29 March 2002.

15. The Ukraine List (UKL), no. 171, 11 April 2002.

16. *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, 16–22 March 2002.

Ukraine, who easily won the single-member constituency with sixty-one percent of the vote. The assassination was linked by ZaledU and its affiliated media to the Galician Division's supposed rehabilitation, and Zvarych (American-born, like Yushchenko's wife) and Our Ukraine were described as rabidly "nationalist."

In spite of the denunciation of "nationalists," the Cabinet of Prime Minister Anatolii Kinakh announced in July 2002 that, based on commissioned historical research, it had drafted a bill to recognize the OUN and its military wing, UPA, as "fighters for freedom and the independence of Ukraine." Surviving veterans who had not committed "crimes against humanity" would be rehabilitated. Soviet veterans would not be similarly investigated or vetted. Predictably, the Russian Foreign Ministry reacted angrily to the announcement, saying that the UPA should be condemned, not rehabilitated, by the Ukrainian government. The government's actions may have been influenced by a particularly strong appeal from the city of Lviv for the rehabilitation of the UPA.<sup>17</sup> The Rivne Oblast Council, meanwhile, went one step further by asking President Kuchma, his government, and the Supreme Council to accord UPA members official status as veterans on a par with their Soviet counterparts.<sup>18</sup> The push by the Kinakh Cabinet for the recognition of the UPA had more to do with the poor showing of the pro-government parties in western Ukraine during the 2002 elections than with a desire for reconciliation. In spite of the above pronouncements, to date no legislation on the rehabilitation of the OUN-UPA has made it to the legislative agenda.<sup>19</sup>

In July 2003 the Ukrainian and Polish presidents attended a ceremony of reconciliation to mark the killing of ethnic Poles in Volyn in 1943 in which the UPA and local Ukrainians participated. Their joint statement, however, did not denounce the OUN and UPA, or even mention them by name, in connection with this episode of ethnic cleansing. It was said that this Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation had been arranged partly to pry loose some additional votes in western Ukraine in the forthcoming 2004 presidential election for the benefit of President Kuchma's preferred successor.<sup>20</sup>

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17. RFE/RL Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine Report, 23 July 2002; and Gilge, "The Politics of History," 78, n. 147.

18. RFE/RL Newswire, 25 July 2002.

19. Gilge, "The Politics of History," 74.

20. UKL, no. 139, 29 May 2001; RFE/RL Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine Report, 8 July

By the middle of 2004, therefore, it was rather surprising to hear Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich supporting the idea that everyone fighting for Ukraine during the Second World War should be treated equally. This was, as Taras Kuzio says, difficult to reconcile with the prime minister's earlier endorsement of the Soviet security services as defenders of Ukraine and its people.<sup>21</sup> Nor was it easy to square this with Yanukovich's stand, articulated at the outset of the 2004 presidential campaign, equating terrorism with extremism and extremism with political opposition. In fact, "terrorism" had long been a label applied by Ukraine's central authorities to opposition activity, particularly to mass demonstrations. "As in the Soviet era," went a contemporary comment, "'extremists' and 'terrorists' are understood as western Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, both of which strongly support Viktor Yushchenko, Yanukovich's main presidential rival."<sup>22</sup> Apparently, the answer to the puzzle was that Yanukovich was attempting to win the votes of the "nationalists" in western Ukraine and, at the same time, of the "anti-nationalists" in the rest of the country. Hence the well-publicized visit to western Ukraine, the "egg attack" (by "eggstremists") there, and the loud alarm raised by the Yanukovich campaign about his "Nashist" opponent, Yushchenko.<sup>23</sup> Moscow's best "political technologists" were hired to work on Yanukovich's campaign, and they emphasized the opposition "west versus east," that is, "nationalists versus anti-nationalists."<sup>24</sup>

On 28 October 2004, just three days before the presidential election, at a Soviet-style military parade to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of Kyiv from Nazi forces, the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, appeared on the reviewing stand alongside President Kuchma and his preferred successor in a show of support for Yanukovich.<sup>25</sup> This was

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and 12 August 2003; RFE/RL Newsline, 14 July 2003; and, for the historical background, see Timothy Snyder, "'To Resolve the Ukrainian Problem Once and for All': The Ethnic Cleansing of Ukrainians in Poland, 1943–1947," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1, no. 2 (Spring 1999): 86–120.

21. UKL, no. 237, 30 June 2004.

22. Action Ukraine Report (hereafter AUR), 3 October 2004.

23. For more on the media campaign and its equating of Yushchenko with Naziism, Bandera, and Bush, see the special issue of *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 47, nos. 3–4 (September–December 2005): 241–360, on the 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections.

24. Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 86–93.

25. *Ibid.*, 94–5; AUR, 29 and 31 October 2004; UKL, no. 251, 23 October 2004, no.

a graphic demonstration of the hold that the myth of the Great Patriotic War still had on the mind of the Ukrainian public and the willingness of the Kuchma regime to exploit this myth for political ends. Originally scheduled for 6 November, the ceremony was seen by many commentators as an election ploy. The degree to which this redounded to Yanukovich's favour is not known. Certainly, by congratulating Yanukovich at the end of November, immediately after the second ballot and before the official results (which were falsified) were announced, Putin not only discredited himself but also probably set back the Kremlin's strategy of projecting its power into former Soviet territories.<sup>26</sup>

Following his election and inauguration, President Viktor Yushchenko called on Soviet and UPA veterans to reach mutual reconciliation. Since reconciliation over the war had already been achieved with Poland and even with Japan, he argued, it was surely overdue among Ukrainians themselves.<sup>27</sup> Again the Lviv Oblast Council urged the President and his government to recognize the UPA as a participant in the Second World War. The appeal was supported by the Ukrainian People's Party (Ukrainska narodna partiia).<sup>28</sup> But in his May Day address the leader of the KPU, Petro Symonenko, urged Soviet Army veterans not to allow the Khreshchatyk to be sullied by the presence of OUN-UPA soldiers during the forthcoming Victory Day celebrations on 9 May.<sup>29</sup> As a compromise, Yushchenko attended the 2005 Victory Day festivities in both Moscow and Kyiv. On the latter occasion he reiterated his call for reconciliation.<sup>30</sup> "In the end," Ivan Lozowy commented, "the Soviet veterans won out, UPA veterans were excluded, and—as in previous years—at the tail end of the official procession came several hundred Communist leaders and activists, a good number of them prominently displaying portraits of Stalin."<sup>31</sup>

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252, 26 October 2004, and no. 254, 27 October 2004; and Johnson's Russia List (JRL), no. 8427, 26 October 2004.

26. Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*, 94–5; and UKL, no. 290, 29 November 2004.

27. RFE/RL Newline, 17 March 2005, and 9 May 2005; UKL, no. 349, 19 May 2005.

28. AUR, 25 March 2005.

29. *Ibid.*, 3 May 2005; and RFE/RL Newline, 5 May 2005.

30. AUR, 9 and 10 May 2005; and RFE/RL Newline, 10 May 2005.

31. AUR, 13 May 2005.

An additional, but by no means decisive, impetus for reconciliation was provided by a memorandum of the émigré organization World Congress of Ukrainians, presented to Volodymyr Lytvyn, the speaker of the Supreme Council, that urged President Yushchenko “to make a decision on recognition of the fighters of the OUN and UPA as participants in the Second World War.”<sup>32</sup> On his part Lytvyn expressed the view that the various draft laws already in existence should be consolidated into one draft to be presented for parliamentary consideration. This did not happen. Instead, in October, during a rally on the Khreshchatyk to mark UPA’s sixty-third anniversary, clashes broke out between supporters of the UPA and members of the KPU and the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine (Prohresyvna sotsialistychna partiia Ukrainy, or PSPU).<sup>33</sup> Obviously, the time was not ripe for reconciliation, and Yushchenko was compelled to concede at least a temporary defeat of his initiative.<sup>34</sup>

In the 2006 parliamentary elections, as far as I know, only two parties made any references—all of them unequivocally negative—to the OUN and UPA. In their published platforms both the Communists and the Progressive Socialists absolutely rejected the rehabilitation of nationalists. The KPU program stated: “We will not permit the rehabilitation of the OUN-UPA fascist murderers,”<sup>35</sup> and Nataliia Vitrenko’s bloc declared: “We are categorically against the rehabilitation of the OUN-UPA and other accessories of the fascists.”<sup>36</sup> Even the far-right-wing Ukrainian National Assembly (Ukrainska natsionalna asambleia, or UNA) failed to mention the OUN and UPA in its program or to allude to the question of reconciliation.<sup>37</sup> In spite of its support for Yushchenko, the Our Ukraine electoral bloc drew a blank as well. Thus the issue of rehabilitation and reconciliation did not figure in the campaign, since no one took up the cause of the OUN’s and UPA’s rehabilitation, and Russian “political technologists” were less influential.

After the elections Yushchenko again appealed to veterans of the Red Army and the UPA for reconciliation. He even suggested that the matter

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32. *Ibid.*, 22 August 2005.

33. RFE/RL Newsline, 17 October 2005; and AUR, 17 and 26 October 2005.

34. UKL, no. 371, 19 December 2005.

35. *Ibid.*, 18 March 2005. See also AUR, 15 March 2006.

36. *Holos Ukrainy*, 7 March 2005.

37. *Holos Ukrainy*, 24 February 2006.

be included in the post-election coalition agreement, but this was rejected by Viktor Yanukovych, the leader of the Party of Regions (Partiia rehioniv), as well as by Oleksandr Moroz, the leader of the Socialist Party of Ukraine (Sotsialistychna partiia Ukrainy).<sup>38</sup> Yushchenko hoped that the new Parliament would bestow Second World War veteran status on former UPA fighters. But the OUN-UPA issue was one of several that divided potential coalition partners and failed to win agreement.<sup>39</sup>

Again there were clashes in October 2006 as UPA veterans and the political parties supporting them attempted to commemorate the army's sixty-fourth anniversary. Their rallies in Kyiv and Kharkiv were disrupted by left-wing counter-demonstrations.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, Yushchenko issued a decree instructing the Cabinet of Ministers and the National Academy of Sciences to adopt measures in the course of 2006–2007 to study and illuminate objectively Ukrainian participation in the Second World War, as well as in other military conflicts of the twentieth century. The measures included conducting research projects, issuing scholarly and popular publications, producing films and documentary broadcasts, and disseminating the findings through the mass media. On the basis of the research the Cabinet was to prepare a draft law recognizing the part played by various organizations in the struggle for Ukraine's independence from the 1920s to the 1950s. The Ministries of Education and of Culture and Tourism, together with the State Committee on Broadcasting, were directed to assist in appropriate ways.<sup>41</sup> The decree's overall objectives were ambitious to say the least: "to consolidate and develop the Ukrainian nation, to establish historical justice with regard to the participants in the Ukrainian liberation movement, to promote the process of national reconciliation and mutual understanding, and to renew national memory."

In this dramatic departure from the Soviet myth of the Great Patriotic War, President Yushchenko has few reliable political allies. Only the Ukrainian People's Party has been a consistent supporter of the recogni-

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38. RFE/RL Newline, 10 May 2006; JRL, 2006, no. 109, 10 May 2006; and AUR, 11 May 2006.

39. *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, 10–16 June 2006.

40. AUR, 16 and 27 October 2006; and RFE/RL Newline, 16 October 2006.

41. "Pro vsebichne vvychennia ta obiektyvne vysvitlennia diialnosti ukrainskoho vyzvolnoho rukhu ta spryannia protsesu natsionalnoho prymyrennia," Ukaz Prezidenta Ukrainy, no. 879/2006, 14 October 2006.

tion of the OUN and UPA as fighters for Ukraine's independence. It even insists that the President acknowledge that without the UPA there would be no Ukrainian state at all.<sup>42</sup> Only in the fall of 2006 did the President's own party, Our Ukraine, now the Popular Union Our Ukraine (Narodnyi Soiuz Nasha Ukraina, or NSNU), adopt a statement on granting veteran status to UPA fighters in its program.<sup>43</sup> Two of the President's long-time political opponents, the KPU and Nataliia Vitrenko's bloc or the PSPU, categorically reject his latest proposal and remain unshakeable in their faith in the dominant myth: to them it represents absolute truth.<sup>44</sup> The Socialist leader, Moroz, merely insists on an objective study of the matter in Parliament without prejudging its outcome.<sup>45</sup> With such precarious support, the prognosis for the decree's success in displacing the myth of the Great Patriotic War is not very good. In the meantime, the experience of the last few national elections in Ukraine shows that the memories of the Second World War are used by the parties not for reconciliation and nation building, but rather for political in-fighting.<sup>46</sup>

Unquestionably, President Yushchenko is unafraid of controversy in his initiative to achieve a historical revival and to unify a split society,<sup>47</sup> but he has practically no political support. Ultimately, it will be up to Russia to decide, and for the rest of President Putin's term, which ends in 2008, it has already decided that the myth of the Great Patriotic War

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42. See "Zaiava fraktsii Ukrainskoi Narodnoi Partii shchodo UPA," 17 October 2005 on the party's Web site <<http://www.np-ua.org/>> (accessed 22 November 2006).

43. *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, 11–17 November 2006.

44. "V. Iushchenko vzial pod zashchitu predateleï i posobnikov fashizma," resolution adopted at the meeting of the Presidium of the Pavlodar Council of Veterans, 1 November 2006, on the Kompartiiia Ukrainy Web site <<http://www.kpu.net.ua>> (accessed 22 November 2006); and "Vlast Ukrainy reabilituïet posobnikov fashistov," 18 October 2006, Nataliia Vitrenko's bloc or the Progressive Socialist Party of the Ukraine Web site <<http://www.vitrenko.org/>> (accessed 22 November 2006).

45. "Moroz vyskazyvaetsia za obektivnoïe rassmotrenie v parlamente voprosov o statuse voïnov UPA i o golodomore," 21 November 2006, Sotsialistychna partiia Ukrainy Web site <<http://www.spu.org.ua/>> (accessed 22 November 2006).

46. For an excellent inventory of the state of nation building as of 2004, see Stephen Shulman, "Ukrainian Nation-Building Under Kuchma," *Problems of Post-Communism* 52, no. 5 (September–October 2005): 32–47. On transitional justice and reconciliation, with implicit analogies to Ukraine, see Alexander L. Boraine, "Transitional Justice: A Holistic Approach," *Journal of International Affairs* 60, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2006): 17–27.

47. *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, 14–20 May 2005.

must stand. This is regrettable, as James Sherr points out, for “there is a blatant inconsistency, if not schizophrenia, in claiming credit for the triumphs of this state whilst refusing to accept the magnitude of its evils.”<sup>48</sup> Until Russia faces up to its myths—something it has not been willing to do up to now—Ukraine will continue to live with its Soviet myths, at least until the Second World War generation passes away. Myths sustain individuals and communities, particularly in time of war. But after sixty years of peace, it is no longer appropriate for pride and pain to take precedence over reason, compassion, and truth.<sup>49</sup> But to expect “reason, compassion, and truth” in politics is itself unreasonable.

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48. AUR, no. 479, 8 May 2005.

49. *Ibid.*

## Book Reviews

Nicolas V. Iljine, ed. *Odessa Memories*. Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 2004. 145 pp.

This beautiful coffee-table book was inspired by the Russian-émigré nostalgia of Nicolas Iljine, a seasoned European representative of the Solomon Guggenheim Foundation. It could have easily drowned in the hurricane of personal postmodern memoirs, if not for its scholarly pretensions and unjustified ambitions. With the stamp of approval by an American academic press, this elegant volume, designed by Michelle Dunn Marsh and printed in China on high-quality paper, does not purport to be a private memoir, but rather a contribution on nineteenth-century Russian imperial culture, the history of Ukraine, and intellectual life in Odesa.

Despite its high claims, the book belies its entry in the Catalogue of the Library of Congress and is simply a "Samuel and Althea Stroum Book," and a classic sample of "history to order," mirroring our confused modernity and, regrettably, presenting a rather crooked-mirror image of Odesa. It collages some authentic and not so true private "Odessa memories" to amply reward the intended readers and the subvention donors with the highly problematic myth of a "Jewish town." For this purpose, the Trust and Guggenheim Foundation representative commissioned some reliable contributors: Sholom Aleichem's grand daughter, Bel Kaufman, born in Odesa; Dr. Patricia Herlihy, an expert on the Russian grain trade and the author of *The Alcoholic Empire: Vodka and Politics in Late Imperial Russia* (Oxford University Press, 2002) and *Odessa: A History, 1704–1914* (Harvard Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986); and Oleg Gubar and Alexander Rozenboim, Odesa journalists, originally trained as engineers, now prolific writers of popular and occasionally anecdotal history of their native city.

The team concocted an unfortunate mélange of trite mythologies and historical vulgarizations about Odesa, palatable to an unsophisticated American audience and the contributors themselves, who have a hard time meandering between Edessa in the Caucasus and Edessa in ancient Phoenicia in the tenth century BC, the Greek Odessa of the sixth century BC near present-day Ochakiv and the city of Odesa founded in 1794. Geography and history are not an American forte. A simplified etymology has been provided out of sympathy: Odessa? "Greek or, perhaps, Italian in origin" or the one "located in Bulgaria," as per the American expert on Russian grain, currently Research Professor Patricia Herlihy (p. 4). The book is targeted at a specific American reader—the American-Jewish community, some of whose members trace their Old World roots to Odesa environs, without ever having lived in Odesa itself. Like most Americans, they have a rather distorted impression of Europe in general, both Eastern and Western, and even more so, of European Russia and this unique European city.

The regrettable cliché “Odessa, a Jewish town” may be interpreted by some as another anti-Semitic myth, since there are no Catholic, Lutheran, Moslem, or Anglican analogies. Attributing exaggerated significance to Odesa Jews may be surmised as a myth of superiority. In reality, various Jews, who were latecomers to Odesa, did not actually shape her commercial, civic, and cultural life from 1794 to 1900. For a true picture of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century life in Odesa one should have consulted *Staraia Odessa: Istoricheskie ocherki, vospominaniia* (Old Odesa: Historical Sketches, Recollections, 1913) by Aleksandr De Ribas, a famous relative of the city’s first Italian governor, Admiral Giuseppe De Ribas; Valentin Charnetsky’s *Vdali Italii moei* (Far from My Italy, 1993); or several articles by Oleg De Ribas, one of the living descendants of the De Ribas clan, published in Odesa’s local press from 1997 to 2002.

Herlihy, Gubar, and Rozenboim are aware of Odesa’s Italian proto-history, to which they allude in their other writings about Odesa and even in this narrative, and yet they choose to reduce the city’s history to the land of Jewish merchants, pogroms, and Zionism. Ironically enough, Herlihy cites the ideologue of Zionism, Vladimir Jabotinsky (Zhabotinsky), who stated: “From the hundreds of cities of Italy, from Genoa to Brindisi, a long procession of dark-eyed adventurers made their way towards Odessa” (p. 11). This admission and others are adumbrated by the authors’ mythical and anecdotal claims. Gubar’s allegation that even the Italian Opera House “served as a social gathering place for discussion of commerce, politics, and other news” (p. 55) is rather revealing, not of the city’s cultural life but of his own cynical and vulgarized conception of the Opera House.

In reality, Odesa, the most non-Russian, non-Ukrainian, and European city in the Russian Empire, a product of the Enlightenment, was a rare secular city, in which none of the religions prevailed and where none of the “houses of god” dominated city architecture. The Odesa Opera House has always been and still remains the centre of this “ideal city,” and only one cultural group—the Italians—can justifiably claim any substantial cultural and intellectual contributions. It was also the most successful urban project of Europe’s most enlightened monarch. Around 1770 Catherine the Great commissioned Stephano De Rivarola to conduct a geological survey for a future Russian Genoa. Driven by the desire to turn her empire into a truly European state, she embarked on the porto franco Odesa project, which was to establish a bastion of Romanness and Europeaness. Her correspondence from 1770 to 1794 makes it abundantly clear that the mass migration of the invited Italian professional and artistic elite from Genoa, Naples, Palermo, Venice, Rome, Milan, and Turin began after 27 May 1794. The Russian Court completely subsidized the original regulated settlement of Italians, and only Italians, in Odesa. Native Slavic subjects of the Russian Empire in the environs of the future port were allowed to settle in Odesa only much later, as were many other cultural and linguistic groups. Contrary to later claims, none of the numerous non-Russian settlers could match the contributions of the Italian founders in all areas of the city’s life.

Contrary to Gubar and Rozenboim’s myth, Odesa’s history begins with the first settlement permits granted to Darius and Serafino Grafini from Livorno, Mark Gaius, Dzualdo, Zambio, and Nicolaolu from Trieste, Altesti, and others (*A History of Odessa, the Last Italian Black Sea Colony* [Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004], 68). Within a short three-year span, Odesa was designed, built, and developed into a European city, according to Italian projects and with Italian expertise, manpower, and materials

brought from Trieste, Naples, Genoa, and Livorno. Professor Herlihy, who cites the work of Giovanna Moracci, apparently had no time to familiarize herself with the actual work. Otherwise, she would have been aware of Giuseppe De Ribas's role in Odesa's history, a role she downplays. And this is not her only shortcoming. She fails to do justice to the vibrant interaction of European, Russian, and Ukrainian cultures and the complex intellectual life of polyphonic Odesa. Herlihy's, Gubar's, and Rozenboim's narratives are archetypal displacements of fact catering to the lowest common denominator and to an outdated xenophobic paradigm.

The Italian founders gave Odesa her cultural compass and a profoundly humanistic, secular urban existential model, a city where all houses of God were less popular than theatres, art galleries, Italian opera, concert halls, art and music studios, and cafés. The families De Ribas, Poggio, Caruso, Totti, Grafini, Bubba, Montovani, Zamboni, Morandi, Frapolli, Antonini, Zannotti, Riznich, Grafini, Rocco, Rossi, Ralli, Serafino, De Vivo, Anatra, Tomasini, and hundreds of others successfully transplanted superb forms of Romanness/Italianness onto the shores of the Black Sea for generations to come. The Odesa Italians not only set up the obvious economic, commercial, and administrative institutions: the port, customs, banks, trading houses, stock exchange, shipbuilding, and other industries, but also, as many others in European history, shaped the city's entire cultural life—its architecture, ballet, opera, sculpture, and painting. Despite Odesa's multicultural mosaic, none of the immigrant waves that would later succeed the first Italian one can claim any substantial, long-lasting impact on the city. It was thanks to her Italian proto-history that Odesa would later become the "cultural Mecca" of imperial and Soviet Russia.

The Italian, largely secular, presence in Odesa affected even the Jews, who established themselves in the city towards the middle of the nineteenth century. They came from Italy, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, and Albania and evolved into a distinct hybridized and secularized community. According to the American scholar Steven Zipperstein—whom, oddly enough, the contributors cite—the Odesa Jews preferred to visit the opera rather than the synagogue on Saturdays (*The Jews of Odesa: A Cultural History, 1794–1881* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985], 65, 85). This fact may be difficult to absorb for many North Americans, who have a poor understanding of European and particularly Russian history.

Fortunately, the book opens with the honest recollections of Bel Kaufman, who shyly admits that as a child growing up in Odesa, she liked to recite Pushkin's poems in Russian (p. lii). Even now, after living so many years in the United States, she peppers her discourse with Russian words such as *tetradka* and *vecherinka*. It is remarkable that Mme Kaufman, a second generation Odesite, identifies herself with the Odesa of Pushkin's epoch and with Russian culture, and fails to recall Jewish life and pogroms in Odesa.

Her preface is followed by a presumably scholarly commentary by Patricia Herlihy, who skilfully rewrites the historical narrative to turn Odesa into El Dorado and a centre of Zionism. Relying on stereotypes and fictional stories, she occasionally elevates Greek settlers to the Olympus of the Odesa's founding fathers and credits them with major contributions in commerce, shipping, and navigation. Sometimes she favours the Jews, despite the fact that the famous *case del commercio* (houses of trade) were modeled on

the Italian ones. Many Odesa Italians, like the famous Giovanni Riznich (the husband of Amalia Riznich, the Florence-born Odesa passion of Alexander Pushkin), managed Odesa's branch offices of the Genoa and Naples houses of trade. Even at mid-century the trading companies of Carlo Rocco, the Bubba brothers, Trabotti, Rossi, Simoni and Grimaldi, Porro, the Rossi brothers, and others continued to bring huge profits to the Russian Empire. Herlihy deliberately diminishes or ignores Italian contributions to Odesa. For instance, she attributes Odesa's richness in musical performers and audiences to geography: "That relatively southern spot attracted from southern climates ethnic groups already famous for playing musical instruments and singing: Ukrainians, Jews, gypsies, Armenians, Italians and Southern Russians" (p. 17). The overwhelming impact of Italian composers such as Ferdinando Paër, Vincenzo Bellini, Giovanni Paisiello, Ginoachino Rossini, Gaetano Donizetti, Domenico Cimarosa, Francesco Mercadante, Giuseppe Verdi, Nicola Piccinni, and Giacomo Puccini on European and world art and culture escapes the authors, who apparently place klezmer music higher than Rossini and Donizetti (p. 110). Odesa's musical reputation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was based on the centuries-old Italian operatic tradition, not on klezmer music. But Professor Herlihy would like her readers to believe that Odesa's musical heritage consists mainly of songs sung in the Southern Bavarian dialect glamorizing the criminal elements from the working-class district of Moldavanka.

Unaware of the impact of the Greek language on Odesan Russian intonation and of the Italian *comedia del arte* on Odesan gesturing, Herlihy reports that "[p]eople recognize that these performers come from Odessa because of their Jewish intonations and gestures" (p. 18). But are there any universal "Jewish intonations and gestures?" Regrettably, Gubar and Rozenboim helpfully expose the Jewishness of the famous Ilia If, the co-author of *The Twelve Chairs* and *The Golden Calf* (p. 117), and the favourite Soviet singer Leonid Utesov (p. 110). One simply wonders how could the University of Washington Press have put the stamp of approval on this xenophobic exercise? Mr. Utesov's wish not to carry his Germanic name is a sign of his happy assimilation and affinity with the country of his ancestors, who had lived in Russia longer than in Germany. Is it the mandate of the Samuel and Althea Fund or the Guggenheim Foundation to expose Odesa Jews disguised under Slavic names? Efrusi, the Italian merchant from Livorno, is apparently Jewish (pp. 80, 90) and so is Anatra (p. 29). Is this a contribution to the intellectual history of Odesa and Ukraine or a rush "Jew-finding" course?

The contributors' historical distortions are not always consistent. Gubar and Rozenboim contradict some of Herlihy's statements. They correct her reference to a Jewish neighbourhood (p. 28) by pointing out that Odesa never had a Jewish quarter (p. 60). But they uncritically embrace the myth of Jewish wealth, erroneously claiming that by the first decade of the twentieth century Jews controlled ninety percent of the grain export and owned almost half of the manufacturing companies and seventy percent of the commission stores and agencies in Odesa (pp. 76-7).

According to the diaries of Consul Cozzio, all major banks and construction and navigation companies were founded by Italians. The Trapani Navigation Company survived until the 1890s, and most of the Italian wealth (the funds of the Anatra, Cozzio, Grimaldi, Iorini, Molinari, Natali, Perilli, Pettinato, Taddei, Trabotti, and other families invested in Russian banks) was nationalized only after 1917. In the course of assimilating to the city's Italo-Russian culture, Odesa's Jews, as elsewhere in Europe, simply had no

historical time to make a substantial impact on the city. Odesa reshaped them more than they reshaped Odesa. It gave them a freedom and dignity unprecedented in history, which some of them would lose by emigrating to the United States, a country unfriendly to cities and deeply segregated along ethnic, racial, and religious lines.

Unfortunately, Gubar and Rozenboim have misused their recently acquired freedom of expression in independent Ukraine to distort history. Their doctored narrative has distorted many important facts. Why, for instance, was the Odesa synagogue built by Francesco Morandi, and why was it constructed in the Florentine style? The first Odesa hospital was built by the Italian architect Francesco Frapolli and financed by the court. All other buildings also enjoyed generous government and city subsidies, and none of the groups actually financed the urban construction. This explains why Odesa was built so rapidly and successfully.

Falling in with the postmodern tradition, the contributors to *Odesa Memories* have elevated the marginal and inconsequential to the central and significant and have replaced reality with a rather harmful myth.

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Giovanna Brogi Bercoff and Giulia Lami, eds. *Ukraine's Reintegration into Europe: A Historical, Historiographical and Politically Urgent Issue. Conference in Gargnano, 18–20 November 2004*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell' Orso, 2005. 338 pp.

This collection features contributions, presented in 2004 at the Gargnano conference, “dedicated to Ukraine’s re-integration into Europe from the historical, historiographic and political points of view” (p. 5). There are seventeen articles, covering four major topics: (1) Ukrainian identity and nation building in historical perspective (from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries); (2) the role of religious confessions in the development of national identity; (3) the linguistic, literary, and artistic heritage; and (4) Ukraine between the European and Eurasian spaces.

Both the organizers and the participants of this conference appear to be largely unanimous in their evaluation of the state of knowledge about Ukraine as “patchy and imperfect.” They conclude that “despite invaluable contributions from academic circles,” particularly those made during the last decade, “Ukraine is still a relatively unknown political and cultural quantity in Europe” (p. 5). Consequently, the significance of addressing the complicated issues of Ukraine’s quest for cultural and national identity, its history, and its place in contemporary Europe “cannot be underestimated” (p. 6).

The first four papers discuss a range of issues concerning the very nature of Ukrainian national identity. Hans Rothe views the formation of the Ukrainian nation as a battlefield of “forces” and “counter-forces.” According to him, Ukrainian history is more complicated than it appears, for “in no other nation in Europe can we observe that the forces that promoted the formation of a state hindered it at the same time” (p. 14). Such factors as the church and religion, the Ukrainian nobility, and the Ukrainian

language and literature acted as both “forces” and “counter-forces”: the church union of 1596, in fact, divided the emerging nation; the Ukrainian nobility, while actively participating in the process of nation building, readily depended “on the culture of another state” (Poland); and in becoming “Ukrainian,” the literary process “did not exclusively promote literature in Ukrainian language” (pp. 14–15). As for the “historical roots” of the Ukrainian nation’s hindered development, Rothe sees them in the Ukrainian emulation of a “declining state” (Poland), with its “constitutional model” and “the so-called aristocratic republic,” which “impeded the process of strengthening of a new Ukrainian state,” as well as in a belated attempt to find Western allies as guarantors of Ukraine’s sovereignty (p. 16). The struggle for independence was followed by Ukraine’s “dissolution in Russia,” during which its intelligentsia actively participated in creating a new, modern Russian culture and political ideology (pp. 17–19). Some of these problems persist while the Ukrainian nation is still in the process of being born. To facilitate this process Ukrainians would have to decide what they really aspire for and what changes they must make to achieve their goal.

As Iaroslav Isaievych points out in his study on the past and present of pan-Slavism in Ukraine, this ideology has never been very popular among Ukrainians. Its nineteenth-century proponents (M. Kostomarov and M. Drahomanov) combined the idea of “Ukraine’s own way” with “the idea of Slavic solidarity” (pp. 30–1). At the same time, Ukrainian pan-Slavism has often been and remains a guise for a pro-Russian political orientation.

The main purpose of Oleh Ilyntzkyj’s paper is to challenge the “dated conceptual framework that considers Ukrainians as ‘Russians’” (p. 40). The author specifically identifies terminology as a “key stumbling block” in elucidating “issues of national identity and state structures on the East Slavic lands” and a reason behind the promotion of “the stereotypical grand constructs of Russianness,” which are “still entrenched in the West” (pp. 43–4). While recent studies, such as Simon Franklin’s and Emma Widdis’s *National Identity in Russian Culture: An Introduction* (2004), which he analyzes, succeed in dispelling some of the Russian myths, this process is never simple or “without setbacks” (pp. 43–5). Ilyntzkyj specifically faults contemporary Western scholars for the vagueness with which they often define the Russians and “Russianness,” as well as their insufficient understanding of how and when the issue of common Rus’ ancestry became exploited for the sake of “Russian ‘national’ identity and culture” (p. 49). Moreover, some scholars continue to overlook the issue of how Ukrainian and Belarusian cultures became marginalized as a part of this process and to question their originality and self-sufficiency.

Wolf Moskovich’s view on the specificity of Bukovina in the context of Ukrainian culture and consciousness is that of a land of “relative ethnic accord and tolerance” (p. 59). The roots of its regional identity must be sought in the “political and socio-economic pattern of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy,” which survived “the harsh tests of two world wars, of the Rumanian and the Soviet eras” (p. 59). However, “one of the lessons of the Bukovinian experience is that a small province cannot isolate itself from the world at large ... but can only partially soften [its] destructive impact” (p. 61).

The next four papers study the role of religious confessions in the development of Ukrainian national identity. Archbishop Ihor Isichenko examines the role of the Byzantine factor in Ukrainian history and concludes that in early-modern Ukraine the Byzantine (Greek) tradition played an important role in the process of forming the ethno-cultural identity of the Ukrainian people. On the other hand, in modern Ukraine the role of the

Byzantine factor is often characterized as negative because of its association with Russian imperial ideas.

Daniel Tollet investigates the issue of religious and interconfessional confrontation in Polish Ukraine (1569–1772) and notes that Rome’s Counter-Reformation policy, which was promoted by the Polish ruling elite, forced the Greek Orthodox Church in the Polish state to enter union with Rome. Sporadic attempts to reach a compromise were overshadowed by the uprising of 1648, in which religion was an important factor. Throughout the late 1600s and until the first partition of Poland (1772), Polish authorities continued to pursue a pro-union policy among its Greek Orthodox subjects.

István Baán’s paper on the diocese of Munkács (Mukačeve) is devoted to three Greek-speaking bishops who promoted church union in this diocese from 1678 to 1706. Although their appointment by the Sacred Congregation De Propaganda Fide (Rome) is recognized as accidental and even controversial, their biographies are a key to the complex picture of church politics and religious struggle in the region.

Gianpaolo Rigotti gives a “brief and select description” of the Vatican’s archival sources concerning Ukrainian church affairs. The author singles out documents on topics such as (1) the relations between the Holy See and the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine, (2) the religious orders in Ukraine, (3) the life of the Ukrainian diaspora on the other side of the Atlantic, and (4) the Ukrainian clergy’s education in Rome. Among this paper’s valuable contributions are the complete list of archival sources and the texts of select documents.

The next set of papers deal with the Ukrainian language, literature, and visual imagery. Michael Moser examines the development of Ukrainian terminology in fields such as law, politics, botany, zoology, and mineralogy by Ukrainian scholars such as Ivan Verkhratsky in Vienna during the 1800s. The author presents Verkhratsky’s contributions as a pioneering effort, which, despite certain limitations, laid the foundations of contemporary Ukrainian terminologies.

Oksana Ostapchuk touches on the issue of language and politics in modern Ukraine, pointing out that the process of language building must be viewed in the context of Ukrainian state and nation building. She discusses “tendencies in language philosophy” and concentrates specifically on the history and the elements of the process known as “non-native vocabulary enrichment in the Ukrainian standard.” Ostapchuk concludes that there is still a conflict “between the different levels of language ideology and usage” and it remains to be seen whether “current language building measures can solve it” (p. 193).

Giovanna Siedina points to a lack of research on neo-Latin Ukrainian literature. Focusing on the contributions of the faculty of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, she establishes a close connection between the development of education in Ukraine and the status of Ukrainian neo-Latin poetry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Her analysis of the selected poetry by Kyivan professors and their students illustrates the role of the Academy as Ukraine’s main intellectual centre and bridge between Ukraine and European *Latinitas*.

In his paper John-Paul Himka identifies “the conflicts and tensions surrounding ascription of Ukrainian national ownership to past cultural artifacts” (p. 229), challenging the very category of cultural artifact, and particularly of Ukrainian cultural artifact. Even though the Ukrainian case appears more difficult because of “some peculiarities of Ukrainian history,” Himka recognizes the problem of ownership as “relevant to all attempts to create nationally owned artifacts” (p. 237). The scholar also points at methodological

issues that make the ascription of cultural artifacts to a specific culture problematic: national originality as opposed to foreign influences; controversy regarding the "nationality" of a concrete artifact, which often results in "multiple claims to a particular cultural legacy" (p. 236); difficulties with establishing the exact authorship; and confusion that arises from changing ethnic and political boundaries. Overall, Himka effectively challenges the theoretical grounds on which the Ukrainian nationalist paradigm is constructed.

The last group of five papers covers modern Ukrainian politics. Mykola Riabchuk examines the strengths and "potential weaknesses" of the phenomenon known as the "blackmail state" (described by Keith A. Darden in 2001), concentrating on the dismantled "post-communist semi-authoritarian regimes in Ukraine, Georgia, and Yugoslavia" (p. 244). Riabchuk generally accepts Darden's concept, although he finds his conclusion about the resilience of the "blackmail state" overly pessimistic. In Riabchuk's opinion, such factors as civic mobilization, international solidarity, and fragmentation within the country's political elite provide a "corridor of opportunities" for a regime's challengers.

Andrew Wilson's discussion of the role of political technology in Ukraine's presidential election of 2004 is based on the premises that traditional sociological and other tools are insufficient for understanding "elections in post-Soviet space" and that "the twilight world of 'active measures,' 'administrative resources,' black PR, and *kompromat* must be added to the picture" (p. 253). Wilson does exactly that and concludes that, despite certain tactical successes in applying those technologies, the plans of the ruling regime to remain in power were defeated because of the active stance adopted by Ukrainian civil society and the division within Ukraine's ruling elite.

Oxana Pachlovska analyzes the cultural makings of Ukraine's Orange Revolution and its immediate political outcome. The author's view of Ukraine is twofold: (1) historically, Ukraine is a borderland between the East ("Byzantine" civilization) and the West ("humanistic" European civilization) with all the advantages and shortcomings of such a location, and (2) contemporary Ukraine is a key element in "the balance of transformation" in Eastern Europe. To Pachlovska, the Orange Revolution is a manifestation of the struggle between two competing Ukrainian identities, the European and the post-Soviet, with the former prevailing for the time being.

In her paper Giulia Lami muses over the destiny of Ukraine in the light of the contemporary integration processes that are taking place in Europe and the Russia-dominated space. The author pronounces "the loss of credibility of the Russian/Eurasian option" after the Orange Revolution (p. 321) and states that the alternate Euro-Atlantic integration remains "a long-term goal."

The concluding paper by Andriy Portnov gives a comparative analysis of history books in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine as tools of creating "national, religious and socio-cultural identity by means of history" (p. 325). After the demise of the Soviet Union, all these states "began their own symbolic policy for rejection of the Soviet past" (p. 333). Even though this process occurred differently in each of the three countries because of a number of political and other factors, it led to one shared result, namely, it preserved the old Soviet dogmatic approach that prevents students from learning and respecting "different opinions or interpretations" (p. 335).

All the articles in this collection merit a wider and deeper discussion than I have been able to provide in this outline. There is no doubt in my mind that they will be

exceptionally enlightening to all specialists and students involved in European, Slavic, and Ukrainian studies.

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Anthony Hlynka. *The Honourable Member for Vegreville: The Memoirs and Diary of Anthony Hlynka, MP*. Introduced and translated by Oleh W. Gerus. Edited by Oleh W. Gerus and Denis Hlynka. Calgary: University of Calgary Press and Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies, University of Manitoba, 2005. 388 pp.

In 1926 the federal riding of Vegreville in east central Alberta had the distinction of electing Michael Luchkovich as the first member of Parliament of Ukrainian origin in the British Empire, and for over a period of three decades the riding regularly returned Ukrainian-Canadian representatives to the House of Commons. The present volume is a tribute to Anthony Hlynka, the second Ukrainian Canadian elected to the Parliament of Canada, who represented the riding of Vegreville during the war years 1940–49. Born in Western Ukraine, Hlynka arrived in Canada with his parents as an infant and was raised on a pioneer homestead in east central Alberta. He moved to Edmonton at the age of fifteen and put himself through technical school by working in brick yards and teaching English to new immigrants. The love for Canada and his Ukrainian community, which had been instilled by his parents, was crystallized within the urban setting of Edmonton into an ardent patriotism, which he carried throughout his life. A larger than life character described by one member of the media as “Dark, thick-set and with a look of unwavering determination (who) makes an instant impression of courage and clear purpose,” Hlynka distinguished himself as a consistent defender of Canadian farmers, an eloquent advocate for a Canadian citizenship devoid of discrimination, and an ardent champion of postwar Ukrainian refugees and the cause of Ukrainian independence.

Co-edited by Oleh W. Gerus and Denis Hlynka, this volume includes selected translations from Hlynka’s posthumously published book *Antin Hlynka, posol Federalnoho Parlamentu Kanady 1940–1949*, excerpts from his unpublished personal diaries and notes pertaining to his efforts on behalf of postwar Ukrainian refugees, a selection of his speeches to Parliament and other gatherings, press accounts of his career, and several essays on the history of Ukrainians in Canada. In his introduction Gerus provides a biographical overview of Hlynka’s life and sketches in a concise manner the nature of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, the social and political context of Hlynka’s career, and the dramatic developments in wartime and postwar Europe that defined his times.

For Hlynka “British parliamentary democracy and the new British Commonwealth of Nations represented the ideal of freedom, dignity, and mutual respect.” He “abhorred the socio-economic and political power of big business,” yet “embraced compassionate capitalism with socially responsible and just government” (pp. xxiv–xxv). Within the Ukrainian community during the 1930s, he became a member of the Ukrainian National

Federation, a secular nationalist organization allied with the European-based Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). In Canadian politics he aligned himself with the Social Credit party, a conservative-populist movement that subscribed to idiosyncratic theories of economic and monetary reform. The party dominated Alberta politics between 1935 and 1971 but had only modest success at the Federal level.

Hlynka's writings give fascinating insights into his upbringing, offer poignant tributes to the anonymous Ukrainian farmers who elected him, and convey concrete examples of the deeply partisan political divisions within the Ukrainian-Canadian community. He shares vivid and painful impressions of the plight of civilian refugees in postwar Europe and presents the case for Ukrainian independence in postwar Europe. Throughout, Hlynka promotes an inspired vision for Canada with equality for all citizens regardless of their origins, at a time when Ukrainian Canadians were regarded by some as other than "British" or "white."

The volume is presented by the editors as a "tribute" rather than a "critical biography," and ultimately my main criticism of the volume is directed at this fact. Hlynka deserves a full and exacting political biography that would adequately examine all of the issues surrounding his remarkable entry onto the stage of Canadian politics and Ukrainian-Canadian community life. The book unfortunately lacks an index and is sparingly footnoted with a mere fifty-six annotations. The list of additional relevant readings is select to the point of omitting reference to *A Fragment of History: A Story of the Hlynka Family*, a family history published in 1993 by Hlynka's brother Kass(ian). The book includes many valuable details about the cultural activism of Hlynka's father in Western Ukraine prior to coming to Canada, his experiences in Canada during the First World War, as well as a wealth of information on the rest of the Hlynka family.

Many of the additional readings listed by the editors include information on Hlynka's career, which is not elucidated in either the introduction or footnotes. These omissions are telling indicators of a reluctance to explore controversial issues. The editors fail to mention accusations made in the House of Commons that *Klych*, a periodical published by Hlynka during the mid-1930s, was a purveyor of anti-Semitic material. Particularly glaring, by its omission in the discussion of the plebiscite vote of 1942, is the fact that Hlynka's own Vegreville riding, in spite of his urgings to the contrary, voted overwhelmingly "no" to releasing Mackenzie King's Liberal government from previous promises on conscription. Of the handful of ridings outside of Quebec that voted "no," Vegreville had the highest margin of negative votes.

There are some minor editorial errors that mar the text: Danylo Skoropadsky died in 1957, not in 1971 (p. 385); the dates of absence of a Ukrainian-Canadian MP in Ottawa should read 1935-40, not 1935-45 (p. 35); Heinke (p.385) should read Heike; and Crepleve (pp. 73, 385) should read Crapeleve. There is a general problem of verifying and standardizing names throughout the text, a problem compounded by the fact that names are sometimes transliterated by the editors into English from Hlynka's Ukrainian transliterations of English names. Dr. N.D. Holubitsky of Radway appears both as H. Holubitsky (p. 26) and Dmytro Holubitsky (p. 382); P.A. Boutillier (p. 25) was actually Arthur M. Boutillier; Degville (p. 75) should read D'Egville and Coulvert (p. 16) should read Calvert.

Factual errors made in Hlynka's original writings are left uncorrected by the editors. In his essay on Michael Luchkovich, Hlynka identifies Bukovina (p. 374) rather than

Lemko territories as the lands from which the Luchkovich family migrated to the United States, and although Luchkovich was the first Ukrainian to be elected to the Canadian Parliament, he was not the first to let his name stand as a candidate (p. 367).

More seriously, Hlynka is said to have taken the Vegreville riding in the 1940 election "from the Liberal incumbent" (p. xxvi). In fact the seat was previously held by William Hayhurst of Hlynka's own Social Credit party. Hayhurst lost his party's nomination to Hlynka, who defeated three electoral opponents, including the Liberal candidate. All this is described in the translated texts.

Anyone hoping to cite the English translations within this volume should cross check against the original Ukrainian to verify the accuracy of the translation and the extent of textual editing. Peter Mitenko and William Dorosh are identified as provincial Social Credit candidates with whom Hlynka held joint meetings in 1940 (p. 26). In fact neither was a candidate and the original Ukrainian text does not make such a claim. It simply states that they were two supporters from Edmonton who spoke in favour of Hlynka's election. The actual provincial candidates with whom Hlynka held joint meetings—Tomyň, Popil, Baker, Maynard, and Woytkiw (p. 65 of the original Ukrainian text)—are altogether omitted in the translation. Similarly Hlynka's essay on Ukrainian Group Settlement in Canada mentions Dr. Edward Anton [*sic*] (Antochiw) of Port Arthur (p. 355) being elected and re-elected several times as mayor of that city. The original Ukrainian (p. 21) correctly identifies Dr. Anten as a Port Arthur councillor (*radnyi*) rather than mayor.

As one would expect in any tribute, there is a certain amount of hyperbole in this volume. The foreword supports Hlynka's self-ascribed claim of being "the father of the third immigration" of Ukrainians to Canada (p. xi). Unconvincing and lacking empirical study is the notion that "the degree of attention that Hlynka and, by association, Ukrainian issues were given by the English-language press during his tenure was unprecedented and has not been equalled until Ukraine's 'Orange Revolution' of 2004" (p. xxvii). Perhaps the least judicious assertion is that "not one of the dozens of Ukrainian Canadian MPs since 1949 has demonstrated a degree of competence and commitment to Ukrainian Canadian issues comparable to that of Hlynka" and that after Hlynka's defeat the "anticipated political benefits to the Ukrainian community from having a member in the ruling liberal party did not materialize" (p. xl). The parliamentary and judicial career of Liberal John Decore, the Alberta-born lawyer who defeated Hlynka in 1949 and represented Vegreville until 1957, is a subject worthy of a book on its own, but in this volume he receives scant mention (pp. xxxix–xl). Although Hlynka undertook a private and self-funded fact-finding mission to Europe between November 1946 and February 1947 and tirelessly presented the fate of Ukrainian refugees before the conscience of the Canadian public, it was the Liberal backbencher Decore who would ultimately have direct input into the Liberal government policy on postwar Ukrainian immigration to Canada. Throughout his term in office Decore intervened directly with several government departments on matters of concern to the Ukrainian community in Canada.

Hlynka himself seemed prone to self-aggrandisement, putting perhaps too much capital into his status as a backbench MP from a party that held only seven and later thirteen seats in Parliament during his time in office. How seriously could one take his claim that he was the only Ukrainian in the world sitting in a democratic assembly and that this gave him the moral right to speak on behalf of fifty million compatriots (p. 285)? Hlynka's genuine belief that he was obliged to act at every opportunity as advocate for

the imperilled liberties and freedoms of Ukrainians around the globe left him vulnerable to criticism from those who did not share his views. On occasion he displayed a certain political naiveté, as in his unwavering support for all postwar Ukrainian refugees, including surrendered personnel of the 14th Waffen SS Grenadiers Division (p. 91), a group of which he had little knowledge or understanding. Even if none of these soldiers were war criminals, as has often been vacuously proffered against them, what resonance could championing their fate evoke in a rural electorate that had just borne such huge sacrifices in their contribution to the defeat of Nazi Germany? When Hlynka discovered in 1949 that he did not speak for the majority of even his own constituency, let alone fifty million Ukrainians, he understandably felt wronged and declined in spirit, fortune, and health. Sadly, Hlynka “died suddenly” in 1957, one month short of his fiftieth birthday, after battling “hypertension.” Ironically, since Social Credit Peter Stefura’s one-year term was cut short by John Diefenbaker’s Conservative sweep in 1958, there has never been another Ukrainian Canadian elected MP in the Vegreville riding, a period now approaching half a century.

This volume is an encouraging start to the publishing program of the Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies at the University of Manitoba. As alluded by historian Gerald Friesen in his foreword, Anthony Hlynka’s story personifies the western Canadian prairie ideals of equality for all ethnic groups within a democracy that accommodates a “citizen’s continued activity in homeland politics, at least to a degree.” These ideals also demand that “despite an individual’s loyalty to the limited identities derived from religion and ethnic group, [there be] an equivalent commitment to party, province, region, and nation” (p. xii). *The Honourable Member for Vegreville* is a welcome initiative in broadening our understanding of the Ukrainian experience within the Canadian polity and a valuable biographical tribute to Anthony Hlynka, a milestone figure in the history of Ukrainians in Canada.

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Karel C. Berkhoff. *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*. Cambridge, Mass., and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004. xiii, 463 pp.

This is an ambitious, important monograph, an attempt to synthesize the experiences of the population of the Reichskommissariat Ukraine. The Reichskommissariat was an administrative unit set up by the Germans in occupied Ukraine during the Second World War. It did not encompass all of what is today Ukraine. Historical Galicia was incorporated into the General Government, which comprised most of the ethnically Polish lands under German rule. Transcarpathia was annexed by Hungary. Northern Bukovyna and a large strip of Ukraine around Odesa (Transnistria) were held by Romania. Neither the Crimean peninsula nor the easternmost parts of Ukraine, including Kharkiv, were joined to the Reichskommissariat. Still, this was a large territory encompassing the bulk of pre-1939

Ukraine, with a population of almost seventeen million on 1 January 1943. The Reichskommissariat formally came into existence on 1 September 1941 and ceased to exist when the Germans were driven from the territory by the Red Army at the end of March 1944.

This is not just a history of what Ukrainians experienced during the war. Berkhoff has taken a territorial and ethnically inclusive approach to his subject, which is not unexpected from a student of Paul R. Magocsi. The monograph includes a powerful chapter on "The Holocaust of the Jews and Roma" (pp. 59–88) and says much about what Russians and Poles living in Ukraine went through during this terrible time. It also discusses the ethnic Germans of the Reichskommissariat, the so-called *Volksdeutsche*. But the Ukrainians are by no means neglected in this account, since after all they made up the majority of the Reichskommissariat's population.

There is much packed into this book, too much to survey adequately within the limits of a review, so I shall concentrate on some of the themes that seem to be breaking new ground in Ukrainian studies.

Perhaps the most original discovery in this monograph is the account of the deliberate starvation of the city of Kyiv. Other urban centres were also affected by famine-like conditions. That this was a matter of occupation policy is demonstrated by the systematic confiscation of foodstuffs brought into the city from the countryside. It is impossible to say how many people in Kyiv died of starvation, but Berkhoff implies that the number was in the tens of thousands over the course of a year. He makes a noteworthy comparison with the famine of 1932–33: "The situation was a reversal of that which had existed in 1933. In that tragic year, starving peasants had tried to enter Kiev to get some food and were arrested in and near the city. Now it was the peasants who were 'privileged.' The tragedy in the early 1940s caused some resentment among city dwellers who blamed the high cost of barter at the markets and in the countryside on peasants' desire to avenge their earlier suffering" (p. 186).

A figure that surfaces often in the monograph is Hans Koch (not to be confused with Reichskommissar *Erich Koch*). A native of Lviv, Koch had served as a captain in the Ukrainian Galician Army and then studied theology and church history in Vienna. He joined the Nazi party in 1933 and during the war served as an advisor to Ostminister Alfred Rosenberg and an army intelligence officer who liaised with Ukrainian nationalists. After the war he worked first as a pastor and then in the early 1950s became one of the reanimators of East European studies in West Germany. Berkhoff does not provide a biography, but Koch appears again and again in his pages. Here, for example, is Koch characterizing the inhabitants of the Reichskommissariat Ukraine: "The clothing, also of the educated, is not only objectively ragged, but also deliberately neglected. Shaving, personal hygiene, shirt collars, polished boots, clean fingernails: until now, all were apparently considered bourgeois prejudices. The people here spit and blow their noses right on the floor. Human body odors are not regulated here, tooth cleaning is rare, and because everybody smokes nothing but the strongest tobacco (dried beech leaves rolled into thick newsprint), sessions even with learned and high-placed bodies can become an ordeal for a Western European. Gatherings of peasants are similar, even when they are in the open air" (p. 50). He was blasé about the murder of the Jews and reported to his superiors, incorrectly Berkhoff argues, that Kyivans accepted the Babyn Yar massacre "calmly, often with satisfaction" (p. 76; see also p. 220). He was also protective of members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), even when they were under

a ban. The Germans knew that the OUN was using the Ukrainian Red Cross as a cover for its activities, for example, travelling through Ukraine on Red Cross papers, but thanks in large measure to Koch, the organization was not dissolved (p. 110). This was an example of the kind of conflicting interests and jurisdictions that distinguished the administration of the Third Reich and the lands it occupied. While the Gestapo was hunting someone like Mykola Lebed, it could well be that he was being aided by someone in the Rosenberg circle or the Abwehr, someone like Koch. He is a figure to whom Ukrainian studies should pay more attention.

Surprisingly, in light of the kind of victimization narrative articulated, for example, by the film *Between Hitler and Stalin: Ukraine during World War II. The Untold Story*, Berkhoff adduces considerable evidence that the Germans made some effort to discriminate in favour of Ukrainians as against the other nationalities that inhabited the Reichskommissariat. There existed German army instructions to exclude Ukrainians from the roundup of hostages to be shot in reprisal (p. 147), although this was not a systematic policy (p. 49). Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian prisoners of war were released on parole, but this policy was never meant to apply to Russians, and it was later formally suspended for Ukrainians as well (pp. 90, 92–3, 105–7). Under the occupation it at least seemed that “ethnic Ukrainians received preferential treatment in job placement” (p. 144). In a Kyiv factory “Russians apparently wore the letter *R* for a while and faced discrimination” (p. 153). Erich Koch, the Reichskommissar, stated that “everything is being done to give Ukrainianness in Kiev and in other Ukrainian cities a dominant position over Russianness” (p. 195).

But this was being pursued, said Koch, “despite the lack of cooperation from the mass of the Ukrainians.” “For example, Ukrainian artists in Kiev complain when they are ordered to produce themselves [*sic*] in the Ukrainian language, declaring that Russian is the language of the educated and Ukrainian the language of the peasants” (pp. 194–5). Many incidents and observations recorded in Berkhoff’s book show that the sense of Ukrainian identity that prevailed in the former Soviet Ukraine differed markedly from the Ukrainian identity that could be found in Western Ukrainian regions, especially Galicia. In the Reichskommissariat people thought in terms of *svoi liudy*, our people. “In Dnieper Ukraine, [the category] ‘our people’ tended to exclude Jews and ethnic Germans, but almost certainly included Russians. Even speakers of Ukrainian with a strong national consciousness considered Russians ‘ours’.... Contrary to what some scholars have held, most Ukrainians in Soviet Ukraine still considered their membership in the vaguely defined group ‘our people’ as more significant than their Ukrainianness” (pp. 206–7). German intelligence saw the same picture. “From the very beginning, all German agencies were concerned with any demand for independence, but while they found it among the small Ukrainian intelligentsia and the Banderites, the vast majority of the population, they discovered, neither opposed nor wanted a Ukrainian state” (p. 208). The Ukrainian population did not consider itself victimized by the Russians even with regard to the famine of 1932–33. “Hans Koch saw and heard eyewitnesses address public gatherings in the countryside about the famine.... Peasants who had written diaries during the famine submitted them to the local newspapers (which did not publish them). Not once, however, did ordinary Ukrainians go on record as blaming the Russians for the famine” (p. 209). Ordinary people “remained little interested in ethnicity, let alone nationalism” (p. 210). Mykhailo Seleshko, an OUN member and translator for the Germans, talked to young

people in Vinnytsia in 1943. He said they “completely lacked a feeling of national hatred and did not wish to delineate national differences.... National ideals were foreign to them” (p. 228). Of course, this was quite different from the viewpoint of the Galician nationalists. This bifurcation of opinion helps explain why the Security Service (Sicherheitsdienst) observed that the inhabitants of the Reichskommissariat disliked Western Ukrainians (p. 208). The natives of the Reichskommissariat identified Western Ukrainians as Poles or Germans rather than persons of the same Ukrainian nationality as they were (pp. 218–19). Berkhoff’s research indicates that two very different Ukrainian identities formed in Ukraine.

Berkhoff paints an unflattering portrait of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church during the war. He confirms what Amir Weiner had already begun to demonstrate, that the hierarchy of this church served as willing instruments of Nazi-inspired anti-Semitic propaganda (pp. 83–4). The Autocephalous church was, like its interwar predecessor and post-Communist namesake, an unpopular church that commanded the allegiance of only a minority of believers in Ukraine (p. 244). And, as has already been described previously by Friedrich Heyer, it benefited from the murder of clergymen of the rival Autonomist faction by the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) (p. 296).

UPA itself does not come off well in the pages of the monograph, and Berkhoff realizes that his description will not be popular with some Ukrainians. “Because the UPA’s fight against Nazi and Soviet totalitarianism seems to be evolving into a cornerstone of a modern Ukrainian national identity, it remains to be seen whether the critical notes will find any popular resonance” (p. 299). He is forthright about UPA’s “murderous assault on Polish civilians” in Volhynia (p. 287), which cost the lives of “at the very least 15,000 and possibly many thousands more, Polish men, women, and children” (p. 286). He also does not shore up the view that UPA fought equally against German and Soviet forces. Although Berkhoff cites Soviet partisans’ claim that they killed almost 58,700 Germans from April 1943 until January 1944 (p. 279), he cites no figures on how many Germans UPA killed. He only mentions two anti-German actions: (1) the murder of the populations of ethnic German villages in Volhynia (p. 287), and (2) disruption of the recruitment of labour for deportation to Germany (p. 298). He also makes it clear that UPA had a policy of releasing German soldiers that it captured (p. 287).

The book is extremely well researched. It makes use of German, Ukrainian, and other archives, as well as numerous memoirs, document collections, and monographs in four languages.

It will be interesting to see what practitioners of Ukrainian studies draw from this pioneering monograph. Will they primarily take from it the account of the famine in Kyiv and affix it to the already well-elaborated narrative of victimization? Or will the many critical notes that sound in this work and I have emphasized in this review contribute to the re-evaluation of some stable features of this narrative? The choice, I believe, is between intellectual stagnancy and intellectual growth.

Karel Berkhoff has written an extremely impressive first book and a major contribution to the understanding of modern Ukrainian history.

Nikolai M. Dronin and Edward G. Bellinger. *Climate Dependence and Food Problems in Russia, 1900–1990: The Interaction of Climate and Agricultural Policy and Their Effect on Food Problems*. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2005. xviii, 366 pp.

In one way or another climate is a limiting factor for agriculture in most parts of the world. Adverse weather conditions, such as drought, hail, flood or frost, may destroy crops and thus reduce the local food supply. But it is the agricultural policy of a government that may induce farmers to take greater risks by growing less tolerant crops, farming in marginal areas, or inducing more soil erosion and other kinds of harm to the environment. It is government policy that may or may not support the infrastructure, which provides for the storage, processing, and marketing of agricultural products and thus the efficiency of the agro-food system. It is also government policy that may facilitate or deny the availability of food to different groups of people within a country while forcing the export of its food supply.

Nikolai Dronin of Moscow State University and Edward Bellinger of the University of Manchester and founding head of the Department of Environmental Science and Policy at the Central European University are environmental specialists with an interest in food security. In this book they provide a sweeping account of agricultural development in Russia from 1900 to 1990. The area discussed, however, is not restricted to the present-day Russian Federation. Both the title and the treatment is a misnomer, for the study includes the main grain-growing regions of the Russian Empire to 1917 and the USSR to 1990, including Ukraine and northern Kazakhstan. As the title suggests, the study is focused on the relationship between the limitations of the climate and food production and the impact of agricultural policies on the availability of food and its consumption. The book synthesizes an amassed body of official statistical data on agriculture, weather, and crop situation reports, appropriately utilizes reports found in Radio Free Europe and Open Society Archives, and makes timely use of recent studies based on secret and now declassified Soviet government and KGB documents. The study is also forward-looking, since it incorporates the results of the modeling of climate change at Kassel University, Germany, and thus predicts future agricultural problems in Russia.

The authors set the scene in their preface and the first two chapters. In the preface the significance of the problem, the purpose of the book, and the main sources of the study are laid out. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the paradigm of the dependency of Russian agriculture on its climate. First, it effectively demonstrates the limitations of Russian climatic resources in comparison to those of the United States. Secondly, it focuses on Russian grain production in comparison to its demand, by regions, and the linkage of Russian feed supply and its chronic limitations to animal production. Thirdly, it provides a summary of weather hazards by category and their devastating effects (mainly droughts) on Russian agriculture. The second part of this chapter lays out an analytical method in three stages, which are then replicated in subsequent chapters. They are: analyzing the direct impact of weather anomalies on the size of the harvest; evaluating the scale of crop failure; and linking crop failure to food availability in the country.

Chapter 2 discusses the availability and reliability of statistical agricultural data for Russia. The presentation is organized by periods, reflecting the differences in the

availability of statistics in different categories and changes in their definitions. These periods are: (1) the pre-revolutionary years (before 1916), (2) the post-revolutionary decade (1917–28), (3) the Stalin era (1929–53), and (4) the post-Stalin period (after 1953).

The substantive chapters (3–9) that follow analyze and discuss the subject matter in the following periods: the pre-revolutionary period (1900–16), the post-revolutionary period (1917–28), the collectivization of Soviet agriculture (1929–40), the postwar recovery period (1945–54), the virgin-lands campaign (1955–64), the period of agricultural intensification (1965–75), and the period of agricultural stagnation (1976–90). The periods are chosen to reflect common aspects of government policies.

Each substantive chapter has an introductory paragraph followed by an extensive presentation in four parts: (1) major developments in agriculture, (2) weather variations and agricultural production, (3) food problems, and (4) summary. This structuring provides for an effective framework to compare the events and conditions in each of the periods represented. The use of graphs juxtaposing annual grain production with the area not affected by drought and the placement of uniformly designed maps showing areas affected by drought alongside maps showing cereal yields, all based on current administrative units within the Russian Federation, are particularly effective. Also helpful in this regard are two attractive orientation maps on the inside covers of the book. The first, featuring Russia and identifying adjacent countries in northern Eurasia, name each administrative division of the Russian Federation, identifying it as an autonomous republic, oblast, or krai by using a colour code. The second shows the economic regions of Russia by grouping the administrative divisions into larger entities, which are neatly identified by colour coding and named in the legend. Such orientation mapping is lacking for the administrative units of Ukraine or Kazakhstan, even though many of them are mentioned in the text in their Russian transcription.

In each substantive chapter, the authors provide the background that is needed to appreciate the major developments in agriculture. They provide a solid analysis of weather variations and their impact on agricultural production. While their analysis and interpretation of food problems is also solid, it falls short by ignoring government policies regarding the nationalities. This problem is illustrated by the example drawn from the section on food problems in chapter 5, “The Collectivization of Soviet Agriculture (1929–1940).”

In that section, the authors provide revealing information on food problems from the KGB materials edited by V.P. Danilov and others in *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni: Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie: 1927–1939* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2000–2002), vols. 2–4. They explain food shortages on the basis of background information drawn from the substantive studies by R. Conquest, R.W. Davies, and S.G. Wheatcroft. They note that as early as the winter of 1929–30, one KGB report recognized the onset of a food crisis, signaled by the mass slaughter of livestock because of excessive grain procurement (p. 139). Although a record harvest alleviated the situation in the fall of 1930, continuing increases in procurement targets aggravated the food shortage on the farms. Food shortages were reported in 1931 in the villages of the Middle Volga and the Lower Volga regions. By 1932 the food crisis had spread to the Bashkir ASSR, the Tatar ASSR, Western Siberia and the Central Black Earth Region, the North Caucasus, and the Ukrainian SSR (pp. 141–3). The authors note that in May 1932, the Soviet Union had

purchased grain from Canada to alleviate shortages in Eastern Siberia and the Far East (p. 145). Nevertheless, in 1932–33 the peasants of Ukraine suffered a catastrophic famine (p. 143). The KGB reported letters written by peasants to Soviet newspapers describing their predicament and pleading for help (p. 144). The authors state correctly that the catastrophic famine that killed millions in Ukraine in the spring of 1933 should be attributed exclusively to concrete political decisions adopted by the Soviet authorities during that disastrous year (p. 145). The authors refer to draconian directives to substantiate this point: the withdrawal of all seed from kolkhozes that failed to meet planned targets, and the orders to local authorities to prevent starving peasants from leaving their regions in search of food (p. 146). They also mention a ban on the reporting of famine and on the travel of foreign correspondents in Ukraine (p. 148).

The above evidence suggests that the authors are aware of this Ukrainian tragedy. Yet in their summary (p. 152) the authors make the following strangely worded statement: “Many experts believe that this was [a] deliberately conducted genocide against the Russian [*sic!*] peasantry.” Surely the authors know that the Soviet Union was a multinational state. Why obfuscate the nationality issue?

Then they provide an alternate explanation. “Stalin’s pathological distrust of the peasants, completely false statistics, and a determination to hide information about food crises from the outside world could have brought about the catastrophe.” They support this view with the following argument: “There are some indications that the authorities themselves were bemused by the mass famine among kolkhozniiks. After 1934 they tried to make a correction in their policy. In 1936, when the most severe drought affected the Soviet Union, the recurrence of mass famine was avoided due to a few elementary measures such as the radical reduction of the grain procurement plan (by sixty percent) and the halting of grain exports.” Clearly, on the issue of the famine in Ukraine in 1932–33, the authors chose to deny genocide and to ignore the campaign to root out Ukrainian nationalism in the Soviet Union as a factor in the events of 1930–33.

The same problem arises in the interpretation of the famine of 1946–47. Citing V.F. Zima’s study *Golod v SSSR 1946–1947 godov: Proiskozhdenie i posledstviia* (Moscow: Rossiiskaia akademiia nauk, Institut rossiiskoi istorii, 1996), the authors point to the excessive grain procurements, as well as the redeployment of the 1932 draconian laws that deprived the peasantry of food and, despite adequate grain reserves, caused a million deaths from famine and four million famine-related illnesses (pp. 167–8). Again, they fail to link this policy with the suppression of the Ukrainian national movement after the Second World War.

This interpretation of famines in the Stalin era is repeated in the conclusion of the book. “All mass famines that occurred in years of crop failure were mainly the result of a deliberately conducted anti-peasant policy on the part of the Communist leadership. This policy (for example, restricting the migration of peasants from affected areas) left millions of Russian [*sic!*] peasants with no chance of avoiding famine. No doubt, none of the mass famines in the Stalin era would have occurred if the state policy had been more humane” (p. 337).

The study by Dronin and Bellinger is a remarkable contribution to our understanding of climate dependence and food problems in Russia and the territory it controlled in the past century. It provides an excellent understanding of the interaction of weather conditions, crop production, animal production, and food supply. Using new studies and

recently declassified and published KGB reports, it brings new evidence to bear on famines inflicted on the peasants in the USSR. Unfortunately, the same rigour was not applied in assessing government policies and analyzing the locations of famines to provide a better understanding of the Communist regime's use of food as a weapon against a specific nationality.

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Anna Shymkiv. *Anhlo-ukrainskyi tlumachnyi slovnyk ekonomichnoi leksyky*. Kyiv: Vydavnychiy dim "Kyivo-Mohylianska Akademiia," 2004. 429 pp.

Serhii Iurii, ed. *Anhlo-ukrainskyi slovnyk dilovyykh terminiv*. Ternopil: Vydavnytstvo "Carte-Blanche," 2003. 373 pp.

Fifteen years of Ukraine's independence mark an urgent need for various kinds of English-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-English dictionaries, particularly business dictionaries. There is a tradition of preparing such dictionaries in Ukraine, as well as abroad (see my book review of three such dictionaries in *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 42, nos. 1–2 [2000]: 201–4). The author of the first dictionary, Dr. Anna Shymkiv, has to be commended for the amount of work she has done and the care with which she has done it. Her dictionary is an original contribution vis-à-vis other recently published dictionaries of a similar type. There is certainly need for such a work not only in Ukraine but also in the West. Raised and educated in Canada, and currently residing and working in Australia, the author undertakes a bold initiative—to present to the Ukrainian business public Western concepts in its native tongue at a time when there is an ongoing debate in Ukraine about developing Ukrainian terminology on the basis of the native resources of the Ukrainian language itself or of borrowings from other languages.

The author's objective is to compile a brand new English-Ukrainian explanatory dictionary of business terms based on a new entry structure and framing. I shall not assess the structure of the entries and the principles behind it. In her bibliography Shymkiv lists the dictionaries prepared in Ukraine and abroad (Prague and Munich) from the 1920s to the 1940s.

According to the introductory section "To the User," Shymkiv spent at least sixteen years of professional observation and eight years of purposeful labour in compiling this dictionary (p. 5). Professor Volodymyr Morenets, the head of the Editorial Board of the National University "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy" emphasizes that "this task envisages exceptional sensitivity to the functioning of lexical forms, the diversity of their contextual meanings, and the ever 'freshly' created idiomatic senses" (p. 6).

In the preface Shymkiv writes that the dictionary consists of 20,000 terms used in marketing, management, economics, banking, accounting, auditing, finances, insurance, taxation, production, trade, advertising, shipping, environment, computer technology, communications, sales, and so on (p. 11). This diversity is obviously the source of the

dictionary's strong, as well as weak, sides. The dictionary proper is preceded by an account of the entry structure, a pronunciation key, a list of abbreviations, symbols, and sources, and a table of the English alphabet; and is succeeded by a list of abbreviations, an index of the hierarchical structures of economic terms, an index of currencies, an index of Ukrainian economic terms (a very useful tool for Ukrainian-English translations, pp. 404–25), and a bibliography of English, bilingual, trilingual, Ukrainian, and other non-English sources. The time has probably come for lexicographers to target special branches of the broader business terminology.

The dictionary makes an original contribution to the field of Ukrainian lexicography, especially to the development of Ukrainian business terminology. The author is familiar with the recent literature on the subject (see the bibliography section), although some new sources could be added to her list; for example, Darlene Clarke, ed., *Ukrainsko-anhliiskyi slovnyk biznesovyykh terminiv* (Chernivtsi: Chas, 1992), which was prepared at the University of Saskatchewan; T. Kyiak, ed., *Slovnyk-posibnyk ekonomichnykh terminiv: rosiisko-ukrainsko-anhliiskyi* (Kyiv: Vydavnychi dim "KM Academia," 1997); and especially P.H. Zelensky and O.P. Zelenska, comp., *Ukrainsko-rosiisko-anhliiskyi tumachnyi slovnyk dilovoi liudyny* (Kyiv: Ukrainsko-finskyi instytut menedzhmentu i biznesu, 1998). Neither the English-Russian business dictionary compiled by V.A. Korolkevich and V.F. Korolkevich (Moscow: Iurist, 2000) nor the two-volume English-Ukrainian dictionary by M.I. Balla (Kyiv: Osvita, 1996) is registered. But the biggest omission is probably V.T. Busel's *Velykyi tumachnyi slovnyk suchasnoi ukrainskoi movy* (Kyiv-Irpin: VTF "Perun," 2002) (*VTSSUM*), which includes an extensive business terminology. Because of the constraints of the book review, I shall give only one example. *VTSSUM* presents *akredytyv* 'L/C,' 'letter of credit,' and explains various types of *akredytyvy*: *avizovanyi*, *dokumentarnyi (tovarnyi)*, *hroshovyi (tsyrukuliarnyi)*, *iz chervonoiu smuhoiu*, *kompensatsiinyi*, *neperekaznyi*, *nepodilnyi*, *nepokrytyi*, *perekaznyi (transferabelnyi)*, *pokrytyi*, and *revolvernyi*. The reviewed dictionary does not mention *akredytyv*.

Some business words and notions are missing from this dictionary; for example, "limit," "remittance," "voucher," "remittance voucher," "to owe," "arrears," "arrears of interest" (*prostrocheni vidsotky*, found in Alexander Krouglov, Katya Kurylko, and Dmytro Kostenko, *English-Ukrainian Dictionary of Business / Anhlo-ukrainskyi slovnyk dilovoi leksyky* [Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1997]), "holdings" (*avuary*, *koshty*, *vklady*, there is "holding company" and "holding entity"), "transit," "delinquent" (found in Krouglov, Kurylko, and Kostenko's dictionary and in Yarema Havrylyshyn and Orysia Karkoc, *Glossary of Business Terminology: English-Ukrainian, Ukrainian-English / Slovnyk dilovykh terminiv: Anhlo-ukrainskyi, ukrainsko-anhliiskyi* [Kyiv: Smoloskyp, 1993]), and so on. A list of abbreviations is included. In dictionaries of this caliber it is obligatory to include abbreviations because business texts nowadays contain many acronyms (abbreviations). Currently there is no special English-Ukrainian dictionary of abbreviated business terminology. Among the positive things developed by Shymkiv is a well-developed article on "remuneration" (explained only briefly by Krouglov, Kurylko, and Kostenko), "debt," and in particular "outstanding debt" (*nesplachenyi borh*), "tax deduction" (*znyzhennia podatkov, podatkova pilha*), "net taxes" (*chystyi podatok*), "penalty," and so on.

I have found a few minor problems in this dictionary: no translation is provided for “Eurocurrency” (p. 98) (*ievrovaliuta*) and “debt capital” (p. 107) (*zaluchenyi [pozychkovyi] kapital*). “Debt restructuring” (p. 107) is translated as *perehliad strokiv kredytiv*, although *restrukturyzatsiia borhu* is accepted and widely used in Ukraine.

In general, Modern Ukrainian business terminology incorporates many international borrowings, calques, and so on. We can criticize this tendency, but it exists and is very strong. *Rakhivnytstvo* ‘bookkeeping’ (p. 17) should be replaced with *bukhhalterskyi oblik* (as in Krouglov, Kurylko, and Kostenko’s dictionary, p. 16). *Rakhivnytstvo* can be included in the list of synonyms. *Kotyruiutsia* (p. 43) should be *kotuiutsia* (*kotyruiutsia* is a claque from the Russian *kotiruiutsia*). The Ukrainian infinitive *kotuvaty* ‘to quote’ is registered by Havrylyshyn and Karkoc (p. 69). The form *kotyrivannia*, used by the author (p. 76), is also a Russian calque. The correct Ukrainian form is *kotuvannia*. “Automated teller machine,” “automatic teller machine,” or “ATM” cannot be translated literally as *mashyna avtomatychnoho kasyra*. The standard and normal form, which is given by the author, is *avtomatyzovanyi kasovyi aparat* (p. 47). *Koshtorys pratsi* would be a better translation for “labour budget” than *koshtorys po pratsi* (p. 61). To a native Ukrainian speaker *spozhyvach-prykhlynyk* (for “loyal customer”) (p. 101) sounds artificial and unnatural. “Director’s retirement” (*pensiina vidstavka dyrektora*) (p. 117) could have been easily omitted, because the correct and better form *vykhid na pensiiu dyrektora* is already provided. The Ukrainian *vidstavka* has a negative connotation. “Affiliated” (*filialni*) (pp. 135, 136) is better rendered as *filiinyi*, as it is by Krouglov, Kurylko, and Kostenko (p. 5), from the Ukrainian *filiia*, not *filiial*.

This kind of reference book is both urgently needed and very necessary. The publication of this dictionary in Ukraine will make the immensely complicated and difficult task of matching transitional Ukrainian with established Western business systems (at least in its linguistic expression) much easier and less painful. I strongly recommend this dictionary for the North American public as well. There are many fewer such necessary linguistic resources in Ukrainian than in other languages.

It is symbolic that the second dictionary under review is mentioned in the first one as a recent attempt by Ukrainian specialists at compiling or creating a specialized dictionary. Like the previous one, this dictionary has over 20,000 entries. “The Dictionary comprises words and word combinations covering terminology in such fields of business activity as economics, finance and banking as well as related branches, such as commerce, management, marketing, taxation, customs duties, etc.” (p. 4). Examining the dictionary, one immediately notices the frequent occurrence of simple colloquial English words such as “above,” “above-mentioned,” “abridged,” “abroad,” “abstain,” and “absurd” (p. 9). One of the registered and explained words “barbecue” (*barbekiu; amer. Piknik abo pryiom pid vidkrytym nebom* (*na iakomu hostei pryhoshchaiut smazhenym miasom* (*byka, svyni*) (p. 38) is included probably to promote and facilitate business contacts. The question arises what are the criteria of selecting words from a businessman’s vocabulary. In other words, how can one draw a line between ordinary and business expressions? One example can vividly illustrate this. Under the entry “account” two expressions are presented: “to take into account”—*braty do uvahy; vrakhovuvaty*, and “to withdraw from an account”—*zniaty z rakhunku* (p. 12). It is, obviously, useful for the Ukrainian student to know that the word “account” has two meanings, but then the notion of a dictionary of business terms becomes diluted. The contradiction is already evident in the title of the dictionary. On the

one hand, it is a *slovnnyk* 'dictionary' and on the other, it is a *navchalnyi posibnyk* 'textbook' or 'manual/instructional manual.' Unfortunately, this use of double standards is typical in Ukraine, where to get something published one has to "assign" it to a "recommended" (although logically inappropriate) category. To combine a dictionary and textbook under one cover is impossible. But the Ministry of Education of Ukraine has its own standards and criteria for publishing scholarly works.

Under the entry "affiliated" the following Ukrainian translation/explanation is provided: adj. *zviazanyi; dorichnyi; toi, shcho ie filialom; ~ of societies—filialy, filialni viddilennia* (p. 20). But on p. 61, "affiliated/allied/subsidiary company" is translated as *pidkontrolna/dorichna kompaniia; filiiia*. The question arises why not use *filiia* consistently and make its adjectival derivative *filiinyi*, instead of *filialnyi*?

In general, word entries are well developed in spite of the mentioned shortcomings. If, for example, you want to find the translation for "letter of credit" (*akredytyv*) or the more widely used in Ukraine "letter of intent" (*protokol namiriv*), you will find them on p. 164.

The dictionary contains also a section "Abbreviations and Acronyms," in which acronyms are not only listed, as in the previous dictionary, but also translated. In the "Text and Bibliography Sources" section, there are, unfortunately, a number of misprints: "Karkots" is misspelled as "Karkon" and "Vozniuk" as "Voziuk," and "Darlin P.M. Klark" is split into two names "P. Darlin" and "M. Klark" (p. 373).

The second dictionary can be recommended for students taking business Ukrainian, interpreters/translators, and instructors/teachers of Ukrainian courses.

In general, it is high time to raise the bar for English-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-English dictionaries in Ukraine and in the West, whether compiled by Ukrainian or Western lexicographers. A certain foundation has already been laid. Instead of pretending that they are entering uncharted waters, future compilers must become familiar with what has been accomplished in the field and must build on it.

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Maria Rewakowicz, comp. *Pivstolittia napivtyshi: Antolohiia poezii Niu-Iorkskoi hrupy*. Kyiv: Fakt, 2005. 373 pp.

From Maria Rewakowicz's preface to *Pivstolittia napivtyshi* (A Half-Century of Half-Silence) one learns that the project of compiling an anthology of verse by the poets of the New York Group and publishing it in Ukraine was first suggested more than fifteen years ago, in the early 1990s. At that time the creative legacy of this informal group of several Ukrainian modernist poets and a handful of artists, which emerged spontaneously in New York in the mid-1950s and was never united by a specific artistic program, was popular and even fashionable among the Western-oriented literati of the newly independent Ukraine. Book editions of selected works by three of the Group's founding members, Bohdan Boychuk, Yuriy Tarnawsky, and Bohdan Rubchak, published in 1991 by Ukraine's then leading publisher, Dnipro, can serve as evidence of a genuine interest. In

1993 a collection of poetry by one of the Group's youngest members, Roman Baboval, appeared in a Dnipro book series edited by the well-known poet Vasyl Herasymyuk.

However, the original anthology project was never realized. A more ambitious plan, suggested by Tarnawsky in the mid-1990s, to publish simultaneously several anthologies in various languages did not materialize either, but it did serve as an incentive for Rewakowicz to compile her initial collection. It was not until 2005, however, that a revised version of her anthology finally appeared in book form in Kyiv. By that time it was no longer the first collection of the Group's poetry to be published in Ukraine. *Poety "Niu-Iorkskoi hrupy": Antolohiia* (Poets of the New York Group: An Anthology), compiled by Oleksandr Astafiev and Anatolii Dnistrovyy, had appeared in Kharkiv in 2003.

Even a superficial comparison of these two books indicates that the publication of *Pivstolittia napivtyshi* was not superfluous or unnecessary. For one, Rewakowicz avoids several editorial errors made by her predecessors and presents a book that is better structured and offers a well-researched and clearly organized background for the poems in it. The Kharkiv anthology left much to be desired on that front. Apart from the selections of works by the poets associated with the Group, it included only Astafiev's untitled introduction containing a generalized historical exposition, followed by a discussion of the oeuvre of six (out of twelve) individual poets. Since the great majority of readers in Ukraine have very nebulous and often misleading notions about the New York Group, one of the primary goals of the Kharkiv edition should have been to provide them with a proper introduction to this phenomenon. But the book lacks a clear and engaging overview of the Group's history and the cultural context in which its members wrote and collaborated. It provides too little biographical material, especially about the younger poets about whom, according to the editor, "little is known." Although biographical and bibliographic information is scattered throughout the introduction, it is often cursory and incomplete. To give just one example, the last book in Astafiev's list of Emma Andiiivska's poetry collections is *Arkhitekturni ansambl'i* (Architectural Ensembles, 1989 [Astafiev erroneously gives 1990]), although she published six more books of verse between 1989 and 2003—a fact that was known to the editor because the anthology contained several poems from Andiiivska's collections published in 2000 and 2002. It appears, therefore, that we are dealing here not so much with a lack of knowledge as with a lack of proper care on the part of the editors.

Rewakowicz avoided such editorial pitfalls by being much more careful and deliberate in the planning stages of her work and more consistent in implementing the general conception of her anthology. Her underlying purpose appears to be to introduce not so much the individual poets, but the New York Group as a self-contained cultural phenomenon to readers in Ukraine and to systematize and contextualize the sporadic and incomplete descriptions presented by other critics. Thus, the editor focuses her attention almost exclusively on historical, biographical, and bibliographic material. Apart from a preface and an introduction, the collection contains three appendices devoted, respectively, to concise biographies of the individual poets, complete lists of their book publications, and selected secondary bibliography. The introduction itself provides the reader with a well-researched and thorough (perhaps, so far the most thorough) overview of the emergence and development of the New York Group. This is, most likely, the most important and valuable aspect of Rewakowicz's work as editor. As an "insider" (she became associated with the Group after her poetic debut in 1985), she had access not only

to publications by and about the Group, but also to sources, such as private letters and intimate conversations, that were unavailable to non-members. On the other hand, she was enough of an "outsider" (having played no part whatsoever in the crucial first three decades of the Group's existence) to be able to approach her editorial work from the viewpoint of a researcher and scholar, rather than of an active participant.

Her choice of a historical, rather than an analytical framework for this anthology seems to be partly justified by the fact that *Pivstolittia napivtyshi* attempts to present the Group's creative legacy as a complete and closed body of work. Dividing the Group's history into three periods: (1) formation and consolidation, 1956–71, (2) dispersion, 1972–84, and (3) regrouping and legacy preservation, 1985–99, Rewakowicz treats the New York Group as a cultural phenomenon of the past, despite the fact that some of its poets continue to write and publish. She considers the dissolution in 1999 of the Kyiv-based journal *Svito-vyd*, which was edited by Boychuk and her, to mark the end of the Group's discourse and existence. Consequently, she attempts to present as "complete" and comprehensive a picture of the Group's legacy as possible. This intent is reflected not only in her historical exposition and appendices but also in her selection of poems. She deliberately and consistently chooses works from various stages of each poet's creative development and from almost every one of his or her published collections in order to reveal as many facets of the poet's creative individuality as possible. Again, this distinguishes her anthology from Astafiev and Dnistrov's. The latter sometimes make highly questionable and one-dimensional selections; for example, they do not include a single poem from the first three decades of Andiiievsk's creative work, and they represent Oleh Koverko's legacy with only two very short poems.

Although Rewakowicz is successful in presenting a comprehensive picture of the New York Group as a historical phenomenon, she does not provide an inspired critical commentary to the poetry itself. In fact, apart from the historical overview, which contains a fair amount of new information, including an interesting discussion of the Group's relations with the older generation of Ukrainian writers, in particular, Eaghor Kostetzky and George Shevelov, as well as with the *shestydesiatnyky* poets in Ukraine, I have scarcely found in the editor's texts anything concerning the poetry of the Group members that would not echo or repeat earlier statements by Rewakowicz and other critics. In this respect *Pivstolittia napivtyshi* is inferior to the Kharkiv anthology in which Astafiev fairly often expresses fresh and imaginative insights about the craft of individual poets. Rewakowicz limits herself to very brief (one paragraph per poet) and superficial discussions of the individual poets at the end of her introduction. In all other cases she discusses their work and their (sometimes very distinct) poetic styles strictly in the context of the New York Group as a more or less unified entity. Although she points out that the poets were not united by a creative program or manifesto, but simply by their "adherence to the principle of complete freedom of expression and the decision to creatively express themselves for the most part in Ukrainian" (p. 18), she emphasizes those features of their works, such as common themes, an interest in erotic poetry, and their modernist treatment of metaphor, that suggest a common artistic platform and largely ignores those that reveal their unique and idiosyncratic visions, approaches, and techniques, which, in the end, constitute the very heart of their poetry.

Rewakowicz is aware that "in the final analysis, the phenomenon of the New York Group was determined, primarily, by their poetry" (p. 27). Paradoxically, she takes this

statement as a cue to suspend her analytical and interpretative judgment and withdraws, as it were, into the shadows in order to let the poetry speak for itself. In my opinion such “modesty” does not benefit the anthology. Without a challenging or controversial analysis of the poetry, the collection may thoroughly document the Group’s history and present a balanced selection of its creative output, but it will hardly spark a lively interest in the poetry’s timeless qualities. The most controversial statement in Rewakowicz’s well-tempered introduction deals with the Group’s place in the history of Ukrainian literature: “In the history of Ukrainian modernism, the creative legacy of the New York Group represents a culminating (*zavershuvalna*), synthesizing and at the same time hybrid ... stage” (p. 32). In my opinion this assessment of the Group’s achievement is rather inaccurate: its poetry can hardly be considered the “culminating” stage of Ukrainian modernism, since some more recent literary groups, such as the so-called Kyiv School of poets (Mykola Vorobiov, Vasyl Holoborodko, Mykhailo Hryhoriv, Viktor Kordun, and, in some sense, Oleh Lysheha), have produced works that are no less modernist and in many cases artistically more accomplished than those of the New York Group. The word “synthesizing” (*syntezuiucha*) also strikes me as questionable in this context.

The well-planned and tightly structured *Pivstolittia napivtyshi* is a solid, if somewhat stolid, edition, which can justly be considered the first authoritative anthology of the New York Group. The less comprehensive and rather chaotic Kharkiv anthology contains, on the other hand, a lively and engaging commentary to the poems. Both collections are important in the process of making this particular phenomenon of Ukrainian literary modernism better known to contemporary readers. However, both anthologies fall short of the standard established by two of the Group’s founding members, Boychuk and Rubchak, in their two-volume anthology of Ukrainian émigré verse *Koordynaty* (Coordinates) in 1969. A poetic anthology that, like *Koordynaty*, would shed light on the historical context and provide insightful and inspiring interpretation of the creative output of each individual poet would truly do justice to the legacy of the New York Group.

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Roshanna P. Sylvester. *Tales of Old Odessa: Crime and Civility in a City of Thieves*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005. x, 244 pp.

Roshanna Sylvester’s book aims to present an in-depth look at the city of Odes(s)a at the beginning of the twentieth century, specifically, at “the mischievous playfulness that, with the criminal mystique, forms the bedrock of Odessan essentialism” (p. 4). The misuse of the term “essentialism” here is a signal of more troubles to come: the question how can an emphasis on “playfulness” and “manipulation of identities” (p. 10) (that is, performativity) form a “bedrock” of essentialism as opposed to serving as a defining feature of an elaborately constructed and fluid identity politics is never addressed. The author goes on to pose several potentially productive questions: “what did it feel like to

be in Odessa” at the time, “how did Odessans understand the city and their place in it,” and “what did it mean for an Odessan to be modern” (p. 4). Surprisingly, she then declares that these broad and challenging questions are answered in this book “through dissection of stories appearing in Odessa’s mass-circulation *Russian-language* periodical press” (my emphasis—V.C.), specifically the early 1910s runs of three periodicals published in the city: the mainstream liberal-leaning newspaper *Odesskii listok*, the sensationalist tabloid *Odessaika pochta*, and the “short-lived but influential” weekly humour magazine *Krokodil*, which was exemplary in “revealing ... Odessan mentality, especially ... secular Jewish attitudes towards modernity” (p. 7). She focuses primarily on the criminal chronicle section of the two newspapers, chosen somewhat randomly out of more than sixty periodicals published at the time in the city “in a number of languages” (p. 6—we are never told which languages and their breakdown by title or cumulative circulation). Sylvester never pauses to acknowledge that this selection of primary material inevitably leads to a very slanted, indeed, biased picture. In fact, she frequently reproduces the language and attitudes of her sources without any critical distance; for instance, if the sources speak of “hooligans and perverts,” she repeats these terms (p. 104), without bothering to problematize them and their usage.

Sylvester notes that Odes(s)a is one of just a handful of the world’s cities that are famous for having produced, thanks to their ethnic and cultural diversity, a very distinct identity, their own “type of people”; however, she almost immediately reduces this multiplicity of cultures to a stark duality, calling the city’s patois “a Yiddish/Russian argot” (p. 4). The author refers periodically to the city’s “diversity” and “multiculturalism,” and yet invariably reduces them to the Russian/Jewish duality.

The narrative focused on the two newspapers is preceded by two chapters on the city’s working-class neighbourhoods: the commercial port area, whose primary residents were barrack-dwelling day laborers, and the outlying blue-collar settlements of Peresyp, Slobidka-Romanivka (Slobodka-Romanovka), and Moldavanka. We learn that, according to censuses from that era, Peresyp was overwhelmingly Ukrainian-populated, Slobidka primarily Russian-populated, and Moldavanka mostly Jewish. The presentation of these neighbourhoods is conducted in a style verging on naturalist “muck-racking,” spiced up with lurid crime stories. It almost seems that the author aspires to be a pulp-fiction writer rather than a historian. The chapter titles (for example, “Dangertown,” “Horrors of Life,” and “Under the Cover of Night”) only serve to reinforce this impression. Then the narrative abruptly shifts to an account of crime stories published in the two newspapers. The beginning of the twentieth century in the Russian Empire was an era of burgeoning capitalism and softening censorship. Under these circumstances sensationalized crime stories were a sure means for boosting newspaper circulation. Looking *exclusively* at the criminal chronicle of any city’s newspapers is bound to present a distorted picture. New York, London, Paris, Kalamazoo, or Tambov would fare just as badly as Odes(s)a in Sylvester’s text.

This book contains a valid and important idea, namely, that Odes(s)a was unique among cities in the Russian Empire in that at the beginning of the twentieth century Russophone secular Jewish culture commanded the greatest symbolic power there, and that this was the culture to which newcomers to the city and socially mobile individuals, whether they were Jewish or not, often strove to assimilate. But the book drowns in an avalanche of stereotypical presentations of the city’s inhabitants and their everyday lives.

The analysis of the three periodicals is conducted in a vacuum: neither other cultural positions or viewpoints nor any other linguistic or ethno-cultural communities are granted a modicum of attention. Most importantly, the fact that Odes(s)a is a city located in Ukraine is never even mentioned; it is repeatedly referred to as a “Russian city” located “on the edge of Russia,” not “of the Russian Empire.” In contrast to Patricia Herlihy’s classic study, which explicitly confronted the fact that, although at the beginning of the twentieth century Odes(s)a was the largest city in Ukraine, the Ukrainians as an ethnic group were a minority in the city, just as they were in Kyiv or Lviv, since over ninety percent of Ukrainians at the time lived in the countryside, Ukraine does not appear to exist on Sylvester’s mental map. For instance, for her the Pale of Settlement is “Russian hinterland” (p. 5), and Odes(s)a’s lower classes are products of “the great unwashed Russian peasantry” [*sic*, without quotation marks, p. 9]. It comes then as no surprise that Sylvester gives Ukrainian toponyms and names of state institutions (such as archives) in post-Soviet Ukraine in their Russian-language versions.

The book’s title is troubling and borders on the offensive: for a contemporary scholar to call Odes(s)a a city of thieves *without* quotation marks is as inappropriate as, for example, calling the early twentieth-century Chicago the city of murderers, although we know that murders did take place there (and Sylvester does compare the residents of early twentieth-century Odes[s]a to “Chicagoans of the Capone era” [p. 4]). Rather incongruously, on the dust jacket the book’s title is paired with an engraving of Odes(s)a’s famed opera house; an uninformed reader might assume that the building in question was the main “den of thieves” in the city.

The book abounds in errors in the transliteration from the Russian (for example on pp. 7, 25, 29, 42, 43, 44, 55, 56, 65, 112, 113, 114, 116, 117, 127, 129, 148, 160, 196, 199, 203, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 214, 215, 223). At the same time, the author takes for granted the readers’ familiarity with the Russian language and Russian historical terminology, as various forms of Russian words are thrown in indiscriminately without any explanation (for instance, *intelligent*, *intelligentnyi*, *intelligentnye*, and *intelligents* [*sic*], *meshchanin*, *meshchanstvo*, and *meshchanskii*, as well as “the Kadet party” [*sic*]). Singular forms of adjectives are often paired with plural forms of nouns and vice versa. One also encounters occasional bizarre mistranslations: for example, *prokuror* is rendered as “procurer” (p. 45) and “*obzhorka*” as “little gourmand” (p. 52). I also wonder what geographical sources were used in preparing the book, as the book’s map of the city shows several streets that never existed; Slobidka, situated on a high plateau separated from the downtown by a wide ravine, is described in the text as “low-lying” (p. 25), while the downtown area, whose elevation above sea level is 42 metres, is described as “several hundred feet above” the port (p. 29).

Last but not least, the index highlights the book’s bias: it contains an entry for “Ukraine and Ukrainians,” although the word “Ukraine” does not appear once in the main text or the footnotes. Ukrainians are never mentioned in the book’s extensive introductory chapter, and make their first appearance on p. 18, in chapter 1: within an enumeration of the city’s ethnic communities, they are listed fifth, after Russians, Jews, Greeks, and Turks, even though Odes(s)a never had a significant Turkish community, and by the early twentieth century the Ukrainians greatly outnumbered the Greeks in the city. “Ukrainian” appears a handful of times further on in the book, invariably in phrases such as “Russian and Ukrainian workers,” “Russian and Ukrainian peasants,” and “anti-Semitic Russians

and Ukrainians." When they are given any attention at all, Ukrainians are portrayed as bigoted, uneducated pogromists. Even if this is how they were presented in the author's sources, she should have established a critical distance from them. Sending this kind of unbalanced, stereotype-ridden book for review to a Ukrainian studies journal borders on a deliberate insult.

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June Dutka. *The Grace of Passing: Constantine H. Andrusyshen. The Odyssey of a Slavist*. Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2000. 125 pp.

Recently we witness increased interest in biographical and autobiographical writing, but still there is a huge void in this respect. The life and scientific contributions of the major scholars of our time are often not described and assessed before their death. This genre of writing is especially important because it furnishes the young generation of scholars with models to follow. It can also provide young researchers with a premonition of the problems, pitfalls, and obstacles they may face in their respective fields.

The life of the founder and pioneer of Slavic studies in North America and, in particular, in Canada deserves close examination. Written by his niece, June Dutka, *The Grace of Passing* is devoted to the life, research, and community activity of Constantine H. Andrusyshen (1907–83), the first Canadian-born Slavist and professor emeritus of the University of Saskatchewan. Andrusyshen is widely known as the author of a Ukrainian-English dictionary, which was published over fifty years ago and is still employed by students in Ukrainian studies, translators, and teachers in North America. Although new Ukrainian-English dictionaries have appeared recently in independent Ukraine, the value and importance of Andrusyshen's dictionary can hardly be exaggerated.

The book opens with Volodymyr Kobylansky's poem "Autumn," which appears in *The Ukrainian Poets, 1189–1962*, an anthology of poetry selected and translated by Andrusyshen in collaboration with Watson Kirkconnell and published by the University of Toronto Press in 1963.

A five-page foreword by Oleh W. Gerus of the Department of History at the University of Manitoba points out the major challenges faced by the first Slavists in Canada in establishing their field as an indispensable part of the university structure. "[Andrusyshen's] appointment in 1945 as the head of the newly formed Slavic Department at the University of Saskatchewan marked the birth of university-level Slavic studies in Canada," Gerus writes (p. xiii).

In her "Preface and Acknowledgements" June Dutka explains her reasons for writing this book. She justifies her reliance on Andrusyshen's own words as follows: "I quote liberally from my uncle's speeches, departmental reports, and published works because I believe that he expressed his ideas much more concisely and eloquently than I could" (p. xx). A dozen pictures are also included in the book.

The book consists of two parts: a biographical sketch (pp. 1–67) and a bibliography of works by and about Andrusyshen (pp. 69–118). The first part is organized into seven sections: “The Beginnings (1907–30),” “Scholarly Pursuits (1931–44),” “Academic Roots (1945–55),” “Literary Achievements (1956–66),” “Towards Retirement (1967–75),” “A Cherished Memory (1976–83),” and “Recapitulation.”

Dutka describes Andrusyshen as a literary scholar, translator, and lexicographer, but never calls him a polyglot, although “[h]e loved learning languages, and later in his life he was fluent in seven of them—English, Ukrainian, Polish, Russian, French, Spanish, and Italian—and had a working knowledge of Latin, Greek, Slovenian, and Serbo-Croatian” (pp. 5–6). Andrusyshen obtained his B.A. degree in French and English in 1929 and his M.A. degree two years later from the University of Manitoba. His eight-month stay in Paris enriched his knowledge of the French language, literature, and culture. In 1932 he ran (unsuccessfully) as an independent candidate in the Manitoba provincial election and married his first wife, Helen Krett. Moving to Toronto, he received a Ph.D. degree in Romance languages in 1940 and then returned to Winnipeg, where he edited the newspaper *Kanadiiskyi farmer* (1941–44) and became involved in the work of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee. In 1943, at the first All-Canadian Congress of Ukrainians in Canada, he met professors George Simpson and Watson Kirkconnell, who furthered his academic career. In mid-1945 Andrusyshen was appointed instructor in Slavic studies at the University of Saskatchewan. Before assuming his duties he spent ten months studying Slavic languages at Harvard University (p. 19). The details with which Dutka sprinkles her biographical sketch help to fix a vivid picture of the times and add a touch of drama to her subject’s private and public life.

Dutka illustrates the difficulties and obstacles Andrusyshen faced, especially in the initial stages of his university career. Her account of his contacts with top university officials, including the president of the University of Saskatchewan, James S. Thomson, is particularly interesting. It shows how Slavic studies emerged as an academic discipline in Canada.

Besides writing articles and reviewing books on Ukrainian literature, Andrusyshen translated works of Ukrainian writers in order to introduce them to a Canadian audience. He continued this many-sided work in Ukrainian studies to the end of his scholarly career. Born at first out of necessity, translating eventually became a natural activity, which gave him much intellectual pleasure. Andrusyshen was also involved in drafting a Ukrainian program for the high schools of Saskatchewan province.

According to Dutka, “Andrusyshen’s *Ukrainian-English Dictionary* (University of Saskatchewan, 1955; University of Toronto, 1957) was his most remarkable and noteworthy contribution to Ukrainian studies” (p. 32). It demanded much concentrated effort for about ten years. “He devoted, on average, five hours to it daily during the academic year, and from April to September he worked on it full time” (p. 33). The dictionary reflects the continuity and variability of language use. It has withstood a half a century of testing and can serve as a foundation for new dictionaries.

Dutka deftly interweaves the scholarly and personal events of Andrusyshen’s life, showing how closely they were interconnected. “Andrusyshen’s struggle to affirm what it meant to be both Ukrainian and Canadian was a key issue in his life. His family and cultural roots helped to shape his future” (p. 64). She describes his involvement in the life of the Ukrainian community, which was often a natural extension of his academic work.

He was untiring and effective in promoting Slavic studies and expanding its domain. His contribution to the development of the Slavic collection at the Library of the University of Saskatchewan is deservedly mentioned. He underlined the importance of textbooks and grammars, as well as translations, in promoting Ukrainian-language instruction for non-native speakers.

Dutka reveals how Andrusyshen's friendship with Watson Kirkconnell was solidified through their collaborative work. She provides interesting details about their labours on *The Ukrainian Poets, 1189–1962* and *The Poetical Works of Taras Shevchenko: The Kobzar* (1964). She also mentions Andrusyshen's passion for music and collecting records. As a young man he served as director of the Prosvita Society's choir in Winnipeg. He was also a natural pedagogue who instantly established relations of mutual respect with his students.

The second part of the book consists of several bibliographies compiled by June Dutka, a librarian by profession. First is a detailed bibliography of Andrusyshen's scholarly publications, including books, articles, and book reviews; popular works such as translations of stories and poems, and prefaces and introductions; as well as unpublished papers and addresses, and unlocated manuscripts. This is followed by lists of works about Andrusyshen, reviews of his works, notices about him, and theses supervised by him. In an appendix Dutka lists the main dates of Andrusyshen's biography; the medals, awards, and distinctions he received; and the associations to which he belonged. Finally, the author itemizes the primary sources—the archival collections, letters, newspapers, and journals—she consulted and the interviews she conducted, as well as the secondary sources she used. An index completes the endeavour.

The last item in the section "Works about Andrusyshen" is Victor Buyniak's article on Andrusyshen, which was published in the *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 16, nos. 1–2 (1991). Dutka's book fills in this temporal gap and will be read by North American linguists, students, and researchers. It should be translated into Ukrainian and reprinted in Ukraine, where the life and scholarly activity of the Canadian-Ukrainian lexicographic pioneer is a *terra incognita*.

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Serhii Plokyh. *Tsars and Cossacks: A Study in Iconography*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2002. 102 pp.

The intersection between rule and religion, the sacrosanct and the secular is a heavily trodden zone, delineated, it would seem, millennia ago from one end of the earth to another. Throughout the world, from the earliest moments of "civilized" life, individuals and societies have sought to understand, manipulate, and articulate their relationship with the divine forces at work in their universe, real and conceptual. In *Tsars and Cossacks: A Study in Iconography*, Serhii Plokyh reflects on the evolving imagery of this relationship in the religious art produced in the Russian-dominated Hetmanate of Right-Bank Ukraine in the early modern era. Plokyh's overarching attempt is to "broaden and

deepen our understanding of the age and its political, social, religious and cultural aspects," an ambitious goal for so slight a text. That the book succeeds as well as it does in meeting this goal depends on the narrowing of Ploky's gaze to one fundamentally salient feature of the age in question, namely, Ukrainian political identity, whose evolution he traces in both critical events and powerful Christian iconographic representations deftly constructed to express socio-political realities, hopes, and fears in troubled and rapidly changing times.

According to the narrative presented here, it was in the second half of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries, particularly in the aftermath of Poltava and the suppression of any chance of a unified or independent Ukraine, that Ukrainian cultural and political elites—churchmen, thinkers, and Cossack officers—embraced and developed the concept of Little Russia, which Ploky believes to be of fundamental importance for the historical development of Ukrainian national consciousness. At its core, the concept revolved around the notion of a single Russian or *rossiiskii* people, which included both Ukrainians and Russians. This organic unity was further strengthened by an ideological bond born of a common, exalted, and urgent purpose, that of defending the one true faith of Orthodoxy against the heretical Catholic menace represented by Poland-Lithuania. As Ploky notes, Little Russianism was the only political ideology that could be propagated officially in the Hetmanate. And so it was, in print, as well as in art, most notably in representations of the Pokrova Virgin, several of which are examined and deciphered by Ploky in this book. They include engravings of the Pokrova that prefaced important publications of the Kyivan Caves Monastery print shop (for example, the 1661 Patericon), and icons commissioned by Cossack officers or the political elite. Among the various iconographic depictions of the Virgin Protectress/Mediatrix deconstructed by Ploky, the *Deshky Pokrova*, dating to the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, and the *Pokrova of Pereiaslav*, painted in the first or second decade of the eighteenth century, dominate the discussion. Taken together these two icons provide a striking visual expression of both the evolving Little Russian identity of the Hetmanate's political class, as well as of the Cossack elite's able manipulation of potent images to convey significant political content.

Thus, the full meaning of the depiction of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky and the tsar (possibly Aleksei) beneath the protective mantle of the Virgin in the *Deshky Pokrova* is comprehensible only in the context of the rediscovered cult of the architect of Pereiaslav, a cult that Ploky situates at the core of Little Russianism. In Ploky's discussion the Cossack officer stratum resurrected and reconfigured Khmelnytsky's cult to protect both itself and, by extension, the Hetmanate or Little Russian Ukraine. In this period Khmelnytsky was fashioned into a Little Russian hero of many faces: the liberator of Orthodox Ukrainians from Catholic Polish oppression and executor of Russian reunification under the aegis of the Muscovite tsar, as well as the author of the hallowed articles at the foundation of the relationship established with Moscow in 1654. Equally importantly, after Poltava, with the very existence of the Hetmanate at risk, Khmelnytsky came to represent the antithesis of the anathematized Mazepa; he became the symbol of the Hetmanate's loyalty to the Russian Empire. In the hands of the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Cossack elite, which, Ploky notes, was gradually becoming a social group resembling the nobility and was keen to defend its rights and privileges, the Khmelnytsky

cult served to assert the Hetmanate's submission to Russia and, at the same time, ground its case for the preservation of Cossack liberties, which were steadily being eroded.

The dissolution of Cossack autonomy was accompanied with a growing dependence on Moscow in the post-Poltava era: an increasing number of officers at various levels came to be appointed directly by the Russian monarchs, and competition among officers intensified. These phenomena were also reflected in the iconography of the period, as Plokhy shows in his examination of the Pokrova of Pereiaslav, which prominently displays the larger than life figures of Peter I and Catherine II. In this period Russian sovereigns joined members of the local Ukrainian clergy and Cossack-officer patrons beneath the interceding Virgin, the ensemble standing together as one, but with the Russian sovereigns positioned prominently at the forefront. In this icon, as in many others similarly structured, we catch a glimpse of the Little Russian world in which the Cossack-officer stratum was allied with Russian imperial rule. A fascinating contrast, which one hopes Plokhy will explore further in the future, is the depiction of the Catholic Polish monarch in Pokrova icons produced in the same years in the Polish-controlled Right Bank. They symbolize the alliance and union of the Ruthenian episcopate with the Polish authorities at a time when Ukrainians in the territory converted en masse to the Uniate Church. One also wonders whether the Pokrova iconography then current in Russia might also prove useful as a comparative reference.

The sovereign offers the possibility of protection in a restless environment facing palpable dangers and an uncertain future. On both sides of the Dnieper Ukrainian elites displayed an astute political awareness and pragmatism in contemplating what lay ahead, made difficult choices, and heralded these effectively to their communities and the higher powers by grafting their vision, their project, onto the iconographic image with the greatest resonance in this turbulent region, the Pokrova. An image inspired by Byzantium, fervently embraced by Rus' and Muscovy, and influenced by Western Marian iconography (notably, the Virgin of Mercy), the Pokrova was adopted, adorned, and adapted over the centuries in response to the aesthetic and politico-ideological exigencies of the East Slavic world. Plokhy's tight narrative provides an insightful and timely reflection on the evolution of a powerful sacred image intimately linked to the drama of the spiritual salvation of humanity and its appropriation by elites in the interests of self-preservation here and now.

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Serhii Plokhy. *Unmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History* (Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2005). 614 pp.

Since the 1920s, debate about Mykhailo Hrushevsky's place in Ukrainian history has revolved around his attitude toward Ukrainian statehood. The question was posed: Was Mykhailo Hrushevsky primarily a "populist" (*narodnyk*) with deeply democratic commitments who viewed the state in a negative light as the traditional oppressor and

exploiter of the Ukrainian people? Or was he a partisan of independent Ukrainian statehood (*derzhavnyk*) who worked all his life to create a national state for the Ukrainian people? Some historians, such as Dmytro Doroshenko (1882–1951), Omeljan Pritsak (1919–2005), and Yaroslav Hrytsak, take the former view and characterize him primarily as a populist, while other historians, such as Lubomyr Wynar (b. 1932) and Yaroslav Dashkevych, take the latter view and describe him primarily as a partisan of statehood.

There is plentiful evidence to support each of these viewpoints, and it is this vexing question which runs like a red thread through Serhii Plokyh's weighty tome on Hrushevsky. Plokyh's book is divided into two parts. Part I, "Nation and Empire," describes the old tripartite view of East Slavic nationality, a view that relegated Ukrainians and Belarusians to mere branches of a single pan-Russian nation. Then Part I explores Hrushevsky's alternate view of mutually exclusive Ukrainian and Russian national identity. Part II, which is titled "Nation and Class," describes how Hrushevsky's view was partially checked by but ultimately successful over the imperial view, which was only partially rehabilitated in Soviet times and almost completely disintegrated afterwards. The general picture shows how Hrushevsky steadily elaborated and sharpened his national vision of Ukrainian history and how at one or another time "the people" or "the state" played dominant roles in this process. Thus during his early years as a graduate student and young professor, Hrushevsky espoused a clearly populist view inherited from his Kyiv mentor, the historian Volodymyr Antonovych. In his inaugural lecture of 1894 at Lviv University, Hrushevsky clearly stated that "the people" were the alpha and the omega of Ukrainian history and its interests were paramount over those of the ruling elite, domestic or foreign. But by the end of his long career, after the hard experiences of exile, revolution, war, more revolution, and then Soviet rule, the historian had clearly evolved into a partisan of Ukrainian statehood, who extolled national independence in the final volumes of his great *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy* (History of Ukraine-Rus') and criticized the Cossack leader Bohdan Khmelnytsky (1595–1657) for not serving the needs of the Ukrainian Cossack state that he had created in 1648 more effectively.

Hrushevsky's path from populism to statism was long, tortured, and very complicated. It involved a form of Enlightenment rationalism imbibed during his youth, romantic views of the hero and nation, which, in part, contradicted his rationalism, and a positivist methodology grounded in a Rankean, critical approach to the sources. If in his work as a student Hrushevsky extolled "the popular masses" and praised popular revolts against the elite, some years later, by the time of the publication of the first volumes of his *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy*, he was praising Prince Volodymyr and his time as a "high point in the development of a Ukrainian state" (p. 179). By the middle volumes of his *magnum opus* Hrushevsky was using the term "the people" in a different sense; that is, there occurred a change from "popular masses" to "nation" (p. 208). By the outbreak of war in 1914, the historian was even encouraging his students, such as Ivan Dzhydzhora, to defend the Ukrainian Cossack elite and incipient gentry in its patriotic stance against Muscovite attempts to use the common folk against Ukrainian national interests.

On a different level, argues Plokyh, Hrushevsky's idea of the different "other" (a basic constituent of modern nationalism) changed over the years. If in his early work, it was Poland and the Poles who were the Ukrainians' significant "other" and the target of his criticism, by the 1920s, when he was writing in Soviet Ukraine, it was Muscovy and the Russians who assumed this role. When reading the last volumes of his great history,

writes Plokhy, "one hardly feels the same anti-Polish animus as in its earlier volumes" (p. 297). Finally, Plokhy discusses the origins of the populist-statist Hrushevsky debate in the 1920s and concludes as follows:

There can be little doubt that framing the historiographic discussion of the 1920s as a confrontation between "statists" and "populists," as was done by Hrushevsky's opponents in the 1920s, is misleading at best. At the core of the disagreement between Lypynsky, Tomashivsky, and other statists on the one hand, and Hrushevsky on the other was not the issue of statehood per se but the question of what kind of state they wanted to build. In that regard, Hrushevsky indeed remained a populist who generally (if not invariably) put the interests of the popular masses at the top of his agenda. By contrast, Lypynsky, Tomashivsky, Doroshenko, Krevetsky, and others rejected the orientation on the masses: in their writings, they were much more inclined toward a positive assessment of the role played in Ukrainian history by the elites. If anything, they were "elitist" in their interpretation of Ukrainian history. "Elitism," however, did not have as much appeal in postrevolutionary Ukrainian society as "statism," and, of course, it was much more effective to accuse one's opponent of being "anti-statist" than egalitarian or anti-elitist (p. 331).

Other important points made by Plokhy in his study include the fact that although in some ways Hrushevsky was a "primordialist" who carried the history of the Ukrainian people very far back into the past, much, much farther, in fact, than the rise of modern nationalism in the nineteenth century, he qualified this view by pointing out some of the discontinuities in Ukrainian history. Thus he did not reach back to Kyivan Rus' to find the origins of the Ukrainian Cossacks but concentrated primarily upon the social phenomena of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially the factor of "runaway serfs" who fled to the Cossacks to escape oppressive landlords.

However, in admitting certain discontinuities in Ukrainian history, Hrushevsky did not abandon his basically "teleological" view of the Ukrainian past. Rather he saw this history as "a sequence of rises, declines, and revivals" (p. 419), the latest phase of which was the rise of modern nationalism in the nineteenth century. According to Plokhy, in espousing this national revival in which he had great confidence, Hrushevsky to some degree acceded to a romantic form of nationalism, complete with certain features of hero worship (at least in his popular histories). Thus, continues Plokhy, contrary to Soviet myths about him, Hrushevsky never presented the history of Ukraine as that of a "classless nation." Rather he readily admitted the existence of Ukrainian elites and classes and saw their interaction as a main feature of Ukrainian history.

In general, Plokhy has drawn a detailed and nuanced picture of Hrushevsky the historian. In contrast to previous historians who only stated one thesis or another without going into much analysis of the great scholar's life and work, he has mustered solid evidence behind the theses of Hrushevsky the "populist" and Hrushevsky the "statist," and subtly balanced them. He has used a wide variety of sources and read deeply and long into Hrushevsky's enormous corpus. As well, he has made limited but very good use of unpublished archival sources, such as letters to Hrushevsky (preserved among his papers in Kyiv) from common folk whose national consciousness was deeply affected by reading the historian's work. Plokhy's book now stands as the most detailed and authoritative

study of Hrushevsky as a historian, and as such, is a welcome addition to the rapidly growing literature on this central and still very controversial figure of modern Ukrainian history.

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Volodymyr Boichuk. *Vivady: Vesilni pisni ukrainstiv Bosnii*. Toronto: Canadian Association of Ukrainians from Former Yugoslavia, 2006. 235 pp.

Ukrainians have maintained their ethnic traditions not only in Canada but also in many other countries to which they have immigrated. A group of Ukrainians went to Bosnia where they settled in villages close to one another and strove to keep alive various traditional practices, especially those tied to the central event of the human life cycle, the wedding. Some Bosnian Ukrainians later came to Canada. It is through them that Boichuk became interested in Ukrainian/Bosnian traditions and it is they who funded the publication of this book.

Boichuk was admirably thorough in his work. He collected data from the Bosnian Ukrainians in Canada and did fieldwork in former Yugoslavia. He attended weddings and he conducted interviews. As a result, he was able to document not only the words of the songs, the primary focus of this study, but also the song contexts and music. He tells us when the songs were sung and by whom. We get a good sense of what the Bosnian Ukrainian wedding was like and how the songs fit into the celebration. The songs come alive in this sort of presentation and their power is more thoroughly appreciated.

In weddings in Central Ukraine, the area with which I am most familiar, songs appear throughout the wedding process, from the baking of the bread and other preparations to the wedding day itself, and they have different names, depending on the stage in the wedding at which they are performed. What Boichuk finds is that in the Bosnian Ukrainian ceremony the songs are concentrated in the gift-giving session and have a single name: *vivady*. Because *vivady* are sung at only one point in the wedding, there are a number of song types and Boichuk groups them by theme. In group one he places songs that talk about the actual gift-giving and the families of the couple. The family and gift-giving are closely connected because relatives begin the gift-giving process and their gifts are important symbolically, as well as financially to the newly-weds. Generous gifts indicate approval of the marriage and wishes for the couple's prosperity. The second group, according to Boichuk, consists of songs about the wedding itself. They describe the wedding festivities, the music, the food, and the guests, often in humorous terms. Songs of this type are especially popular in Central Ukraine and serve both to entertain and to express the tension between two separate families and groups of friends who, through the couple, are about to become one. Group three consists of songs about love and the beloved. Some of these are serious and swear eternal devotion while others are funny and voice mock insults of a beloved who is described as crooked or lame. Others, perhaps some of the most moving songs, express the

unfortunate truths of life: it is the wealthy girls who are most ardently courted; sometimes one must marry not one's beloved but the person chosen by the parents; often one party falls out of love while the feelings of the other remain strong. The fourth group talks about married life, including its less attractive features such as wife-beating and mothers-in-law who treat new brides like servants. The failings of men and women are the subject of group five. These songs tell of laziness and neglect, the failure of women to maintain the home and of men to plant and care for crops. Men, and sometimes women, are faulted for drunkenness. The songs in group six describe the good traits, which are more often physical features such as nice skin and a fine voice than character traits or examples of good behaviour. In group seven are what Boichuk calls assorted humorous songs. Some of these are quite suggestive, using metaphors to talk about sex organs and the sex act.

After grouping the songs by type, Boichuk offers a short discussion of their music and then moves on to the literary devices found in the texts. He discusses dialogue, the seeming exchange between one speaker and another, all sung by one person. Many songs are monologues, sung in the first person. Some are addressed to a member of the wedding party, with the singer seemingly voicing his or her own opinions. Others describe oneself and one's own behaviour. Interestingly, a number of these are humorous and self-critical, recounting failure as a farmer or reluctance to do the necessary household tasks. A few songs are third-person narratives, describing another and his or her behaviour.

A section on the length of *vivady* tells us that most of them are quite short, no longer than one stanza, although longer songs are possible. Their poetic features include juxtaposition and contrast, hyperbole, repetition, and parallelism. Boichuk matches poetic devices with *vivady* types and discusses how the particular devices contribute to the artistic effect. He provides a bibliography. The rest of the book, a good half of it, consists of song texts grouped by the melodies to which they are typically sung. The musical notation for each melody is given at the beginning of the section, and all songs are fully annotated. In the notes he tells the reader where and when the songs were recorded, from whom and by whom.

Boichuk's *Vivady* is an admirably thorough book. He has done everything right and he has preserved for us a treasure of spiritual culture. Because his is such a worthwhile effort, it is unfortunate that it has some minor problems that could have been easily fixed by a good editor. Boichuk's book was originally a master's thesis and this shows. The work is repetitious. Just a bit of editing could have removed the repetitions without any loss of content. Even more annoying is the formatting. The margins were apparently justified on a computer. With some fonts, and this is true of the one used for this book, this introduces spaces within words that prevent smooth reading. With these minor caveats, and they are minor indeed, the book is highly recommended.

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Giovanna Siedina, ed. *Mazepa e il suo tempo: Storia, cultura, società / Mazepa and His Time: History, Culture, and Society*. Slavica no. 6. Alessandria: Edizioni dell' Orso, 2004. 593 pp.

The era of Ivan Mazepa was undoubtedly one of the formative moments of Ukrainian history and coincided with what is perhaps the cultural high point of the Hetmanate in general. It is thus doubly fitting that the politics and culture of the period (society hardly figures in the collection, in spite of the title) should be the subject of this useful and important volume. The product of a 2002 conference, it reflects the scholarly interests of the moment, with a definite tilt toward the cultural side. Some contributions are mainly antiquarian or tackle specialized themes, but on the whole the volume is unified by its broadly cultural emphasis. That emphasis is not unwelcome, for the politics of Mazepa's Hetmanate are somewhat better known from pre-1917 and Ukrainian émigré scholarship than its culture.

The historical essays in the collection concern mainly political ideas and culture, rather than activities or institutions, a feature that gives still more unity to the volume. Serhii Plokhyy explores what Teofan Prokopovych really meant by "Rossiia," and Frank Sysyn, Natalia Iakovenko, and Teresa Chynczewska-Hennel all take up different sides of the political culture of the Hetmanate, mainly of the Cossack elite. These papers necessarily involve aspects of the vexed question of the heritage of the political world of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Sysyn traces the development of notions of the Hetmanate as a fatherland, while Iakovenko tries to outline the main features of its political culture, which embraced both the elite and to some extent the Cossack rank and file. Chynczewska-Hennel is convinced that the *starshyna* around Mazepa were largely in the tradition of the Commonwealth, while Iakovenko sees the similarities as superficial. Sysyn is somewhere in between. Larisa Dovha examines political ideas in the sermons of the time, a normally neglected source. Four articles focusing on history (Daniel Beauvois, Iryna Dmytryshyn) and literature (Rostysław Radyszewski, Oleksandra Trofymuk) treat Pylyp Orlyk and his son, both of whom recur in other contributions. Iurii Mytsyk, Giovanna Brogi Bercoff, and Serhij Jakowenko discuss Mazepa's relations with the church as patron and hetman. The picture that emerges from these essays is necessarily complex, varying with time and the social place of the writers. One gets the impression, however, that by Mazepa's time there was little difference between the clergy and the Cossack elite. Both professed a patriotism focused on the Hetmanate, a general loyalty to the Russian tsar, and political values derived both from the Polish Commonwealth and from the Hetmanate's own recent history.

Many of the literary studies (Natalia Pylypiuk, Lidia Sazonova, Serhij Jakowenko, Radyszewski), like the historical ones, rely extensively on the panegyrics in the sermons, poetry, emblems, and coats of arms to uncover what the educated elite of the time thought of Mazepa or, at least, what it wanted to proclaim in print. Most of the results are predictable baroque clichés: Mazepa is a brave and victorious commander, pious, just, a Hercules against the infidel. Also rather predictable are the terms of denigration of the hetman in Russian publications after 1708. Indeed the imagery is so predictable that it is a pity that the authors did not look farther afield for prototypes: were these images universal? Were they used only of monarchs and semi-monarchs, or of other leaders as well? Of course, not just monarchs but also great noblemen in Poland and some of

Mazepa's contemporaries in the Hetmanate received much fulsome poetic praise. How different was it from that composed for the hetman?

The essays on the literature of the time give a clear picture of how the elite of the Ukrainian Hetmanate and Russia wanted to portray Mazepa, but this brings out all the more vividly the absence of the hetman himself in the collection. The only essay to explore Mazepa's policies and actions in any detail is that of Oleksii Sokyрко on Mazepa's special corps of guards, which he organized and supported from his own resources and which was separate from the Cossack forces. Many years ago Oleksander Ohloblyn suggested that Mazepa wanted not only greater autonomy and eventual independence from Russia but also increasing control of the Hetmanate. Sokyрко's essay in a modest way supports this hypothesis and, perhaps, so do the panegyrics and accounts of cultural patronage.

There are many lesser issues explored in the volume: the archeology of Baturyn, the philosophical vocabulary at the Kyivan Academy, and others. Many of the contributions to this fine collection are more descriptive than analytic, but then perhaps at this stage of the historiography on Mazepa and his time new material is preferable to premature generalization.

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Irena R. Makaryk. *Shakespeare in the Undiscovered Bourn: Les Kurbas, Ukrainian Modernism, and Early Soviet Cultural Politics*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004. xx, 257 pp.

Irena R. Makaryk's new book, as suggested by its title, situates itself at the crossroads of several disciplines: it is a study of theatre history and, more broadly, of the cultural history of Ukraine during the first third of the twentieth century, as seen through the prism of the staging of Shakespeare's plays by Ukrainian theatre directors and the reception of their work. As such, this lucidly written, powerfully argued study attempts to reach several audiences, in particular Shakespearians and specialists in modern-theatre history as yet unfamiliar with the contributions to it made by the Ukrainians, in particular by the book's main hero, Les Kurbas. Yet I am certain that specialists in Ukrainian studies will also read this book with considerable interest, as it presents a significant amount of original archival research, as well as an outstanding attempt at a synthesizing presentation that places internal Ukrainian cultural developments within a broader cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, and theoretical context.

The book is organized as a combination of a biographical and historical narrative with critical analysis. At the centre of the text are three mid-1920s Ukrainian productions of Shakespeare's plays: Kurbas's 1924 *Macbeth*, Panas Saksahansky's 1926 *Othello*, and Hnat Iura's 1927 *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Within the structure of the book, they appear as a modernist/avant-garde innovative thesis, a traditionalist quasi-realist antithesis, and an opportunistic and eclectic negative synthesis. While Makaryk's sympathies are clearly on Kurbas's side, she also presents a very informative account of the other two

productions, which serve as an illuminating foil to Kurbas's bold experimentation. In addition to these three central works, Makaryk also offers the reader an introduction to the initial stage of Kurbas's theatrical career and an account of his work on an unfinished production of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1918–19, as well as his preparatory work, shortly before his arrest in December 1933, for a production of *King Lear* at the State Jewish Theatre in Moscow.

Positioning herself as a Shakespeare scholar for whom a key segment of the audience is comprised of fellow Shakespeareans, Makaryk assumes that her audience is familiar with Shakespeare's text and relatively unfamiliar with the other plays staged by the directors she discusses. Thus, in her presentation Friedrich Schiller becomes a relatively minor author, and her focus on Western classics leads to a minimal discussion of Ukrainian dramatists, with the notable exception of Ivan Mykytenko, who appears in the guise of a cardboard villain, a socialist-realist hack officially titled the "proletarian Shakespeare." I believe this is probably the biggest structural gap in Makaryk's text, especially since she devotes a fair amount of attention to Ukrainians active in other art genres, such as painting, costume and set design, and dance. Also, the emphasis on Kurbas's dialogue with his Western colleagues contrasts not only with the intentional de-emphasizing of any parallels with developments in the Russian theatre (an understandable gesture given the surprising endurance of the imperialist Russocentric paradigm within general theatre studies), but also with the neglect of other non-Russian cultural practitioners with whom the Ukrainians were in dialogue (for example, the Georgians). Additionally, while Makaryk's painstaking work with archival materials is to be commended, I was surprised that she only referred in passing to the published work of other scholars, among them Natalia Chechel, Nelli Korniienko, and Virlana Tkacz.

While on the whole the book's scholarly apparatus is very well organized, a few relatively minor errors did find their way onto its pages. Thus, Makaryk locates the Sofiivka Park not in Uman, but in Bila Tserkva (p. 40), identifies Ivan Mykytenko's death in 1937 as an execution rather than a suicide (p. 198), and at one point conflates the Rylsky Institute of Folklore and Ethnography and the Shevchenko Institute of Literature into the "Ryl's'kyi Institute of Literature" (p. xiv). The book also contains several mistakes in transliteration from the Russian and, at one point, a mistranslation from the Russian into Ukrainian by another scholar leads to an erroneous argument: *pace* Makaryk, Kurbas's notion of *ochudnennia* is, in fact, the correct translation of Viktor Shklovsky's term *ostranenie* (p. 92).

Overall, however, this book is truly a labour of love, and will make for an illuminating and enjoyable reading for a diverse intellectual audience. I hope the University of Toronto Press will also bring it out in a paperback edition, as Makaryk's study would be a welcome addition to the reading lists of university courses on Ukrainian culture, modern-theatre history, and Soviet cultural politics.

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Piotr Wawrzeniuk. *Confessional Civilising in Ukraine: The Bishop Iosyf Shumliansky and the Introduction of Reforms in the Diocese of Lviv 1688–1708*. Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2005. xv, 160 pp.

This monograph describes the efforts of Bishop Iosyf Shumliansky of the Lviv eparchy (1668–1708) to modify the culture of his clergy, in order to make them more like the gentry and less like the peasantry, and also to discipline infractions. As primary sources the author uses in particular a manual that the bishop wrote for his priests, entitled *Metryka*, and the protocol books of the Consistorial Court of Lviv, now held in the National Museum in Lviv.

The introduction sketches the political and religious background of the Orthodox Ruthenian lands in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It pays particular attention to the early modern confessionalization emerging from the Protestant Reformation and Catholic Reform (other authors would use the term Counter-Reformation) and also to the Union of Brest of 1596, which united the Orthodox in the Commonwealth with the Roman Catholics. The Union had originally been rejected by both the Lviv and Przemyśl eparchies, and an Orthodox hierarchy for the other Ruthenian eparchies was restored in the 1620s and 1630s. After the Cossack wars, Poland wanted to impose the Union in all territories that remained under its control. In the late 1660s it would only appoint episcopal candidates who supported this outcome. Thus when Iosyf Shumliansky became a candidate for the throne of Lviv, he “promised to repay his appointment by bringing his diocese into the union with Rome as soon as possible” (p. 29). In spite of his promise, Kyr Iosyf postponed the union for over thirty years after his episcopal consecration, until 1700, leaning in the meantime towards Orthodoxy or Catholicism, depending on his own and his eparchy’s interests at the given moment.

The bishop developed an ambitious plan for the reform of his clergy. He explained to them in his *Metryka* how they should comport themselves. Here is some typical advice from the manual: “Do not socialize with people not of your own rank if there is no need. When mingling with your equals on appropriate occasions, do not let any idle or foul words come out of your mouth” (p. 71). He also introduced a dress code for the clergy and warned them in particular not to get drunk with the peasants. In addition to written guidelines, the bishop established consistorial courts to mete out punishment to clerical offenders. Priests were brought to court for fighting with other priests; the fights usually involved alcohol or personal honour. But there were many other misdemeanours that could land a priest in trouble. One priest was accused of conducting services in irregular ways and neglecting to conduct them, drinking notoriously and constantly smoking tobacco, engaging in adultery, and assaulting and attempting to assault parishioners and the former parish priest (p. 124).

The disciplining reforms were symptomatic of the age of the Counter-Reformation, but the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the turn of the eighteenth century was a difficult place to institute them. War and Tatar raids made parts of the Lviv eparchy ungovernable. The consistorial courts often could not meet. The lawlessness of the Commonwealth also infected and affected the church. Typically enough, Shumliansky had to fight for his episcopal throne for seven years against another Orthodox bishop of Lviv. In the course of this struggle St. George’s Cathedral in Lviv and the cathedral in Krylos were stormed, and several people were injured or killed. “Shumliansky showed his

determination and a great degree of political judgment by combining legal action with real threats and violent acts. He vigorously either ignored decrees obstructive to his cause or tended to interpret them to his advantage" (p. 59). This was not a context conducive to civilizing projects. As the author convincingly argues, "it took a dedicated, determined and strong (absolutist) state to modernize the Ruthenian Church" (p. 52), namely, the Habsburg monarchy.

This short monograph is worth reading. It is well researched, clearly written, and provides perspective on a little known episode in the history of the Ukrainian church.

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Hans Joachim Killmann, ed. and comp. *Evhen P. Hrebinka / Grebenka — Bibliografie*. Maintal bei Frankfurt am Main: Selbstverlag, 2004. 100 pp.

Killmann's interest in Ukrainian studies was kindled by his teacher, the Frankfurt am Main University Slavist Olexa Horbach (Horbatsch) (1918–1997), and it was Professor Horbach who encouraged him to study the life and work of Ievhen Hrebinka. Hrebinka (1812–1848) lived most of his adult life in St. Petersburg and wrote in both Ukrainian and Russian. In Ukrainian literature he is known primarily for his fables and for his friendship with and support of Taras Shevchenko. In Russian he wrote novels and stories, as well as poetry. We remember him today as the author of the still popular love song "Ochi chernye, ochi strastnye."

Hans Joachim Killmann is the author of a forthcoming monograph on Hrebinka's Russian prose, and the present bibliography seems to be a by-product of this monograph. The bibliography is organized in two main parts: works by Hrebinka and works about him, with books and periodical publications in separate sections, arranged chronologically. The entries are numbered (there are 958 items in all), and a name index makes retrieval easy.

The bibliography covers Hrebinka's works published from 1831 to 1992; works about him extend all the way to 2004.

All entries are given not in the original Cyrillic script, but in German transliteration. With a few minor exceptions, annotations are not provided. This makes it difficult at times to determine whether the original text is in Ukrainian or in Russian, especially since the description is based on the data on the title page, which may be in Russian even if the book is in Ukrainian; for example, "#1. Grebenka, Evgenij. Malorossijskie prikazki E. Grebenki ... 1834"; or "#5. Grebenka, Evgenij (Hg). Lastowka. Al'manach. Sočinenija na malorossijskom jazyke ... 1841."

The compiler's brief foreword lists acknowledgments to various Russian, German, Ukrainian, British, and other libraries, but it does not inform us of the intended scope of his bibliography: is it supposed to be comprehensive or selective? There are some puzzles; for example, Koshelivets's English-language entry on Hrebinka in the *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine* is included (#625), but the same entry, published earlier in

*Encyclopedia of Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 2: 239–40, is not. George Grabowicz's article published in the *Handbook of Russian Literature*, ed. Victor Terras (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 183–4 is not covered by Killmann. Was it omitted deliberately or accidentally? Did Killmann make a serious attempt to cover Western literary dictionaries and encyclopedias? Many Ukrainian sources are included, but some are conspicuous by their absence. The 1955 entry on Hrebinka in *Entsyklopediia ukrainoznavstva: Slovnykova chastyna* is listed in the bibliography, albeit without the volume and page numbers, but the much longer articles by S.D. Zubkov in *Ukrainska literaturna entsyklopediia* (Kyiv, 1988), 1: 482–3, and by Bohdan Romanenchuk in his *Azbukovnyk: Entsyklopediia ukrainskoi literatury* (Philadelphia, 1973), 2: 455–60, are not. There is but one German translation of a poem by Hrebinka (#233 "Sonne und Wolke," translated by Hans Koch in his anthology *Die ukrainische Lyrik*, published in 1955). Is this the only work by Hrebinka to have been translated into German? If so, this fact should have been noted.

Marta Tarnawsky  
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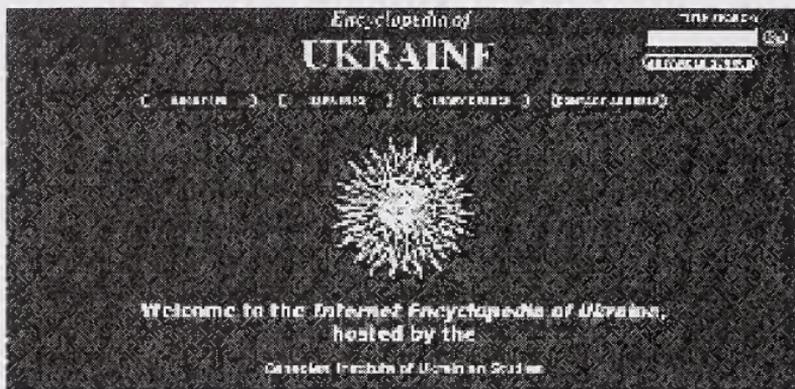
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а—a	і—i	т—t
б—b	ї—i	у—u
в—v	й—i	ф—f
г—h	к—k	х—kh
ґ—g	л—l	ц—ts
д—d	м—m	ч—ch
е—e	н—n	ш—sh
є—ie	о—o	щ—shch
ж—zh	п—p	ю—iu
з—z	р—r	я—ia
и—y	с—s	ь—omit
		ий—y in endings of personal names only.

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