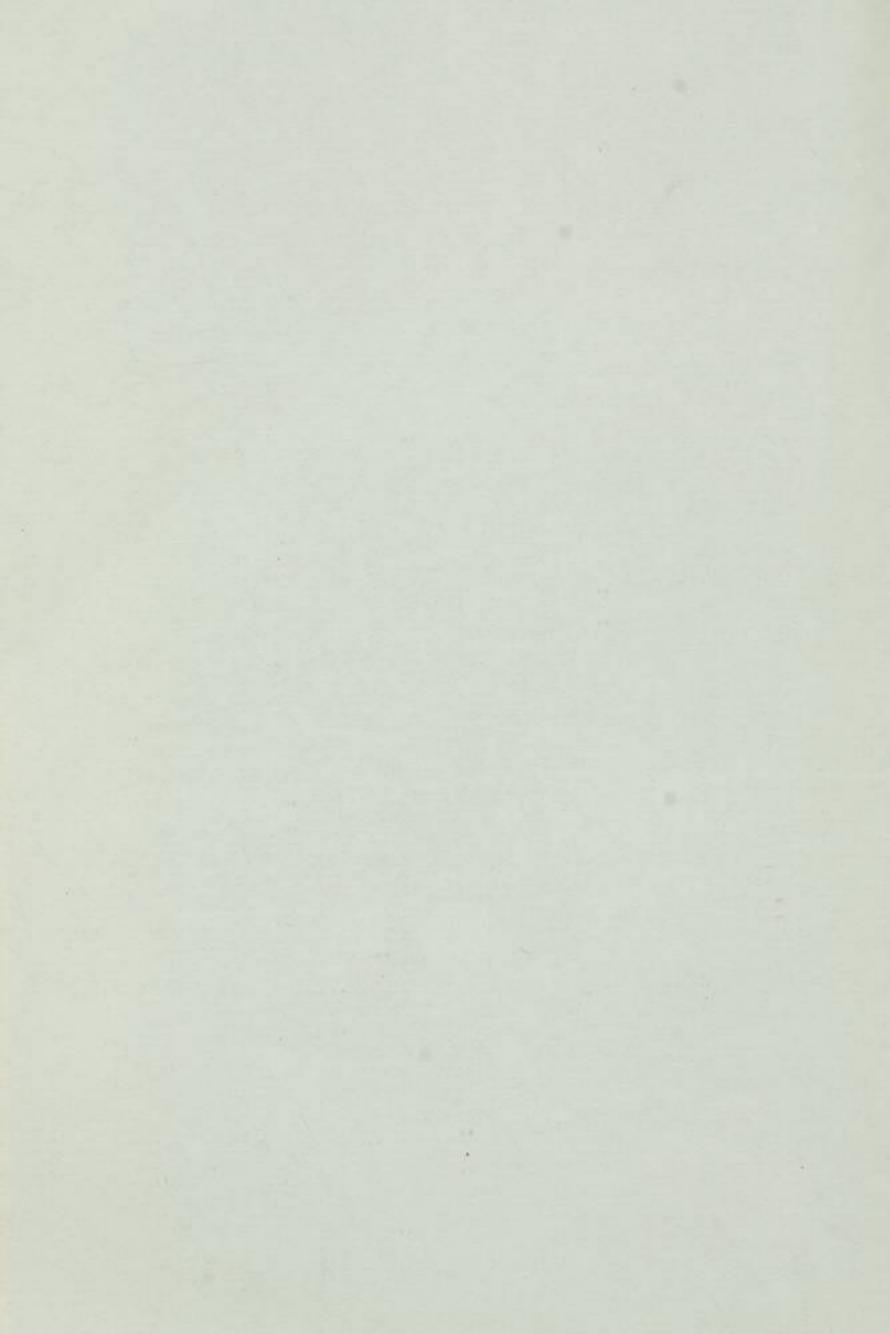
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Shevchenko and Belinsky

VICTOR SWOBODA

THE nature of the relationship between the greatest Ukrainian poet, Taras Hryhorovych Shevchenko (1814-1861), and the greatest Russian literary critic, Vissarion Grigor'yevich Belinsky (1811-1848), has been the subject of conflicting statements, representing Shevchenko as a pupil and comrade-in-arms of Belinsky or asserting that Belinsky was deeply hostile to Shevchenko. The controversy has become particularly pronounced in the last decade or so and shows the increasing attention now given to the problem of Shevchenko's ideological parentage, which is extremely important in view of his continued immense popularity and influence among Ukrainians.

II

One problem to be considered is that of the personal and social contacts between Shevchenko and Belinsky. Opportunities for these existed during the five years from November 18391 till March 18452 when both men were in St Petersburg. But the only known record of any personal and social contact between them is in A. N. Strugovshchikov's memoirs.3 Parts of the relevant passage have been frequently quoted or referred to:4 it describes a musical soirée at Strugovshchikov's on 27 April 1840, mentions some thirty guests (twenty-seven of them by name), and adds the names of nine absentees together with whom 'the list of guests which has been preserved in my possession would have given the complete roll of our kruzhok, with the few exceptions of those who were grouped more around Count M. Yu. Viel'gorsky and Prince V. F. Odoyevsky'. 5 The inclusion of both Shevchenko and Belinsky in the list of guests and the indication that the list contains the names of those who belonged to Strugovshchikov's kruzhok might seem to justify the conclusion of many commentators that Shevchenko and Belinsky must have met at Strugovshchikov's on other occasions also.6 But such

Shevchenko left St Petersburg on 25 March 1845; he was also absent for eight months

from 13 May 1843 till the end of February 1844.

3 A. N. Strugovshchikov, 'M. I. Glinka. Vospominaniya. 1839–1841' (Russkaya starina, IX, St Petersburg, 1874, pp. 701-2). They were written not later than 1857 (ibid., p. 696).

4 The fullest quotation is in Biohrafiya T. H. Shevchenka za spohadamy suchasnykiv, AN URSR,

Kiev, 1958, p. 37.

⁵ Strugovshchikov, op. cit., pp. 701-2.

⁶ Thus, Ye. P. Kyrylyuk (T. H. Shevchenko. Zhyttya i tvorchist', Kiev, 1959, p. 82) says: 'The fact that this was not merely a single simply fortuitous meeting is proved by the subsequent words in the memoirs. Having mentioned some persons absent that evening, A. Strugovshchikov added: "With them the list of guests which has been preserved in my possession would

Belinsky arrived in St Petersburg probably on 24 October 1839 (all dates prior to 1917 are given in old style) (Yu. Oksman, Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva V. G. Belinskogo, Moscow, . 1958, p. 212).

a conclusion would be correct only if it is accepted that Belinsky really belonged to Strugovshchikov's kruzhok. This is doubtful. According to I. I. Panayev, Belinsky went out of his own kruzhok rarely and reluctantly and called on Strugovshchikov only occasionally (иногда).7 Though he valued Strugovshchikov highly as a translator of Goethe,8 he apparently did not see eye to eye with him on certain, probably ideological, matters9 or rate him as a friend in the same way as he did Herzen.¹⁰ On the other hand, from the beginning of his stay in St Petersburg and during 1840-1 he was a not infrequent guest at the literary Saturday salons of Prince V. F. Odoyevsky who took a great interest in him.11 It would therefore seem right to conclude that Belinsky was not only the centre of attraction of his own (and Panayev's12) kruzhok but could also be said to have belonged to 'those grouped . . . around . . . Prince V. F. Odoyevsky'. 13 This implies that he did not really belong to Strugovshchikov's kruzhok.

Shevchenko is not known to have visited Strugovshchikov's on any other occasion than the soirée already mentioned. But N. A. Markevych mentions two occasions when Shevchenko and Strugovshchikov were among the company assembled at his house and another occasion when they were both at N. Kukol'nik's.14 On the whole, it seems likely that Shevchenko visited Strugovshchikov's more than once in the company of his greatly admired teacher and friend, Professor K. P. Bryullov.15 But the only occasion when he and Belinsky are definitely said to have been present at the same time was on 27 April 1840, and no real evidence has yet been produced for the contention that they met repeatedly at Strugovshchikov's.

have given the complete roll of our kruzhok".' Kyrylyuk stresses the word 'kruzhok' and ends the quotation with it; he thus omits the final part of Strugovshchikov's remarks which is clearly of great importance.

⁷ I. I. Panayev, Literaturnyye vospominaniya, [Leningrad,] 1950, p. 256. Strugovshchikov and Belinsky were, however, colleagues both on Otechestvennyye zapiski and on Sovremennik and occasionally met elsewhere (Oksman, op. cit., pp. 225, 264, 460; A. I. Herzen, Polnoye

sobraniye sochineniy i pisem, II, Petrograd, 1919, p. 415).

8 V. G. Belinsky, Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy, thirteen vols., Moscow, 1953-59 (referred to hereafter as B), II, p. 361, III, pp. 63-5, IV, pp. 126, 175, V, p. 263, XI, pp. 262, 362-3, XII,

p. 83.
9 '... I [Herzen] and Belins[ky] routed (разбивали) Strugovshchikov and Neverov...'

10 In 1846 Belinsky could not think of Strugovshchikov 'without a sinking heart and irritation of every kind' (без сердечного и всяческого щемления) (В, XII, р. 300).

11 B, XI, pp. 418, 420, 428, 436, 446, XII, p. 10; I. I. Panayev, op. cit., pp. 99, 137, 296–300, 415, 431; Literaturnoye nasledstvo, AN SSSR, vol. 56, pp. 135–6, 314; Oksman, op. cit., p. 245; Herzen, op. cit., XIII, Petersburg, 1919, pp. 23–4.

12 V. A. Panayev, 'Vospominaniya' (Russkaya starina, vol. 79, 1893, p. 478).

¹³ See footnote 5 above.

14 Biohrafiya T. H. Shevchenka etc., AN URSR, pp. 37-8.
15 I. I. Panayev intended to describe in Chapter IX 'Friendly soirées at Strugovshchikov's', with particular reference to 'Bryullov and Kukol'nik at these soirées' (op. cit., p. 269), but his death in 1862 cut short the progress of his memoirs (ibid., p. 422). The close friendship between Strugovshchikov and Bryullov can be gathered from the fact that the former used to call at the Academy to take Bryullov with him when driving out to Kukol'nik's (Strugovshchikov, op. cit., p. 700).

Even at the soirée on 27 April they seem unlikely to have had much opportunity for close personal contact. It is not unreasonable to suppose that in this gathering of about thirty people Belinsky may have kept to the circle of his close friends, I. I. Panayev and V. F. Odoyevsky, and Shevchenko to his new friend Markevych, the 'triumvirate'16 composed of Bryullov, Glinka and Kukol'nik, several fellow-students from the Academy and certain other artists.17 Strugovshchikov's account of what took place at the soirée should also be borne in mind in this connection. What he has to say does not end as it is usually quoted.18 It goes on:

Dreyschock [A.], who, in the words of Glinka, was 'cutting chops with his fingers', during that evening smashed two grand pianos hired by me from Wirt and made some, including Belinsky, leave before supper; to make up for this, Markevych astounded everyone by his playing, eclipsing Dreyschock and Stör [K.]. Everyone was rather tired, but a jovial conversation at supper revived us. We started talking about Glinka's new opera; unable to restrain himself, he rose from the table and sat down at the piano. . . Glinka was inexhaustible. . . A warm morning dawned; the windows were open and it struck seven o'clock, when someone noticed that passers-by were stopping. My guests left. 19

This makes it clear that Belinsky left Strugovshchikov's before the end of the Dreyschock and Stör recitals which seem to have been given during the first part of the soirée, and while they were in progress he could hardly have talked much to anybody.20 It is not known when

¹⁸ See footnote 4 above.

разъехались. (Strugovshchikov, op. cit., p. 702.)

So named by I. I. Panayev (op. cit., p. 44).
 M. A. Ramazanov, A. M. Goronovich, Ya. F. Yanenko, P. V. Basin, S. F. Shchedrin, M. A. and P. A. Stepanov (Biohrafia T. H. Shevchenka etc., pp. 376-8).

¹⁹ Дрейшок, «рубивший пальцами котлеты», по выражению Глинки, исколотил в этот вечер два рояля, взятые мною у Вирта напрокат, и заставил некоторых, в том числе и Белинского, уехать до ужина; зато Маркевич удивил всех своей игрой, затмив Дрейшока и Стёра. Все были порядочно утомлены, но веселая беседа за ужином оживила нас. Заговорили о новой опере Глинки; он не выдержал, встал из-за стола и подсел к роялю . . . Глинка был неистощим . . . Взошло теплое утро; окна были отворены и било семь, когда кто-то заметил, что прохожие останавливаются. Мои гости

²⁰ Incidentally, it is interesting to compare the way in which Strugovshchikov's description is mutilated and misinterpreted by many writers on Shevchenko with the procedure adopted by Ye. Kann-Novikova, who wishes to prove the existence of personal contact between Glinka and Belinsky and asserts (in her M. I. Glinka, III, Moscow, 1955, pp. 142-3): 'Finally, it is A. N. Strugovshchikov who with complete certainty establishes the fact of personal contact between Glinka and Belinsky.' She gives the usual quotation from Strugovshchikov but only down to and including the sentence 'With them the list of guests. . . . V. F. Odoevsky', From Strugovshchikov's account of what happened at the soirée, which she does not quote, she vaguely concludes: 'It transpires from the context [sic] of Strugovshchikov's memoirs that music was the chief point of that soirée, and, in particular, Glinka's music, performed by the composer himself. By these memoirs the fact of personal contact between Glinka and Belinsky is reliably documented, and the widest circle of their common acquaintances is established.' By withholding the mention of Belinsky's early departure, she implies that he listened to Glinka's music (which, as has been shown above, is not true); she is also obviously unaware that Belinsky did not belong to Strugovshchikov's kruzhok.

Shevchenko left; probably he stayed on with his friend Markevych.21

Ye. P. Kyrylyuk has recently asserted that Hrebinka's was another meeting place: 'Shevchenko used to go to Hrebinka's literary soirées where a wide circle of writers and artists used to gather. I. Panayev mentions in his memoirs that Shevchenko and Belinsky used to go there.' But Panayev's memoirs by no means bracket the names of Shevchenko and Belinsky in the manner which Kyrylyuk suggests. It is true that at one point they describe a literary gathering at Hrebinka's and mention that Shevchenko was present. But it is not until very much further on that they say that Belinsky 'usually visited Hrebinka once a year when the latter called on him to invite him to Little Russian pork fat and liqueurs. Here and evidently at other similar gatherings he met various famous literary personalities: Kukol'nik and others.... But he did not want to become friendly (сближаться) with them.'22 The most that this would seem to indicate is that Belinsky and Shevchenko may very occasionally have chanced to be at Hrebinka's on the same day. But it can scarcely be regarded as definite evidence of personal contact between them.

If any personal or ideological contact between Belinsky and Shevchenko had existed, they might have been expected to exchange letters during Shevchenko's absence from St Petersburg in 1843-4 and after 184523 until his arrest on 5 April 1847. But no personal correspondence between them is extant. The only letter which throws any light on their personal relationship or even mentions Shevchenko's name is Belinsky's famous letter to P. V. Annenkov, written in December 1847 after Shevchenko's arrest; and this gives no grounds at all for assuming that Shevchenko was in any sense a friend, 'comrade-in-arms' or follower of Belinsky.24

Thus, the frequent assertions that Shevchenko was personally friendly with Belinsky, or used to meet him, must be regarded as mere conjectures with no reliable foundation in known fact.

III

Another problem to be considered is the attitude of Belinsky as critic towards Shevchenko as creative artist. It is sometimes asserted that Belinsky's attitude was influenced by an irreconcilable personal hatred. But this is incorrect and takes no account of three favourable comments by Belinsky which are often overlooked. The first occurred in February 1842 in a review of Nashi, spisannyye s natury russkimi,25 where Belinsky

²¹ It is significant that Belinsky was not acquainted even with Bryullov until two and a half years later (B, XII, p. 125).

22 Kyrylyuk, loc. cit.; I. I. Panayev, op. cit., pp. 103-5, 256.

²³ See footnote 2 above.

²⁴ B, XII. p. 440.

²⁵ A. P. Bashutsky (ed.), Nashi, spisannyye s naturv russkimi, 1-5, St Petersburg, 1841.

commented that 'The illustrations by Messrs Tim, Shchedrovsky and Shevchenko are distinguished by their typical originality and faithfulness to reality. . . . '26 The two others were not explicit. When Belinsky reviewed No. 13 of Nashi, spisannyye s natury russkimi27 in December 1842 he said simply that 'The pictures and vignettes (13 in number) are excellent',28 without mentioning Shevchenko who had done the chief illustration. The other favourable comment came in June 1845 in a review of Russkiye polkovodtsy,29 where Belinsky found that 'The portraits are very well finished and seem to be very much like those from which they are taken'.30 At the same time he criticised certain of Shevchenko's illustrations. In July 1841 he called one of them bad,31 while in January and November 1843 he summarily condemned all the pictures in two editions of a book, some of which had been done by Shevchenko.32

It was a remarkable achievement for Shevchenko to have risen within nine years from the status of a serf to a lectureship in drawing at Kiev university, and his record as an artist was far from insignificant. But as Belinsky was a literary critic, not a critic of the fine arts, it was Shevchenko's work as a writer which mainly attracted his attention. The first of Shevchenko's writings to be published was a collection of poems called Kobzar ('The Minstrel').33 It was passed by the censor on 12 February 1840 and appeared in print shortly afterwards. The first reviews of Kobzar came out early in May. They all acknowledged and acclaimed Shevchenko's talent as a poet, but differed in their attitudes towards the Ukrainian language as a literary medium. Belinsky, who had been a regular contributor to Otechestvennyye zapiski since August 1839, was apparently not given Kobzar to review. But he must have read the

B, V, p. 602.
 Bashutsky, op. cit., 13, [St Petersburg, 1842?], consisting of H. F. Kvitka-Osnov'yanen-

ko's story 'Znakhar''.

28 B, VI, p. 497.

29 N. Polevoy, Russkiye polkovodtsy, ili zhizn' rossiyskikh polkovodtsev..., St Petersburg, 1845.

'The portraits, drawn by the well-known artist, T. H. Shevchenko, . . . were engraved on steel by the famous English engraver Robinson, and printed in London.' (*Ibid.*, p. x.). Some of the portraits are initialled 'H. R.', i.e. John Henry Robinson, R.A. (1796–1871), who gained eminence in his profession (W. Sandby, *The History of the Royal Academy of Arts*, II, London, 1862, p. 356; S. Lee (ed.), *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 49, London, 1897, pp. 29-30). 30 B, IX, p. 131.

³¹ When reviewing Sto russkikh literatorov, II, (publ. by A. Smirdin, St Petersburg, 1841), Belinsky said of N. I. Nadezhdin's story: "Sila voli" is told in a clever, but cold and colourless way', and then mentioned that 'The picture accompanying Mr Nadezhdin's story is bad' («Сила воли» рассказана умно, но холодно и бесцветно . . . Картинка, приложенная к повести г. Надеждина, плоха) (B, V, р. 214). Shevchenko contributed to this volume only one illustration (facing p. 399), with which he is credited in the list preceding p. 1. Belinsky's comment on Shevchenko's illustration is thus distorted by D. Kosaryk: 'The critic expressed himself negatively about the work itself [i.e. Nadezhdin's story], but he commended Shevchenko's illustration to it' (Zhyttya i diyal'nist' T. Shevchenka.

Literaturna khronika, Kiev, 1955, p. 41).

32 Reviews of N. Polevoy, Istoriya . . . grafa Suvorova Rymnikskogo (two editions, St Petersburg, 1843), in B, VI, p. 562, and VIII, pp. 18–19.

33 T. Shevchenko, Kobzar, St Petersburg, 1840, 114 pp.

favourable anonymous review which Otechestvennyye zapiski published and possibly some or all of the six reviews which appeared elsewhere.

Several of Shevchenko's poems,34 apparently of an earlier date, were published in 1841 in Hrebinka's collection Lastivka which included works by more than a dozen authors. 35 This Belinsky reviewed in June 1841.36 It is noteworthy that he did not praise or criticise by name any of the authors included in Lastivka. Instead he argued at length that a Ukrainian literature ought not to exist, and that writers of Ukrainian origin ought not to write in their native language. At the very end of his review he gave two random quotations which were obviously meant to be taken as typical of the book as a whole. At any rate he neither said nor implied that they were drawn from contributions which were better or worse than the rest.37

Shevchenko's next work to appear was the historical poem Haydamaky which came out in full in April 1842.38 Belinsky may have read one chapter of it in 1841,39 and he reviewed the full version in May 1842.40 The tone of his review was such that when S. A. Vengerov reprinted it for the first time41 in 1904 in his edition of Belinsky's collected works he felt driven to comment: 'In the present notice Belinsky does not have even the remotest idea of the fact that he is deriding one of the greatest poets of the whole of Slavdom.'42 It is also described as 'erroneous' or 'unjust' even by Belinsky's most ardent admirers of today.

IV

In 1939 V. S. Spiridonov advanced the view that Belinsky was the author of the anonymous review of Shevchenko's Kobzar which appeared in Otechestvennyye zapiski in May 1840. He based this opinion on an analysis of the language and style of the review. 43 As editor of the last

34 The earliest extant poem 'Prychynna', 'Vitre buynyy', 'Na vichnu pam'yat' Kotlya-revs'komu', 'Teche voda', and the first chapter of Haydamaky ('Halayda').

35 Ye. Grebenka [Hrebinka] (ed.), Lastivka. Sochineniya na malorossiyskom yazyke, St Peters-

burg, 1841, 382 pp.

36 B, V, pp. 176-9.

37 F. Ya. Priyma (B, V, p. 800) unconvincingly argues that Belinsky criticised just the two authors quoted (i.e. Hrebinka and Kvitka-Osnov'yanenko).

38 Shevchenko, Haydamaky. Poema, St Petersburg, 1841.

39 See footnote 34 above.

⁴⁰ B, VI, pp. 172-4.
⁴¹ Though it had been quoted and referred to more than once, e.g. at length in A. N. Pypin, Belinsky, yego zhizn' i perepiska, II, St Petersburg, 1876, pp. 223-4, 2nd ed., 1908, pp.

472-3.

42 Belinsky, Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy v dvenadtsati tomakh, VII, St Petersburg, 1904, p. 595,

42 Belinsky, Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy v dvenadtsati tomakh, VII, St Petersburg, 1904, p. 595, note 130. Among the recent commentators, Ye. I. Kiyko suggests that 'Belinsky's opinion of T. H. Shevchenko is unjust and is to a considerable degree explained by the fact that Belinsky was little acquainted with his works' (B, VI, p. 731, note 1723). This can hardly be disputed; Belinsky apparently did not read Kobzar and probably did not pay much attention to Shevchenko's poems in Lastivka (in the review of which he implied that nobody 'will have enough patience to read through the whole book. . .' [B, V, p. 178]; however, he later im-

plied in a letter [B, XII, p. 62] that he had read through it).

43 V. S. Spiridonov, 'Neizvestnaya retsenziya Belinskogo o "Kobzare" ' (Literaturnaya

gazeta, Moscow, 5 March 1939, No. 13).

two volumes of the Vengerov edition of Belinsky's collected works, Spiridonov wanted to include the review of Kobzar among the material published in volume XIII. But the appointed 'readers' (рецензенты) of the proposed volume found that his arguments for Belinsky's authorship were not sufficiently convincing, and the review was omitted when volume XIII appeared in 1948.44 The decision to omit it may have been taken in the first half of 1947. But on 13 June 1947 Spiridonov could still write to Kosaryk: 'I continue to think that the author of the Kobzar review is Belinsky'.45

In 1953, when Spiridonov was already dead, F. Ya. Priyma read a paper at a conference in Kiev which developed Spiridonov's arguments and added some of his own.46 Priyma was 'chief reader' (контрольный рецензент) of the new edition of Belinsky's works which appeared in thirteen volumes between 1953 and 1959. He dealt with all the volumes except volumes VI,47 IX, and XII and also supplied commentaries to some of the material in them. This probably explains why volume IV of the new edition included the review of Kobzar with Priyma's own comments which repeated the arguments expressed in his paper to the Kiev conference. 48 Priyma similarly expounded his case for Belinsky's authorship of the review of Kobzar in an article published in 1954 which also saw the publication of volume IV of the new edition of Belinsky's works. 49 Since then, whenever it has been appropriate, all publications on Shevchenko appearing in the Ukrainian S.S.R. have contained references to, or quotations from, the anonymous Kobzar review which is now firmly attributed to Belinsky. 49a One result is that critics have come to treat the thesis of Shevchenko's dependence on Belinsky as almost axiomatic. But they still have to explain away Belinsky's review of Haydamaky and his well-known letter to Annenkov after Shevchenko's banishment to Central Asia. Both have recently been republished and can no longer be passed over as if they had never been written.50

The view that Belinsky wrote the anonymous review of Kobzar published by Otechestvennyye zapiski has not gone unchallenged even in the Soviet Union outside the Ukrainian S.S.R. As has already been

⁴⁴ B. IV, pp. 625-6, note 1711.
45 D. Kosaryk op. cit., p. 38, note.
46 F. Ya. Priyma, 'Retsenziya V. G. Belinskoho na "Kobzar" 1840 r.' (Zbirnyk prats' pershoyi i druhoyi naukovykh shevchenkivs'kykh konferentsiy, Kiev, 1954, pp. 61-76).
47 In this volume Kiyko's comment, though manifestly at variance with Priyma's views,

was allowed to pass unchallenged (see footnote 42 above).

⁴⁸ B. IV, pp. 171-2, 606, 625-7, note 1711.
49 Priyma, 'T. H. Shevchenko i russkaya literatura' (Izvestiya AN SSSR, Otdeleniye

literatury i yazyka, XIII, 3, May-June 1954, pp. 221-3).

49a One of the most recent publications is M. P. Komyshanko's Literaturno-krytychne slovo bezsmertnoho kobzarya (Kiev, 1961) in which he states, without any reservations, that 'V. Belinsky in 1840 publishes a favourable review of it (Kobzar) in the pages of the journal Otechestvennyye zapiski' (p. 3). I. V. Lun'yevich, too, unreservedly subscribes to Spiridonov's and Priyma's view in his M. O. Dobrolyubov i ukrayins'ka literatura, Kiev, 1961 (p. 22).

⁵⁰ See footnotes 24 and 40 above.

pointed out, the 'readers' of volume XIII of the Vengerov edition of Belinsky's works rejected it in 1947. Ye. I. Kiyko also seems to disbelieve it,51 while Yu. Oksman openly disagreed with it in a book on Belinsky published in Moscow in 1958.52 Outside the Soviet Union it was challenged by the late M. Hlobenko of Paris in 1953.53 Those who are interested may wish to study the different points of phraseology and style on which Spiridonov and Priyma based their conclusions and the objections to them put forward by Oksman. But it would seem more to the point to compare the opinions which Belinsky expressed in his review of Haydamaky with those to be found in the anonymous review of Kobzar on the one hand and with those which he expressed in his review of Lastivka on the other.54

Belinsky began his review of Haydamaky with the following remark: 'The readers of Otechestvennyye zapiski are familiar with our opinion regarding the works of the so-called Little Russian literature'. This can surely refer only to his review of Lastivka and not to the anonymous review of Kobzar which wholeheartedly supported Shevchenko's right to use Ukrainian.55 The review of Haydamaky went on to assert that Ukrainian literature had no reading public except the authors who wrote in Ukrainian. The review of Lastivka had also taken the same line, while the review of Kobzar had said on the contrary that books in Ukrainian 'of the kind of [Kvitka-] Osnov'yanenko's Lysty do zemlyakiv, or Hrebinka's Prykazky, or Shevchenko's Kateryna,56 which have a moral aim and are written in a language intelligible to every Little Russian, will no doubt bring the greatest benefit to South Russian readers from among the ordinary people'. Belinsky even seems to have intended to challenge this passage from the Kobzar review when he wrote in his review of Haydamaky: 'And if these Messrs "minstrels" (госнода кобзари) think to bring benefit by their "poems" to the lowest class of their compatriots, they are greatly mistaken in this. . . . ' Such an obviously derisive mention of 'minstrels' by Belinsky is also inconsistent with the sympathetic attitude which the Kobzar review had taken towards them. In his review of Haydamaky Belinsky referred scornfully to 'the new attempt at "singings" of Mr Shevchenko, an apparently privileged Little Russian poet', and said that it 'convinces us still more that works of such a kind are published for their authors' own enjoyment and instruction: they seem to have no other public'.

⁵¹ See footnote 42 above.

Yu. Oksman, op. cit., pp. 250, 567-8.
 M. Hlobenko, 'Shevchenko v sovyets'komu literaturoznavstvi' (Zapysky Naukovoho Tovarystva im. Shevchenka, vol. 161, New York-Paris, 1953, pp. 193-200).

⁵⁴ See footnotes 36, 40, and 48 above.
55 Kiyko (B. VI, p. 731, note 1722) also agrees that the reference is to the review of Lastivka.
56 First published in Kobzar, 1840 and again as a separate book in the same year; the latter was also never reviewed by Belinsky. 57 Спиваний, an impossible mock-formation.

This can be interpreted in two different ways. On the one hand it might mean that Belinsky had originally based his opinion on his knowledge of other Ukrainian poets than Shevchenko and had now confirmed it from his reading of Shevchenko's Haydamaky. If so, he could not have read Shevchenko's Kobzar or written the anonymous review of it in Otechestvennyye zapiski. On the other hand it might mean that it was Shevchenko's own earlier poetry on which Belinsky's opinion had first been based. If so, he could not have been responsible for the very different opinion expressed in the anonymous review of Shevchenko's Kobzar in Otechestvennyye zapiski. What seems most likely is that Belinsky had never read Shevchenko's poems until he received Lastivka for review, and that his attitude towards them was negative and was shown by the 'studied silence'58 with which his review passed them over.

Two further points merit attention. The first is that while the anonymous review of Kobzar couples Kvitka-Osnov'yanenko's Lysty and Shevchenko's Kateryna as deserving of praise, Belinsky's review of Haydamaky condemns Shevchenko's poetry but faintly praises Lysty. The second is that Belinsky is known to have developed a negative attitude towards Ukrainian even before the appearance of the anonymous review of Kobzar in May 1840. As Oksman has pointed out, 59 M. S. Shchepkin's daughter, Nadezhda, wrote a letter to Belinsky on 10 April 1840 which significantly began with the words: 'Чи живенькі, чи здоровенькі? (На зло вам начинаю по малороссийски)'.60

V

As Belinsky's review of Lastivka ignored the five poems contributed by Shevchenko, the review which he wrote of Haydamaky must be accounted his first review of Shevchenko's poetic work. It also proved to be his last. When he reviewed Molodyk na 1843 god in December 1843 he made no comment at all on the Ukrainian part which included three of Shevchenko's poems.⁶¹ The reason for his silence was that he now grudgingly admitted that Ukrainian literature was not merely a part of Russian literature. 'After this', he wrote, 'follows the so-called "Little Russian section", which, as not belonging to Russian literature, we pass over in silence'.⁶² Possibly for the same reason he never reviewed the two publications of Shevchenko which appeared in book form in

⁵⁸ Подчеркнутое молчание (to quote Yu. Oksman's comment, op. cit., p. 568).

⁵⁹ Loc. cit.
60 'Are you alive and well? (In order to annoy you, I begin in Little Russian)' (N. L. Brodsky, V. G. Belinsky i vego korrespondenty, Moscow, 1048, p. 282).

Brodsky, V. G. Belinsky i yego korrespondenty, Moscow, 1948, p. 282).

61 I. Betsky (ed.), Molodyk na 1843 god. Ukrainskiy literaturnyy sbornik, II, Khar'kov, 1843. Shevchenko's poems included here were: 'Utoplena'. 'Dumka' ('Tyazhko, vazhko...'), and 'N. Markevychu'.

⁶² B, VIII, p. 34.

1844.63 On the other hand he similarly ignored Shevchenko's poem in Russian, Trizna,64 which also appeared in 1844.

No other works of Shevchenko appeared in book form between 1844 and Belinsky's death in 1848. But in 1844 and 1845 Shevchenko was already writing his greatest revolutionary poems such as 'Son', 'Kavkaz', 'Velykyy l'okh', 'I mertvym, i zhyvym', and 'Zapovit'.65 He collected most of them in a manuscript volume bearing the title Try lita (i.e. the three years 1843-45) which he had naturally no hope of publishing at the time. But they circulated in a large and growing number of manuscript copies among the admirers of his poetry who included his fellow-members of the Brotherhood of Cyril and Methodius, personal friends and acquaintances, and many who had never met him. Shevchenko's passionate revolutionary invectives against the reality of Russiantsarist oppression in the 'prison of peoples' brought the following and final comment from Belinsky in a letter to Annenkov of December 1847: 'I have not read these lampoons, and no-one of my acquaintance has (which fact, by the way, proves that they are by no means malicious but merely flat and stupid). . . . Shevchenko has been banished to the Caucasus as a private. I am not sorry for him; if I had been his judge, I would not have done less'.66

VI

As Belinsky is often said to have influenced Shevchenko, it is important to consider whether Shevchenko adopted Belinsky's views on any major issue. Not surprisingly a basic issue for Shevchenko was always the problem of language on which Belinsky expressed himself very clearly and forcefully. As early as August 1835, soon after the start of his career as a critic, he had dealt with a book in Ukrainian and had noted that it was in 'the purest Little Russian language which is completely inaccessible to us Muscovites (москалей) and therefore deprives us of the possibility of judging it on its merits'.67 In March 1838 he referred even more pointedly to the 'Little Russian dialect' (малороссийское наречие) when he exhorted Kvitka-Osnov'yanenko to follow Gogol''s

⁶³ Shevchenko, Chigirinskiy Kobzar' i Haydamaky. Dve poemy na malorossiyskom yazyke, St Petersburg, 1844 and Hamaliya, St Petersburg, 1844.

⁶⁴ Trizna, [St Petersburg,] 1844.
65 Cf. M. Ohloblyn-Hlobenko, '1845 rik u tvorchosti Shevchenka' in his Istoryko-literaturni statti (Zapysky N. T. Sh., vol. 167), New York-Paris-Munich, 1858, pp. 32-44.
66 B, XII, p. 440. This letter to P. V. Annenkov in Paris was apparently written between 1-10 December 1847 in St Petersburg and sent privately by way of Berlin (probably through A. A. Tuchkov) (Oksman, op. cit., p. 535). Oksman believes that the letter was meant chiefly for his other Paris friends: Herzen, Bakunin, and N. I. Sazonov (Literaturnoye medicates and a C. Manager and a constant that it was Bakunin (referred to in the letter as nasledstvo, vol. 56, Moscow, 1950, p. 217); and that it was Bakunin (referred to in the letter as 'my believing friend') who was interested in Shevchenko's fate (Oksman, op. cit., p. 515; cf. also B, XII, p. 571, note 20).

⁶⁷ Review of I. Matyrenko (pseud. of O. M. Bodyans'ky), Nas'ki ukrayins'ki kazky, Moscow, 1835 (B, I, p. 239).

example and write in Russian. He assured him that if he did he would enjoy much greater fame.68

Belinsky again expressed his views on Ukrainian on three occasions in 1841. The first occasion was in June when he reviewed Lastivka. The second was in August in his review of Snip,69 where he wrote with obvious sarcasm of the 'pure' Little Russian language. He said that he was unable to understand what could be interesting and poetical in stories and poems whose only merit was that they were written in a language 'spoken by no one, except Little Russian plebs (чернь), i.e. muzhiks'. He was also unable to understand why anyone should even want to write for a public which was not literate enough to read books, and he denied that anything which could be called a literature existed.70 The third occasion was in November when Belinsky defined his general attitude towards the poetic achievements of the Slavs. He believed that it was only the Russians, and perhaps also the Czechs, who could boast of a few great and remarkable poets. The rest of the Slavs, such as Bulgars, 71 Serbs, Dalmatians, Illyrians and others, had nothing except their folk poetry which was incapable of rising to the level of artistic poetry. His views about Ukrainian were specific and categoric. 'The literary language of Little Russians', he wrote, 'must be the language of their educated society, namely the Russian language. Even if a great poet should appear in Little Russia, this could only be subject to the condition of his being a Russian poet. . . . A tribe (племя) can only have folk songs, but it cannot have poets, and even less, great poets.' He conluded by saying that Ukrainian could never be a literary language.72

Shevchenko's whole career shows how completely he rejected Belinsky's pronouncements on the language question. He ignored the exhortation to Kvitka-Osnov'yanenko to follow Gogol"s example and write in Russian for greater fame. Instead he continued to write in the language of 'the Little Russian plebs' however incomprehensible Belinsky may have found his wish to do so. More important still, he showed the error of Belinsky's views by the sheer genius of his Ukrainian poetry.

It remains to be considered whether Belinsky's views may still not have influenced the content of Shevchenko's poetry even if they failed to change its Ukrainian form. In this connection it will be useful to examine the attitude of the two writers towards various historical

⁶⁸ B, II, pp. 355-6.

⁶⁹ A. Korsun (ed.), Snip, ukrayins'kyy novorichnyk, Khar'kov, 1841.

⁷¹ It seems that a month earlier he had given the reason for Turkish domination over the Bulgars as 'the historic right, which is might' (B, VI, pp. 343, 749, note 343²), while in September 1842 he addressed the Bulgars in a very patronising and condescending way: 'enlighten yourselves, good Bulgars! Good luck to you! Even write verses, if you cannot help it. . . ' (*B*, VI, p. 343). ⁷² *B*, V, pp. 330-1.

events on which they both commented. The turning-point in the modern history of the Ukraine had been its incorporation into the Muscovite state in 1654. Belinsky was full of praise for Bohdan Khmel'nyts'ky who had been instrumental in bringing it about and described him as 'a hero and a great man in the full meaning of the term', and as 'a great warrior and a great politician' who 'understood that Little Russia was unable to exist as an independent state'. He also believed that as a result of the incorporation 'Little Russia opened her doors to civilisation, enlightenment, the arts, the sciences'. 73 Shevchenko on the other hand always regarded the Ukraine's incorporation into Russia as a disaster and condemned Khmel'nyts'ky for the part which he had played in it. The earliest poem in his manuscript volume *Try lita*, which is entitled 'Rozryta mohyla' and is dated 9 October 1843, makes the Ukraine call Bohdan her 'foolish son' whom she 'would have strangled in his cradle' if she had known the slavery into which his deed would lead her. 74 'Velykyy l'okh', written in 1845, which his deed would lead her. 74 'Velykyy l'okh', written in 1845, also condemns Khmel'nyts'ky's oath of allegiance to Moscow at Pereyaslav. 75 In 'Stoyit' v seli Subotovi' of 21 October 1845 Shevchenko concedes that Khmel'nyts'ky's intentions were directed towards the mutual good of both parties; yet 'It did not come about like this; the dear Muscovites (москалики) plundered whatever they caught sight of'. 76 When Shevchenko again visited his native land after ten years of exile and was passing through Pereyaslav, he bitterly addressed Khmel'nyts'ky as follows in his 'Yakby to ty, Bohdane n'yannyy' dated 18 August 1850. p'yannyy' dated 18 August 1859:

> Amen to thee, O great man! Great, glorious! but not very . . . If you had not been born Or had drowned in drink in your cradle . . . I would not have dragged you through the mud, You, the most glorious one. Amen.77

His attitude towards Khmel'nyts'ky never changed from youth till the end of his life, and in 'Hosea, xiv. Podrazhaniye', written on Christmas Day 1859, he said that God punished the Ukraine first of all for Bohdan,78

Shevchenko also saw Russia's civilising mission in a very different light from that in which Belinsky saw it. He had no illusions about the blessings of enlightenment which Russia was bringing to the peoples of the Caucasus, those 'blind children', or about the arts and crafts they would be privileged to learn from her:

 ⁷³ B, VII, pp. 63-4.
 ⁷⁴ T. Shevchenko, Povne zibrannya tvoriv v desyaty tomakh, I, Kiev, 1939, pp. 225-6.
 ⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 294-5, lines 54-69.
 ⁷⁶ Op. cit., II, Kiev, 1939, p. 283.
 ⁷⁸ Bid., pp. 294-5

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 308.

We are enlightened! what's more, we want
To enlighten others,
To show the sun of truth
To blind children, you know!
We will show you everything (just put
Yourselves in our hands):
How to build prisons,
How to forge fetters,
And how to wear them! . . . and how to plait
Knotted knouts,—
We will teach you everything; just give us
Your blue mountains,
The last ones . . . for we have taken
Both your plains and sea . . .

'Kavkaz' (18 November 1845).⁷⁹

The period of Russian history which always attracted Belinsky most was the age of Peter the Great. He looked on Peter as 'the personified power, the personified ideal of the Russian people'80 who 'pushed Russia into world history with his mighty hand'.81 His creation of St Petersburg was a historical necessity, satisfying the need for 'a new capital on the sea coast which would give us a means of easy and convenient relations with Europe'.82 Not surprisingly Belinsky also glorified Peter's victory over Charles XII at Poltava83 and could even say: 'his equestrian statue on Isakiyevskaya Square is not enough: altars must be erected to him on all the squares and in all the streets of the great tsardom of Russia!'84

But Shevchenko took a very different attitude. In 'Son', written in 1844, he reflected, as he looked at St Petersburg, on the rivers of human blood which had been spilled in the building of it, and he made the spirit of Hetman Polubotok accuse Peter of filling the marshes with the bones of Cossacks and building his capital on their tortured bodies. The souls of the Cossacks make even worse accusations. As Shevchenko contemplates the famous statue of Peter, he sees how the tsar 'stretches out his arm as if he wants to seize the whole world'; he reminds his readers that it is Peter 'who crucified our Ukraine' and tells them that he is accursed, an insatiable serpent, an evil hangman, a cannibal.⁸⁵ His attitude towards Peter never changed, and even in 1859 he still described him as 'the rabid Peter'.⁸⁶ He regarded Peter's victory at

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    79 Op. cit., I, pp. 328-9.
    81 B, III, p. 500.
    82 B, X, p. 14.
    84 B, V, p. 137.
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⁸³ B, V, p. 150, VII, p. 418 IX, p. 441.

84 B, V, p. 137.

85 Shevchenko, Povne zibrannya. . .., I, pp. 249-51.

86 'Hosea, xiv. Podrazhaniye' (op. cit., II, p. 308). A contemporary attests Shevchenko's violent outbursts, clad in poetic form, against Peter I, addressed to his immense clay statue in the Academy's casting yard (about 1858) (M. Mikeshyn, 'Spomynky pro Shevchenka' in Shevchenko, Kobzar, I, Prague, 1876, p. xx, as quoted in Biohrafiya Shevchenka etc., p. 228); cf. also J. Bojko, 'Taras Shevchenko' (Slavonic and East European Review, XXXIV, 82, London, 1955, pp. 77-98).

Poltava as the Ukraine's disaster which brought her even greater tribulations:87

Minstrels told us
Of wars and fighting,
Of hard, evil times,
Of cruel trials
Inflicted upon us by the Poles,—
They told us everything.
But what happened after the Swede's time!
Even they got frightened,
Blind unfortunates.
So much did the voivodes,
Peter's hounds,
Tear and worry her . . .
'Irzhavets' (1847–14 March 1858).

In Shevchenko's view the disaster would have been averted if only the Ukrainian leaders, Mazeppa and Semen Paliy, had been united.⁸⁸

It is often said that it was Belinsky's ideas which inspired Shevchen-ko's revolutionary ardour. But *Haydamaky*, which was the first of Shevchenko's poems to express revolutionary ideas, met with Belinsky's open hostility. Shevchenko's subsequent views were always characterised by his condemnation of Russian conquest and subjugation of other peoples and by calls to revolutionary struggle for national liberation. Belinsky on the other hand always expressed his wholehearted approval of Russia's imperial expansion.

VII

From what has been said it seems clear that the reasons for Belinsky's hostility towards Shevchenko can hardly have been personal, since the two men were not closely acquainted with each other and Belinsky was fair to Shevchenko as an artist. At the same time it has to be remembered that Belinsky described Shevchenko as 'an ass, fool and poshlets, and a desperate drunkard into the bargain, a brandy lover out of Khokhol patriotism. This Khokhol radical. . . . '89 This repetition of the pejorative Khokhol seems significant. For all his intellectual considerations of 'humanity in general' Belinsky appears to have had an instinctive dislike of things foreign, particularly of languages which he did not understand: for example he asked in a letter that Herzen 'should not use Latin proverbs any more, which I cannot tolerate, like anything in languages foreign to me'. 90 He was also greatly irritated when people

^{87 &#}x27;Velykyy l'okh', lines 70-133, 252-72 (Shevchenko, Povne zibrannya. . . , I, pp. 295-6, 300-1).

^{88 &#}x27;Írzhavets'', lines 6-14, 51-74 (op. cit.. II, pp. 25-7).

⁸⁹ See footnote 24 above.

⁹⁰ B, XI, p. 517.

who appeared to be perfectly capable of writing in good Russian stubbornly produced a 'non-existent literature' in a 'language that nobody spoke'. His disdain for Ukrainian was that of a member of a master race for the language of a subject people who had to be assimilated and whose language had to disappear: he maintained that Ukrainian was 'spoken by no one, except Little Russian plebs, i.e. muzhiks'. 'Even less do we understand', he continued in his review of Snip, 'your desire to write for a public which reads no books at all because it is hardly literate.' It does not seem ever to have occurred to him that the 'Little Russian plebs' might have had some desire for education. His attitude should not be misinterpreted as merely that of an aristocrat towards the plebs: when Gogol' expressed similar views about the Russian muzhik,91 Belinsky immediately and most severely lectured him on the striving of the Russian common people (now простой народ, not чернь) towards, and their deep need for, literacy and learning.92

The information about Shevchenko which Belinsky supplied to Bakunin through Annenkov at Bakunin's request indicates the extent of his antipathy towards Shevchenko.93 Oksman has found that almost the whole of it was derived from a secret report from Count A. F. Orlov to Nicholas I. He considers that the real author of the report was M. M. Popov, a former teacher of Belinsky, who had become a senior official for special duties in the Third Department and took an important part in the conduct of Shevchenko's case.94 It seems very strange that Belinsky should not have turned for information to his own friends and those of Shevchenko, but should have relied instead on sources serving the Third Department,95 especially as he himself was not in the department's good books. His flat had been searched for papers in his absence as early as 183696 and only two months after his letter to Annenkov, when he received an official note from Popov to say that Dubelt, the chief of the department, wished to meet him,97 he excused himself on the grounds of ill-health, expected a search and arrest, and immediately proceeded to burn everything which might be politically compromising.98 In 1842 when Kukol'nik, who was one of Belinsky's pet aversions, ran foul of the Third Department for one of his stories,99

^{91 &#}x27;It is really nonsense to teach the muzhik to read and write (Грамоте) in order to enable him to read stupid brochures published for the people by European philanthropists. . . . Actually, he has no need to know whether any other books exist apart from the sacred ones' (N. Gogol', Vybrannyye mesta iz perepiski s druz'yami, St Petersburg, 1847, pp. 161-2).

⁹² B, X, pp. 69-70, 216. 93 See footnote 66 above.

⁹⁴ Literaturnoye nasledstvo, vol. 56, Moscow, 1950, pp. 245, 249, notes 60, 110.
95 Oksman, op. cit., p. 523; B, XII, p. 571, note 21.
96 M. Lemke, Nikolayevskiye zhandarmy i literatura, 1826–1855 gg., Moscow, 1908, pp. 416, 423; V. S. Nechayeva, V. G. Belinsky (1829–1836), [Leningrad], 1954, pp. 399–400, 482; Literaturnoye nasledstvo, vol. cit., p. 202.

⁹⁷ Russkaya starina, vol. 34, 1882, p. 434; Byloye, I, St Petersburg, 1906, x, p. 285.
98 B, XII, p. 469; N. A. Nekrasov, Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy i pisem, X, Moscow, 1952, p.
99 Russkaya starina, III, 1871, pp. 793-4. 124.

Belinsky sympathised with him and referred to the action of the department as 'the increase of the censorship terror'. This makes it all the stranger that he should not only have uncritically accepted the Third Department's version of the Shevchenko case, but should have expressed wholehearted approval of the verdict.

The explanation seems to lie in the differences in the literary and political views of the two men. Belinsky denied the possibility of the development of literatures among other Slavs, and he condemned Ukrainian in particular to total disappearance as a natural consequence of the Ukraine's incorporation into the Russian empire, of whose expansion and growth he was always a most enthusiastic supporter. Shevchenko on the other hand successfully used in his poetry the language which Belinsky wished to see disappear and saw nothing but disaster for his native country as a result of her incorporation into, and continued retention within, the Russian empire. Belinsky had no first-hand knowledge of Shevchenko's revolutionary works, but he must have known about his ideas from hearsay since he classed Shevchenko with P. Kulish ('a Khokhol liberal'), to whom he attributed the opinion that 'Little Russia must either secede from Russia or perish'.101 As Belinsky wholeheartedly approved of Russian imperial expansion, he was naturally on the side of the government in this matter and therefore supported the Third Department's efforts to suppress Ukrainian nationalism,102 however disgusted he may have been by its activities in other directions.

¹⁰⁰ B, XII, p. 103. 101 B, XII, p. 441.

^{102 &#}x27;How can one complain about the government? What government will permit the preaching in print of the secession of a region from it?' (loc. cit.).

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