



TREASURES
OF THE
CENTURIES

SOPHIA HAEVSKA

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Народним і ненародним
присвячую
Софія Гавська

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**TREASURES
OF
THE CENTURIES**

Published by

The Ukrainian Free University Foundation

New York - Denver

- 1981 -

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--- Printed in the U.S.A. ---

“Art for the eyes and melody for the heart.”

* * *

Remembering the glory of the rebirth of our Ukrainian Republic in 1918, I dedicate this book to the people and to the Government of the United States of America. They have done more for ordinary human happiness than any other nation in the history of the world, pouring out their treasures to help less fortunate countries. The United States of America achieved these accomplishments not with chauvinism but as representatives of us all. It fulfills aspirations that nearly all of us share. The great asset of this country is the interwoven tapestry of cultures. I love America because it taught me how to cherish and appreciate liberty and justice, equality and brotherhood.

S. H.

. . .

Down in the southeastern part of Europe is a land filled with treasures--the land of Ukraine whose treasure is folklore. It is as colorful as rubies, as gay as diamonds, as melancholy as onyx, and as lovely as pearls.

A treasure of songs, poetry, and of dance which has survived the ceaseless march of the centuries. Dip your hands into these treasures and you have melodies the ancients sang. Folklore handed down from father to son--songs which run the gamut of human emotions: love, fear, hate, gaiety, sadness. You hear in these songs the exultant cry of the fierce Cossack as he rides forth to battle against his country's oppressors; the weeping of the maiden he leaves behind; the anguish of the old mother. In other songs you hear the quiet joy of the Ukrainian peasant as he tills his field beneath the indescribable blue of the Ukrainian sky--a lively maiden coquetting with her lover. But in others there is no joy or gaiety, only the somber song of a people protesting their yoke of slavery.

This folklore will whirl you into a land of exotic color, poignant yearning and unforgotten music and poetry.

. . .

A BROKEN HERITAGE

I had never seen our father so agitated, exhausted, and depressed. Mother was petrified with apprehension. She just stood at the table, forgetting the supper which she usually served to Father when he came home after long hours of work. We children were clustered in the corner holding our breaths, terrified.

“Our mill has burned!” Gone! What could Father do now? How could Mother manage to feed our large family and provide clothes for the children without any income?

Our mill had been a worry to our parents for some time. We had heard about all its misfortunes ever since the new, large mill had been built on the river by the newcomer from Muscovy.

This foreign Muscovite spoke only the language of “genteel society” and belonged to the ruling class. Business matters, local government disputes, and trade arrangements were always decided in his favor.

“How did he know about our fire insurance? It is only three days since it expired. If only I had had the money in time. How can we survive?”

But we did survive. Delicious vegetables from the garden that was our parents’ pride, fruits from the orchard, occasional fowl from our coops, and fish from the nearby river provided the family with enough to eat. Precious eggs were exchanged for sugar, salt, kerosene, and other necessities.

Since there was no money for a watchman and the mill had to be rebuilt as soon as possible, our father slept there after the fire; and my brother and I brought his meals to him. It took us more than an hour to walk there. It was tiresome in hot weather, but we enjoyed the walk much more than weeding the garden and collecting the

caterpillars from the apple and pear trees. We did not like to walk by the big houses surrounded by beautiful shrubbery and flowers on the main street where local gentry lived. Their children were our schoolmates, but they played with expensive toys and thought themselves very grand. We tried not to hear their sarcastic remarks and hid our covered food basket as we passed.

We looked forward to reaching the open road lined on both sides by huge linden trees. The old people said that they were planted by local serfs at the order of Count Potemkin shortly after the Russians had subjugated the people of this southern region. Many of those old trees were in the prime of their lives, stretching their luscious branches up to the middle of the wide road to meet their equals from the opposite side.

On one previous occasion in happier times, on the way to the mill, my brother and I were lying on our backs in the cart while our father sat in the front with the driver. We watched the huge linden tree branches arching over us against a magnificent blue sky. The grandeur of forms and designs, the thrill of their changing shapes, and their beauty overwhelmed me. “Look at that,” I whispered, “doesn’t it look like a cupola in our church?” We lay there absorbed in the vast cathedral moving above us. It seemed to offer God’s consolation and tranquility to our troubled lives.

Our mother often reminded us to walk on the side of the road, so we did. The fields smiled to the sun with their radiant green colors. The crops bowed to one or the other side like waves. The bees industriously buzzed in the buckwheat fields. The air was deliciously scented by the sun, winds, and earth. Above all this, the skylark was singing in the sky.

“How magnificent is a summer day in Ukraine.”

“How intoxicating,” my brother interrupted me. “The towering oaks stand--”

“They are not oaks,” I said. “They are linden trees.”

We mimicked phrases of Nicolai Gogol’s description of a summer day in Ukraine that we had heard when our older sister Larisa was memorizing them for her homework assignment.

How intoxicating, how magnificent is a summer day in Ukraine! How luxuriously warm it is when midday glitters in stillness and sultry heat, and the blue expanse of sky, arching like a voluptuous cupola, seems to be slumbering, bathed in languor, clasping the fair earth and holding it close in its eternal embrace. Above not a cloud, below not a sound. Everything seems still except in the airy heights above where a lark is trilling and the silvery notes tinkle down upon the adoring earth. From time to time the cry of a gull or the piping of a quail sounds in the steppe. The towering oaks stand, lazy and carefree, like aimless wayfarers; and the dazzling gleams of sunshine light up picturesque masses of leaves while casting on to others a shadow black as night but flecked with gold when the wind blows. Like sparks of emerald, topaz, and ruby, the insects of the air flit about the gay kitchen gardens topped by stately sunflowers. Grey haystacks and golden sheaves of corn dot the plain and stray over its immensity. The broad branches of cherry, plum, apple, and pear trees bend under their load of fruit; the sky is a mirror; the river is set in a green, proudly erect frame. How full of voluptuousness and languor is the Ukrainian summer!

There is a legend about the skylark. God felt compassion for the first tiller. He took a lump of soil in his hand, threw it up in the sky, and the skylark was born. Singing happily, it brought enlightenment and joy to the tiller.

Delicious air and the bright colors of fields, trees, and flowers filled our souls with happiness. We joyously sang songs to the rhythm of our walk. We were approaching a village which we always admired for its beauty. I started to sing my beloved song. My brother joined me with his alto. Two women passing by smilingly praised our singing. We raised our voices even more.

In the distance a cluster of trees and shrubbery came into sight. It was the cemetery. In ten more minutes we would come to our mill. Our happy mood subsided. We were tired. "Let's sing the 'Hobo Song'" said my brother. This was a new song that we had learned recently from Michael, a man who worked for our father. Our mother advised us not to sing this song because we would be punished if Father heard it. Poor Father! He insisted we speak, act, and think only Russian. The fire had burned out more than our

mill; it had burned out my father's stubborn Ukrainian will to resist. We obeyed him.

I had no way of knowing then the long road I would follow before being free to express my heritage. That bright day my brother and I only knew that there was something mysterious and forbidden about the "Hobo Song." Why didn't hoboos live in houses like everybody else? What was Ukraine? Who was Catherine, and why did they curse her? Michael had told us that the real name of our country is Ukraine. Our people are Ukraininas. The Muscovites subjugated us by force. The Great Czarina Catherine forced our men into military service and turned our peasants into slaves. In order to avoid this hardship and escape oppression, many people left their families and homes. Ukrainian serfs had to work for Muscovites, and all the riches of our land went to the tsar's nobility.

The centuries-old linden trees born in sorrow witnessed all this hardship and misery. Our song kept the tragic events alive.

HOBO SONG

*Many hoboos in the house secretly are gathered.
Let us sing together softly
A song that we so cherish.
Play Mykola on Bandura
When we sit in sadness.
Tell what happened in Ukraine
And whose people are they.
Catherine, Catherine devil's daughter.
What did you do to the country?
Land of liberty and beauty
It lays now in ruins.
Ah, Muscovites, Muscovites
The heretic people
You brought slavery and ruin
To the Ukrainian glory.*

* * *

When we reached the mill, Father and the carpenters were replacing the burned wooden parts with new ones. The roof was replaced already. We sat in Father's office while he ate his lukewarm dinner. Then he resumed his work, sending us outside to

the river. This was our best reward. We liked to go in the boat to where the water lillies grew. There were so many of them. Their reflection intermingled with that of the tall willows in the calm water. Behind the trees, peasant girls were working. Their song was like sunshine, young and fresh and full of hope.*

The summer vacation passed industriously. We helped Mother with the household, carrying food to our father and bringing water from the nearby well to the house. Although the work was sometimes tiresome, we did not look forward to the start of school. Everything was cold and different there. Our parents could not afford good clothes for us, and we were embarrassed in front of our arrogant gentry classmates. Our teachers spoke only Russian. Very often we did not understand them. We hesitated to answer questions because Russian children laughed at our pronunciation and Ukrainian words. Our homework was overwhelming! Besides grammar, arithmetic, and penmanship every day, we had to memorize long Russian poems and copy the prose of numerous Russian poets and writers. We had to be good students. Our father told us that only a Russian education could help us succeed in life without such hardships as he had experienced.

Late in the evenings we used to sit around the big table with the kerosene lamp in the middle. We studied poetry we did not really understand. Sometimes Mother had to carry my sleeping brother and me to bed. Periodically Father checked with the teachers on our school work. Our report cards were never good enough for Father. We had little time for play. Games, good food, and proper clothes were only for the Russian speaking aristocracy.

After the fire we never regained prosperity. Father lost to his competitor the big orders that were the basis of his income. With great difficulty he met all his obligations and debts, but the hardship ruined the health of our mother. We tried to help her, bringing in all the firewood from the yard, carrying the dirty water out to the ditch at the far corner of our barnyard, and helping her with the washing. We did not let her do any outside work. With our big family and household, she needed a domestic helper badly. She

*"Willows by the River", **Music The Universal Language**, p. 10

struggled, suffered pain silently, but finally could not get up from bed. She died after a short illness. We children were left like orphans. The business kept our father at the mill most of the time. My teenage sister Larisa did the housework. We missed our mother terribly. It was the usual thing to see one of us crying quietly in some dark corner. Once I saw our father weeping in the garden.

Not long after Mother's death, I became very ill. I had very thick, long hair. My scalp was covered with open sores. Larisa was busy with the household duties and did not have time to give me extra care. The doctor said I needed a special nutritious diet and cod liver oil. The pills were not available at that time. The oil was very smelly, and I could not keep it in my stomach. My oldest married sister, Matrona, invited me to her house and took care of me. One morning I awoke rested, refreshed, and almost healed. Matrona was crying at my bedside. She kissed me and told me that Mother had come to her during the night and thanked her for her care of me.

I was happy in her house and gained health rapidly. Matrona treated me as her own child with all her kindness and consideration. From then on her house was my home. Her children were my responsibilities as well as hers. My favorite was her older son, Dimitry. Dimitry wanted to be a doctor, and I wanted to do everything possible to help him with his education. Many years have passed, and I still remember with despair how fate cruelly laughed at our dreams.

Summers and winters passed in sorrow. We worried about our father. He looked sick and oppressed. Our friends and relatives advised him to place his younger children with other members of his family. Larisa was getting married. I was enrolled in normal school for the girls and lived in a dormitory. After three years of ceaseless labor and heartbreak, Father joined our mother in everlasting peace.

Our normal school was under the patronage of the Church. Its aim was to prepare us for teaching in village schools connected with the Church. We did not have much science, mathematics, world history, geography, or literature. The main subjects were Old

Slavonic language in which the church books were written and Russian language, literature, history, and culture. Russian patriotism was stressed in every subject, even in prayer. We sang Russian hymns every day before and after classes and on every occasion and enterprise. The Russian tsar for us was more important than God. We were condemned to speak only Russian. We were constantly reminded that the Ukrainian language was barbaric and uncultured. Long live Holy Tsar, Holy Mother Russia and its Russian language and culture! We were to be good, patriotic Russian teachers.

Singing was our escape in this tedious, rigid life. We all knew many Ukrainian songs but had to sing them softly outside so that our teachers would not hear. Our choir was our joy. We learned to sing and love church music. Our singing gave release to all our frustrations and worries. Our passion prayers were full of sadness, but the Easter songs were happy and joyous. "Angels Were Singing" was my favorite. Two of my friends and I sang it as a trio. We called my friend Nina "Angel" because her voice in that trio sounded so sweet and softly divine. We felt that her voice lifted to heaven and joined the angels in praising God's resurrection.

We all loved Nina. She was the pride of our school. She was helpful and considerate to everyone. Besides her school work, she was always reading booklets on first aid, agriculture, gardening, and all sorts of things. Her mother was a servant in a Russian family. Nina had a partial scholarship because her father was killed in the Russian war with Japan. "My mother will live with me when I am a teacher," she used to say. "I know I'll be a good one. I love children." Her eyes sparkled radiantly. "I will make friends with everyone in the village. I will study in the evenings, and perhaps some day I will pass an entrance exam and enroll in the university."

We all were excited about our teaching. We wanted to help people. We had been convinced that we could best serve by teaching our students Russian culture and good citizenship under omnipotent Holy Mother Russia. All our education and training was based on that.

Thanks to my voice, I was assigned to a village near my hometown. The priest wanted to have a teacher with a good voice

who could conduct a church choir. I was able to visit my sister Matrona frequently. She consoled me in my worries and advised me in my problems. Best of all, Matrona gave me a girl, Olga, who had worked in her household for a few years. It was a beautiful arrangement. When I was in class teaching, Olga prepared our meals, straightened up our apartment, and took care of my clothes. After school she cleaned two classrooms. Often Olga was outspoken, temperamental, and patronizing; but she was a good friend. Most importantly, Olga brought back to me the living Ukraine from which I had been so long estranged. In the evening I usually visited Father Orest's family. His wife was an accomplished pianist, and I liked to listen to her play. The priest had a good voice, musical knowledge, and a big musical library. Our evenings were spent in singing church music, and I learned several new compositions. Sometimes we sang one piece many times, exploring many shades of meaning which the composer attributed to the words of praise. Our favorite composers were Artem Vedel, Dimitri Bortniansky, Peter Tschaikowsky. Their compositions were the most beautiful and expressive in words and music.

Father Orest had a wonderful "feeling for music." He understood and loved it. In exultation he used to say how the high poetic genius of the Russian people gave us such wonderful composers. He believed this; and, knowing no better, I believed it, too. We used to have rehearsal with our church choir in Father Orest's study. At the beginning I relied heavily on his advice and instructions.

A few years later, I learned that all our favorite composers were of Ukrainian origin. For instance, Tschaikowsky's family came from Polish Ukraine, and Artem Vedel was born in Kiev. Vedel's love for the oppressed is reflected in his choice of themes for his concertos. "Upon the River of Babylon" illustrates the mood of an oppressed nation. He was a faithful son to his subdued nation and a victim of the oppressive tsarist regime. These composers transformed vocal and instrumental melodies which were created in the remote past, and are still being created and live in the oral tradition of the Ukrainian people. They turned again and again to the folk music and arranged the folk melodies in various artistic ways and styles.

I was very busy, but for some reason it seemed impossible to establish a friendly relationship with the children and peasants. I was trying to learn their beautiful folk songs. They had ritual celebrations based on the folk calendar, which I had not been taught, deeply imbedded in their family life. My family life had been sternly patterned after our Russian overlords. Certain church rites were connected with popular customs, reflecting the close relationship between the church and peasants. Olga opened this door to me. I remember after St. Andrew's Day, she laughingly informed me that she would get married before the end of the year. She had attended a party where a guest was telling fortunes with little cakes. Her fortune was matrimony. She could hardly speak from laughter as she told me about it. Laugh as she did, she still set about the task of embroidering a wedding blouse. It is customary, she reminded me, for eligible girls to prepare a dowry, just in case.

To cooperate, I started a tablecloth. In the evening, when the work was done, we sat together in the lamplight with our embroidery. My tablecloth proceeded slowly as I was captivated by Olga's narratives and stories. Through them I lived by proxy and began to perceive a life that had been all around me all my life but from which I was estranged because of my Russian education.

I had known that both the gentry and peasants attended church services and gave presents on St. Nicholas' Day. I discovered that St. Nicholas guards not only the orphans and the poor but also all of the animals belonging to the peasants.

Through Olga's stories, I rode on a sleigh filled with gifts, singing ancient carols while the snow softly fell around us. I ate the holy supper of twelve dishes, containing no meat or milk but the fruits of the earth. In my imagination I dipped into even older rituals and placed three spoonfuls of each food on a special plate for the souls of forgotten ancestors. I listened very quietly and attentively to her description of the merriment and gay fortune-telling on New Year's Eve. My poor tablecloth. Would I ever finish it?

There was a pile of papers and boxes in the corner of the kitchen. "Why don't you throw them away?" I asked Olga. She began to laugh and did not say anything. Soon I discovered the answer. On

St. Nicholas' Day, which is celebrated with much merriment, she was invited to a party. Boys and girls rode around the village on sleighs and gave gifts to each other. For her friend, Olga had bought a ring. She put it in a small box, wrapped it, and placed this package in larger and larger boxes, wrapping each one. She went to the party with a large package, and her present was a big hit. They were still laughing when the father came in from the backyard where he was feeding the animals. St. Nicholas is good not only to the poor but also the animals. They are treated with good food and care on his day.

We felt a pleasant Christmas spirit in the air. We were recalling the numerous Christmas carols, adding words and phrases that reminded us of this joyous time of year. Olga was looking forward to going home for the holiday. Her entire family would be there.

It was a beautiful Christmas Eve. The bright moon and stars were reflecting light like they were diamonds or jewels. The moonlight glistened on the white snow. The voices of children were heard singing everywhere. I was very happy when some of them came to the school to sing for me. I treated them with goodies and money as was customary. They sang Christmas carols that brought a great message of peace.

Olga came back on New Year's Day. She went with the other local girls to wish good health and plentitude to each household. They came to my apartment singing a special carol and wishing me health and happiness while they threw grain on the floor.

On the Feast of Epiphany, after liturgy, all the members of the parish went in solemn procession to the river led by the clergy in their vestments carrying icons. Our choir was singing special prayers for this feast. The frosty air was full of the sounds of singing prayers and ringing bells. The blessing of the water took place at the river. In preparation for the blessing, the young men of the village erected a cross of ice blocks cut from the river and dyed with beet juice. After the water was blessed, everyone took home some of this holy water with which they would bless their households.

Around Easter week the spring cycle of customs begins. Peasants

start their work in the fields. Spring cleaning is done in the homes, and their exteriors are whitewashed. The work is accompanied by spring songs devoted to the greeting of birds which have returned from the warmer climates. In our apartment, Olga went through a careful and thorough spring-cleaning. Nothing was left untouched; my books and notes were even carefully lined up on the shelves.

On Palm Sunday willow boughs are blessed in the church. With these the people tap one another repeating the wish: "Be as tall as the willow, as healthy as the water, as rich as the earth." These rites are related to agriculture, to the memory of the dead, and to the marriage season.

During the weeks preceeding Easter, we held extra rehearsals in expectation of Easter liturgy. The spirit of Easter is reflected in the mood set by the prayers, one of joy and gladness. The spirit of this holy day is kindled by the young people who are colorfully dressed in their native costumes with ribbons, flowers, and wreathes. On Easter "the doors of paradise are opened and the sinful souls are freed from hell." Easter cakes, colorful Easter eggs, and elaborate traditional Easter food are blessed in the church.

There is a legend about the Easter eggs. Once there was a peddler who was taking a basket of eggs to the marketplace. On the way he met an angry crowd mocking a man who was staggering under the weight of a huge cross. This peddler felt sorry for the man and, placing his basket of eggs at the roadside, went to the aid of the man. The man was Christ, and the peddler was Simon. The eggs became the first beautifully ornamented pysanky. "Pysanky" is the Ukrainian name for these colorful eggs that are delicately decorated with religious and other symbols. They are a traditional Easter symbol in Ukraine. The peasants display them at the church and in their homes.

In the afternoon on the church grounds, the girls perform special spring plays with spring songs that symbolize the rebirth of the earth out of winter into a new spring with its promise of new hope, new life, health, and prosperity. With the advent of Christianity, each spring symbolized the Resurrection and its promise for a better world.

We were decorating our pysanky long before Easter. Olga procured for me extra designs which I could copy, and we prepared our dyes. With a very serious expression on her face, she began.

“Hold your egg carefully. Apply the wax to the stylus and heat it on the candle flame. Now make your design on the egg. Any kind you like. I am going to make the ones that my mother taught me.” Then she started to name the different designs.

“Triangle means air, fire and water.
Sun means good fortune.
Chicken means fulfillment of desires.
Deer means wealth and prosperity.
Flower symbolizes love and charity.
Endless line means eternity.”

Her list of names and meanings seemed itself endless.

I became absorbed in the task of doing my first pysanka. Once the design was made with the wax, we dipped it into the lightest color, yellow. After it dried, we covered the parts we wanted yellow with wax. I put wax on the egg in the shape of a triangle, and placed it in the red dye. Those triangles which I wished to have red I then covered with wax. There were not many triangles left uncovered when I put the egg into the black dye. Soon my first pysanka was ready. While I was doing that one, Olga was doing several eggs at once. She applied fir trees for youth and health, roosters, deers, etc. After the eggs were ready, we put them into the oven to melt the wax. My first egg was beautiful. On Easter I presented it to my friend.

The peasants created many art forms which were responsible for their beautiful songs, customs, embroidery, woodcraft, handicraft, and even their beautiful homes with their settings in quaint little villages. This abundance of beauty found in every phase of the peasants' lives I once considered barbaric because of my education and teacher's training.

The embroidery on my tablecloth was proceeding slowly. I sat and listened to Olga's stories about the full life of the peasants,

their brotherly love for the people, and their pure morals which they had retained from their ancestors who created these national and spiritual values.

When we were tired of sitting and doing embroidery, we would dance. Olga said that there were always fun and gaiety whenever the young people gathered together. The girls brought fancy cakes to the gatherings, and the boys ate them. Games were played, and songs were sung; and, of course, no evening was complete without some dancing.

* * *

I was beginning to have deep doubts. I could not talk to Father Orest. He was very concerned because my school children showed slow progress in learning Russian. He advised me to place less emphasis on reading, writing, and arithmetic. Sometimes my heart was aching whenever I looked at those darling frightened eyes of my first graders as they struggled with their memorizations and pronunciations of strange and unknown words. They were afraid of me, and their parents avoided me. To them, I was a stranger, a member of the alien upper-class. It was my Russian education which had set me apart from them. They shunned me now as I had once shunned the gentry in my own childhood.

The embroidery of Olga's blouse proceeded more rapidly than my tablecloth. The design, the aesthetic composition of colors, the wealth of compositional possibilities on it were unlimited. This was a wedding blouse. She was overwhelmed anticipating her future happiness. She elaborated on the wreath that would match her costume; she was speaking of her dowry and her plans for the future.

Weddings were my favorite events. The wedding ritual in Ukraine extends beyond the family and is a festival which embraces the entire village. It is accompanied by ritual songs with wishes to be "as rich as the earth and as healthy as water." The betrothed pair is blessed with bread and salt. After the church wedding, the important part of the ritual takes place. Everyone eats at a great feast, and the wedding cake is brought in with musical

accompaniment. It is distributed to all who are present. The wedding ends with a gay entertainment and dancing that sometimes lasts for a few days.

Frequently, I had watched wedding processions from the window in my room. The colorful costumes were so becoming on the young people. I thought it would be wonderful to be one of them. My wishful thinking turned me to the church choir and to the marriage of the choir's best alto, Christina. She had perfect pitch and always knew her part. She was gifted with the voice of a nightingale that would come soaring out of the chorus if I did not signal her to sing softly. Whenever I think of her, I recall with amusement a little incident that happened in our choir during the church rehearsals.

Christina was conscious of her importance and displeased that I had placed her in the second row behind her girl friend. Once when I was busy sorting some of my music books, she changed her place to the first row. Her girl friend, also a good alto, had insufficient pitch. The singing called for forte. I detected some dissonance in the singing and turned to the altos in the same moment that Christina struck her girl friend in the stomach. She had heard and was annoyed with her girl friend's singing out of tune. At the end of the prayer, I placed her back in the second row. I felt that she had understood the reason that she was placed in the second row initially. Her dedication to the choir never subsided. She was the life of the whole choir, sharpwitted, gay, happy, and amusing. I felt that our friendship was mutual not only in the singing but in general.

Before the wedding, according to the custom, Christina and her maid of honor were visiting her relatives and friends, personally inviting them to the wedding. I waited, excited about their visit. They never came. Hurt and bewildered, I mentioned it to Father Orest. He was surprised that I had expected an invitation. Again and again he emphasized that I should not speak their language with them because it would not help me to abrogate their customs and bring them to the culture of Holy Mother Russia. I did not have any argument for that, but that did not stop me from feeling unhappy. People were polite to me but unfriendly. There was a wall between these villagers and me.

One night my teacher friend and I were walking home after a rehearsal. We were gay, laughing, exchanging our experiences at school and our good times with our friends. The night was dark and cloudy. We did not see or hear anything. Suddenly we heard an angry male voice on the other side of the street, "What the devil are these outsiders doing here?" Our chatter stopped. Softly and slowly we continued home.

Whenever I am full of happy or unhappy emotions; whenever I feel lonely or have a religious feeling; singing is my best salvation and means of expression. Ukrainians turn to songs for expressions of personal, familial, and national feelings and aspirations. Some of our songs are full of vivacity and lighthearted gaiety and colorful incidents taken from the lives of the peasants. Many songs are centuries old and are for all occasions in life--weddings, burials, harvest time, changes of season, and religious observances.

Many of the Ukrainian Christmas carols have secular themes from pre-Christian times. These have a wide range of subjects: hope, harvests, family and household themes, nature, and the seasons. The famous "Carol of the Bells," which the American people sing during the Christmas season, was sung widely in our village.

The songs did not help me that Saturday afternoon, after the incident with the man on the street. I turned instead to my alternate remedy for sorrow, hard manual labor. I did not go to my apartment but decided to put my storeroom library in order. My books and shelves were dusted. I put my school aid material in order and filed them in boxes. I washed the window and the oil cloth on the little table by it.

Behind that window there is a large school yard where my school children play during recess. Very often I prepared my aid materials on that table while watching the children outside. It was very amusing to watch their behavior and their different personalities. I liked to observe my first grade students, especially a vivacious golden haired girl that sat at the end of the first row. Boisterous, gay, and inventive, she always had a good time and was constantly surrounded by her friends. I was amazed at how different she was

outside of class. In class she sat quietly with a timid frightened expression in her beautiful eyes. Watching her from the window, I was reminded of an incident in class concerning this young girl.

Teaching two grades, I usually organized my time accordingly. When my first grade students were doing written exercises, I worked with the fourth grade. At the end of the lesson, I checked my first grade students while the fourth grade students were working independently on their exercises. The students were supposed to raise their hands when they needed my help.

Walking to the first grade side, I saw my favorite girl staring at me, tears on her face and fright in her eyes.

“What happened?” I asked.

The girl next to her said, “She lost her pencil.”

“Why didn’t you tell me about it?”

“She didn’t know how to say it your way,” the other girl responded.

My Russian way is “poteriala karandash.” Her Ukrainian way, which she knew all her life, is “Zahubyla olivets.” How could she remember thousands of different words and expressions that I use and which were unknown to her? This is the reason that the children were shy, frightened, and slow to learn. How could I make the principles of education coincide with the forcing of Russian and its influence on these children. How could I be lenient with the Russian language at school when my superiors reprimanded me for it. How could I speak Ukrainian when even my parents had continually explained to us that in order to be successful we had to be and speak like Russians. They were the ones who had privileges in trade, industry, and government. Why had these honest and hard working people with different customs have to be indoctrinated into the Russian culture? The more I thought about this, the more I became lost in doubts which began to plague me. I began to sing loudly, improvising new melodies and words, and energetically scrubbed the floor.

I did not hear Olga when she came into the school building. I

only realized her presence when I heard a torrent of her scoldings. When this subsided she told me that I had a lady visitor waiting in my apartment. This was a very unusual and desirable event. I left Olga to finish the floor and ran home. Nina! Was it Nina? What happened to her bright, happy, shiny eyes? Where were her rosy cheeks? We fell into each others arms and started to cry. We had the same problems and the same disappointments in our aspirations to dedicate our work to our people whom we were eager to help. Nina's mother was very unhappy. They considered her an outsider, too, because she was the teacher's mother.

The sun went down. We became absorbed in relating our unhappy and depressing experiences. Nina began to sing our favorite song, "Angels." It was a blessed break in our sadness, and a few more songs followed. Olga served us a bountiful supper, and we were happy together and reminisced about better times in the normal school. The next day we bid each other good-bye. My heart was aching. I had a premonition that I would never see her again. A few months later I learned that she died from tuberculosis just when the roses were blooming.

. . .

REVELATION

I had a friend Sasha. We often discussed our problems. He was not hurt by being named an outsider because he was one. He was a native Russian and worked in the municipal government as an agriculturalist. He was a very good person, dedicated to his work of trying to improve methods of agriculture, gardening, and dairying in our locality. It challenged and disturbed him that people were inattentive. They were polite. They agreed with all his experiments and methods of economy but never applied the acquired knowledge to their farming and field work. He realized that his greatest setback was that he did not speak the local language. Very often he felt that peasants did not understand him and he did not understand them.

Once he asked me if I knew of a certain poet by the name of Shevchenko. I had never heard of such a poet. He said there was a big demonstration in Kiev. The students organized meetings to commemorate the anniversary of his birth. This was forbidden by the government, and many people were arrested and imprisoned. His friend sent him a poetry book by Shevchenko, but he could not read it because it was written in the native language of this land. He gave me the book and mentioned that it would be politically unsafe to show this book to anyone. All of these events intrigued me, and I laboriously plunged myself into solving the reading puzzle.

Although the Russian and Ukrainian alphabets are identical, there are a few different letters and many identical letters have different pronunciations. It took me several hours to reconcile my accustomed Russian to this new writing of local language. At the beginning, because of the reading difficulties, I did not appreciate Shevchenko's poetry. I had to read each poem several times. The more I read them, the more appreciative I became of them. I was deeply touched by Shevchenko's philosophy, truth, and meaningful simplicity. I was enchanted by the poems "A Cherry

Grove” and “Shepherd.”

*A cherry grove beside the cottage stands
The beetles hum above the cherry trees,
The ploughmen homeward plod to take their ease,
Young women likewise come in singing bands,
Mothers await them all, with food to please.*

*The family beside the cottage eats;
The evening star is rising in the sky
The daughter helps the supper tasks to ply;
Words of advice the mother's mind repeats
But songs of nightingales her words outvie.*

*Her little folks beside the cottage small
The mother puts to rest in slumber deep,
And she herself beside them falls asleep.
Peace now prevails. But the young women all
And the sweet nightingale no silence keep.*

Shepherd

*I was some thirteen years of age
And pastured lambs without a wage,
Whether the bright sun shone to win me
Or some deep impulse stirred within me,
In such amazing joy I trod
As if in truth I walked with God.*

* * *

*I let the lunch-time summons pass
And lingered in the tall, soft grass,
Praying to God; I know not how
My little heart o'erflowed, I vow,
As in my orisons I knelt.
The sky and thorp my rapture felt;
The lambs, it seemed, rejoiced in turn;
The sun was warm and did not burn.*

The picture presented by this latter poem was enchanting. The poet was sitting in the field, learning, enjoying nature, and meditating. He was like one of my school children. He was not

frightened by his teacher. There is so much beauty in his peaceful writing. Many poems I did not understand, but there were understandable poems that were close to my heart.

*Perhaps my mother prayerless trod
Nor knelt on my behalf to God,
But reared me up to what I am
As simply as a little lamb,
Just murmuring: "Let him grow at length
To manhood, full of health and strength!"
I have, thank God, grown up indeed,
But little value can I plead.
'Twere better I had not been born,
Or had been drowned, a thing of scorn
That I should not, 'mid alien nations,
Offend God with my imprecations.*

* * *

*The days pass by, nights flit away,
The summer's gone, pale leaves a-heap
Are rustling; dreams my eyelids sway,
My thoughts and heart are both asleep.
All things around me sleep--I know not
Whether I live or drowse the while.
By any plan my hours flow not,
No longer do I weep or smile.*

* * *

*Where art Thou, Destiny, ah where?
My soul is stirred by none!
If Thou begrudgest me fair fate,
Lord, send a ruthless one!
Let me not sleep when I should wake;
Do not permit my heart to lie
And leave in fetid infamy;
But on me let fierce fervour fall
To love all people all my days,
Or let me cast a curse on all
And set the torpid world ablaze!*

*Dreadful it is to lie in chains
And die in slavery at last,
Yet worse it is when sleep retains
The free man's spirit overcast,
For all eternity to slumber
And leave behind no sign or trace,
As if his days had borne no number
And there was nothing to efface.*

Where art Thou, Destiny, ah where?
My soul is stirred by none!
If Thou begrudgest me fair fate,
Lord, send a ruthless one!

* * *

The heart grown warm to see it plain,
That village in our own Ukraine--
As gay as any Easter egg:

* * *

No sort of paradise I call
In that dark grove that cottage small
Beside the village's clear pond:
There I can see my mother fond
Who swaddled me and sang a tune
That utter sorrow would commune
With her sad child, and in that grove
That paradisal cot, I'd prove
The depths of hell; bondage was there
And toil that gave no time for prayer.
There my kind mother, young but wan,
Exhausted to her grave had gone,
Worn out with penury and stress;
And there my father's hopelessness
With us, his naked little waifs,
In vain at bitter fortune chafes;
He died a slave; and we, fate-curs'd
Were now in other homes dispersed
Like tiny mice. I went to school,
A flunkey under rich boys' rule;
While all my brothers bore the yoke
Of serfdom to the "gentlefolk,"
Until, by army service pressed,
Their heads were shaved with all the rest.
As for my sisters--you alas,
My precious doves, to sorrow pass!
Who cares if you exist on earth?
In serfdom you are lost in dearth;
In serfdom will your braids turn grey;
In serfdom you will end your day.

I started to read these poems aloud to Olga. She could hardly speak. In surprise and exultation, she reverently took the book from my hand and looked at the print to be convinced that it was written the way I read it. Her Russian reading was poor although she had had four years of Russian schooling. This was customary for many peasants.

The majority of the population of Ukraine under the Russian empire was illiterate. In the light of the Soviet census of 1959, illiteracy had allegedly been erased because 98.5 percent of the entire population was said to be literate.

She did not try to read. She just wanted to listen. The evenings were short for us. The poem “Catherine” was our favorite.

Catherine

*My dark-browed beauties, fall in love,
But love no Muscovite,
For Moscow troopers aliens are,
And court in your despite.
A Moscow trooper loves in jest
And jestingly will leave you;
When he returns to Muscovy,
His parting will deceive you.*

. . .

*Who in the world will sympathize,
Now that your lover's left you?
Even your parents are estranged,
Unfeeling words have cleft you!*

. . .

*"It is quite a wedding we have had!
But tell me, where is the groom?
Where are the candle-bearing maids,
The men who grace the room?
In Muscovy, my daughter dear!
Go there to find him there!*

. . .

*My daughter, O my daughter dear
My child who brought me dole,
Depart from us!"*

. . .

*To bless the girl
The strength Mother scarcely found;
"May God be with you!" And, as dead,
She tumbled to the ground.*

. . .

*And down the street
Went Catherine, weeping;
A kerchief covered up her head;
Her arms the babe were keeping.*

*And where is Katie wandering now?
A hedgerow was her bed;
And rising early in the morn,
Toward Muscovy she sped.*

. . .

*The band of Russians nearer drew,
And all of them were riding.*

. . .

*Their chief comes riding at their head!
"Ivan, my darling true!"*

. . .

He pricks the charges with his spurs.

. . .

*"Why do you run away?
Have you forgot your Catherine?
Can you her face survey?"*

. . .

*Abandon me, forget me quite
But don't your son forego!"*

. . .

*Fled! Gone! The father has disowned
His son, his very son!*

. . .

The Muscovites indifferent passed by.

. . .

*Barefooted through the woods she runs
And waves her arms and screams.*

. . .

Then hurried till the pond she reached.

. . .

"Almighty God, receive my soul!"

. . .

*Then in she leaped. Beneath the ice
A gurgling sound was heard.*

. . .

The dark-browed beauty Catherine,

. . .

*The cold wind blew across the pond
And not a trace remained.*

*What comfort has a bastard child?
What voice will bring relief?
Kinless and homeless, he must face
Hard roads, and sands, and grief.*

The embroidery on my tablecloth was progressing rapidly. Olga considered it only proper to put away her embroidery when I was reading her beloved book and work on my tablecloth which absorbed many tears from her eyes during my reading.

Sasha warned me not to show the book to anybody or to speak about it. It would be unsafe for him and for me. Olga was a good collaborator. She took the book and hid it under her possessions. Nobody in the village knew about our reading. She never recited her beloved verses among her friends. I did not know at that time that this foremost poet of Ukraine was born a serf. At an early age he was orphaned. His personal moods and feelings are reflected in his poetry.

*On Easter Day among the straw
Out in the sun the children played
With Easter eggs in colours braw
And each of them loud boasting made
Of gifts received. One, for the feast,
Was given a shirt with sleeves of white;
One with a ribbon had been pleased,
One with a garment, laced and tight;
This boy was given a lambskin cap,
That one a pair of horsehide boots,
And one a jacket to unwrap.
Only one child among their bruits,
An orphan, has no gift of bliss;
Her hands are hidden in her sleeves.
She hears: "My mother bought me this
"My father got me that." (She grieves).
"My good godmother made a blouse
Embroidered gay with dainty thread."
At last the little orphan said:*

"the priest has fed me at his house."

* * *

World War I was raging on. Father Orest's preaching in the

church was full of patriotism. “We have to dedicate our lives when Holy Mother Russia is in danger. We have to exert ourselves on the farm work when our fathers, husbands, and brothers defend the Motherland on the front. Our heroic army is fighting now in the Carpathian Mountains and winning the war with God’s and our brave soldiers’ help.”

The villagers were in a sad mood. Almost every family had someone wounded or killed on the front. The reserve army was stationed in our villages. It consisted primarily of Russians. They were haughty and audacious.

Many of our capable teachers, agronomists, and cooperative leaders had been killed. It was suspiciously disturbing that they were conscripted into the army front lines and killed intentionally. There was a saying that the army did not have much ammunition but plenty of manpower that was not spared. But why kill our outstanding, dedicated leaders? How were they selected? Several months later, to my profound horror, I found out.

My friend, home on a furlough, told me an unusual story.

On Christmas Eve the Russian and Austrian armies had a truce on the front in the Carpathian Mountains. There were campfires surrounded by soldiers on both sides of the front. Our soldiers started to sing Christmas carols. The melody drifted over to the campfires and across to the enemy front. Our soldiers started the well-known “A New Joy is Born.” Singing began on both sides. The line was broken. Men visited, exchanged their greetings, spoke the same language, related the same problems, but killed each other on opposite sides as Russian or Austrian soldiers during the fighting.

Every Sunday many prayers were said for the dead during liturgy. Each party brought an elaborate fancy loaf of bread which was placed on the tetrapod. After liturgy, this bread was taken to the priest’s home. Sometimes several bags were filled with bread. The best loaves were used by the priest’s family and household, but most of the bread was used as food for chickens, ducks, and pigs. It always made me uneasy to see pigs savouring bread when some school children went hungry without any lunch. It reminded me of

Shevchenko's words:

*It is indifferent to me, if I
Live in Ukraine or live there not at all,
Whether or not men let my memory die;
Here in an alien land, mid snows piled high
It will not matter that such things befall.*

*In serfdom, among strangers was I reared,
And unlamented wholly by my own
In exile I shall die, in grief uncheered,
And to my nameless grave shall pass alone.
No trace of me, alas, will then remain
To see in all our glorious Ukraine,
In all that land of ours that is not ours.
No father will commend me to his son,
To pray for me to God, source of all powers:
"Pray then, my boy! For us his course was run.
He died to save Ukraine, whom Fate devours."*

*It is indifferent to me, I say,
Whether or not that son for me should pray*

. . .

*But while I live I cannot bear to see
A wicked people come with crafty threat,
To lull Ukraine yet strip her ruthlessly
And waken her amid the flames they set--
Sure, no indifference in me these wrongs beget!*

* * *

*Then, O my brothers, as a start,
Come, clasp your brothers to your heart,--
So let your mother smile with joy
And dry her tears without annoy!
Blest be your children in these lands
By touch of your toil-hardened hands,
And, duly washed, kissed let them be
With lips that speak of Liberty!
Then all the shame of days of old,
Forgotten, shall no more be told;
Then shall our day of hope arrive,
Ukrainian glory shall revive,
No twilight but the dawn shall render
And break forth into novel splendour*

*Brothers, embrace! Your hopes possess,
I beg you in all earnestness!*

I read his poem "Gain Knowledge" many times and began to

understand how it coincided with reality.

*Gain knowledge, brothers! Think and read
And to your neighbours' gifts pay heed,--
Yet do not thus neglect your own:
For he who is forgetful shown
Of his own mother, graceless elf,
Is punished by our God himself.*

I was trying to understand and reconcile my acquired views to what I felt in my heart as a real truth. Far from barbaric, my country had a vivid, deep, and ancient culture that the Russians were trying to kill; and I was helping them!

* * *

Olga got married!

The priest's wife asked me to have dinner with them in exchange for tutoring their school-age boy. His parents did not want him to attend school because they were trying to isolate him from the influence of the peasants' children and their language. The arrangement was favorable to me. I used to have delicious dinners, and plenty of food was given for my breakfast and lunches at home. If only I had not had this haunting memory of my hungry children at school.

* * *

The Russian army invaded Austria's Carpathian possession. Thousands of displaced local people were evacuated into Russian territory. To our dismay, the Russian War Department requisitioned our property in town for the displaced Austrians. We were afraid of these Austrian enemies. But how mistaken we were. Several families were placed in our two houses. They were the most polite, sincere, and industrious people we ever saw. They had the same customs, clothes, and language as our peasants. They were desperately poor, deprived of everything. Their rations were very limited, but they never robbed anything.

They helped Matrona in her household and garden. They cleaned all the debris in the backyard in our property, and they pruned the

trees in our garden. We had never had such well-wishing tenants since the death of our parents. These were our “Austrian enemies.” They were the same Ukrainians under the Austrian-Polish yoke.

I became more and more influenced by Shevchenko’s fiery words. At the beginning, love was blind, not lightened by sacred intellect. I loved it--that’s all. But why? For what? I did not understand.

To the great distress of my sister Matrona’s and Father Orest’s families, I decided to get a transfer to a different school. My brother Ivan was a postmaster in a town located on the southern part of Ukraine near the Black Sea. He suggested that I apply for a position in his region where I could visit him on my free days and vacations.

This was my longest trip away from home. Two days and nights I went by train down south through the Ukrainian land. This land of plenty, the bread basket of Europe, with its black soil, insures very high crop yields. It has a favorable climate, blue sky, and the Dnieper, the largest and most beautiful river of Ukraine. Near Kiev, the Dnieper is a mighty stream. Farther south, it features the famous rapids formed by the outcrops of grand rapids in the Dnieper Channel. They are now under water as a result of the construction of the great dam.

Again I was moved by Shevchenko’s poetry.

*The rapids rage; the moon appears,
As once it rose before
The Sitch is gone, and gone is he
Who led them all of yore.
The Sitch is gone! The reed-beds ask
The Dnieper and its foam:
“Oh, where have all our children gone?
What country do they roam?”
The sea-mew, on the wing, laments.
As weeping for her brood;
The warm sun and the blowing wind
Are timeless in their mood.
Across the steppe the grassy mounds
Still stand and mourn the past;
They question of the boisterous sea:*

"Where are our dear ones cast?
Where do they rule and revel now?
Where are your steps bestead?
Return! Return! The oats bend low
Where once your horses fed,
Where feather-grass once rustled soft,
Where blood of Tartar fell,
Where Polish blood once flowed in flood.
Return, and break the spell!"
"They never will return at all,"
The blue sea roared reply,
"Though hearts may yearn, they'll not return;
Forever still they lie!"
Right art thou, sea; right, azure one:
Such must their dark doom be!
Those we most long for will not come,
Here comes not liberty;
Old Cossackdom will not return,
Nor hetmans rise again,
Their scarlet mantles nevermore
Will cover our Ukraine.
In tatters, like an orphan waif,
She weeps by streams of night,
Sorely oppressed in loneliness
With none to see her plight,
Except the enemy who mocks.
Laugh, then, ferocious foe,
But not too loudly, for our fame
Will never be laid low.
It will not perish, but proclaim
The annals of our age,
What is our justice, what our wrong,
And what our parentage.
Our epic and our ancient song
Forever shall remain,
And that is where our glory lies,
The glory of Ukraine.
Most chaste, with jewels unadorned,
Without embellished speech,
Yet it is deep-toned and precise,
A tongue that God might teach.

• • •

The rich and colorful vegetation and the land of steppes and forest steppe regions, which are exceptionally suitable for agriculture, affect the inhabitants and distinguish them from their neighbors. The colorful life of peasants during the harvest, the richness of vegetation, and a profusion of flowers suggest the lavish



• • • • •

use of color in their clothes and interior and exterior decorations of their houses. The area pleases with its splendor without destroying balance and harmony. It combines the charm of life with its appeal to emotion and sentiment.

I had had a loving and cordial reception from my brother and his family. My niece and nephew were especially happy to become acquainted with their aunt. I spent a few of my most enjoyable days with them and left for my appointed school with the promise to visit Ivan's family often.

I had known before that farmers in the southern part of the country were more prosperous, more independent, and more aware of their importance in the national economy. They were friendly to and protective of their new young teacher. The children were better dressed and had ample lunches during the midday recess. My supervisor had forty years' experience in teaching. The curriculum and school work were organized with the greatest efficiency and saved the teachers much work. I had plenty of spare time and was sometimes at a loss how to spend it. I missed my choir and beautiful musicals. I read all the books and magazines available and decided to study and enroll at the university. How ardently I wished to discuss Shevchenko's poetry. In his words, there was high dedicated devotion in which I believe strongly.

I believed that I should not discuss this with my supervisor. The first thing that struck me in that school was the abundance of tsars' and their families' portraits. There were three portraits in my classrooms and several in the hall. The supervisor's apartment was filled with portraits of tsars in beautiful frames. Everything showed highly patriotic Russian influence. But I believed the peasants accepted it with mockery.

World War I continued. Mornings and evenings we sang Russian hymns and listened to patriotic speeches during religious instruction. We did not receive many newspapers and were happy to live in ignorance.

Spring was approaching. The field work started. I went for a walk and learned from a peasant that our tsar had abdicated. He did not know the details. I did not learn much about it from my supervisor either. She seemed to want to hide this information from me. A few days later all the tsars' portraits were carefully wrapped, covered, and hidden in a library behind the bookshelves.

* * *

The revolution of 1917 in Ukraine was fought primarily as a war of national liberation. We had our teachers' Convention, and it was unanimously decided that we would teach our children in Ukrainian. We greeted the revolution in Ukraine with enthusiasm because it aimed at both social justice and national liberation and

was very much like the American Revolution of 1776 in its overall objective of a free and independent state of Ukrainian people. The revolution of 1917 in Ukraine was like a continuation of the Cossack uprisings in the seventeenth century and the peasant rebellions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

It was a beautiful spring, and our hearts sang in tune with the magnificent poetry by the Ukrainian poet Oles.

*How glorious: to see a reborn nation!
But yesterday the tears of serfdom fell,
Icons were silent in our ruins' ashes
And the old steeple tolled a funeral knell.*

*When suddenly a zealous might emerging
Snatched up all life and filled it full of power--
Lo, in men's hands are sudden banners waving;
We raise a hymn of triumph in that hour.*

*So sleeps an eagle--when his swift eye opens,
He sees the light and beauty of the sky.
Then in the golden morn, in boundless freedom,
He spurns the cliff and, screaming, soars on high.*

*Thus does the sea at times dream through the night,
Then beats its waves like wings on shorland shelf,
And strangely plays with pearls and coloured shells
And draws creation's glances to itself.*

*It rolls along, it swells in agitation,
It shines and trembles in the sun's embrace,
It feels its whole life happy at that moment,
All things on earth a symphony of grace.*

*When came those snowy billows on its surface?
Who taught the waves to bluster and to roar?
From what bright lands have flown the shining sea-mews
That tenderly lament along the shore?*

*O sea-mews, sea-mews! Weeping is not needed
When liberty and life are almost won,
When in the clouds I see a strange reflection--
The bold returning of the longed-for sun!*

The fall of Russian Czardom was the signal for bursting enthusiasm throughout the whole of Ukraine. Despite systematic attempts through the centuries by the Russian government to suppress Ukrainian ideals and aspirations and to indoctrinate Russian patriotism, Russian culture, Russian folklore, the dreams of Ukrainian freedom and independence had survived and arisen.

In the spring of 1917, the Ukrainian Central Rada (Council) was established in Kiev under the presidency of Professor Michail Hrushevsky, Ukraine's foremost historian. Early in April a great demonstration was held in Kiev. Tens of thousands of peasants and many thousand armed Ukrainian soldiers came to the city. In the Square of St. Sophia in Kiev, Hrushevsky delivered his first great speech: "Ukrainian people, the centuries-old fetters have fallen; the hour of your freedom has come." He administered to his listeners an oath of loyalty to Ukraine. This was the period of the formation of the Ukrainian mass movement for national liberation. It was the glorious sight in Kiev where hundreds of thousands of people greeted our government and sang our national anthem, "Ukraine Has Not Perished" by Verobkevich. The resurrection of Ukraine brought national consciousness to the people. It lived in their hearts and minds from generation to generation for centuries.

These were turbulent times for the Ukrainian government "Rada." Through a series of important acts, Rada led Ukraine into a full fledged independent and sovereign state.

* * *

Our intelligentsia, many teachers, and the government officials in Ukraine were either Russians or brainwashed Ukrainians. In many instances, the latter were more hostile to the independent movement than native Russians.

My brother worked in the Post Office. He used to bring home a packet of letters which he usually read after supper. It was his confidential work to censor and inform the government about persons suspected of governmental crime. It made me feel unhappy to see him censoring these letters; but, seeing my sister-in-law and my brother's patriotic feeling toward the Russian government, I could not even utter a word in defense of those suspected victims. My brother and sister-in-law indignantly opposed the Ukrainian movement. They were constantly arguing with me against the Ukrainization of the school. Our love for each other was shadowed by this difference of opinion. The list of suspected people on my brother's desk grew longer. "What were all these censors doing during the war? Why didn't they send more of these Ukrainian

traitors to the front lines?" Now I knew the reason why our dedicated teachers, agriculturalists, and cooperative leaders were sent to be killed in the war. My happiness over Ukrainian freedom and independence was shadowed by all these predicaments and misunderstandings. I felt an unfriendliness in my brother's home. I was homesick for my Matrona's family, my friends, and I decided to go back to my home town and get a teacher's position in some neighboring village. My mood was beautifully described by poet Oles in his "Sorrow and Joy."

*Sorrow and joy have kissed each other ...
Laughter and tears are strung like pearls.
Morning and night together smother--
In vain my hand their fold unfurls.*

*My joy and sorrow still embrace;
One seeks to fly, and one says No ...
Their struggle never shifts its base,
Which is prevailing does not show.*

The Russian government under Alexander Kerensky refused to accept or recognize the independence of Ukraine. Our Central Rada organized the Ukrainian National Army to defend Ukrainian independence. Ukrainian troops were established. Ukrainian judicial and administrative systems were introduced. The Ukrainian Constituent Assembly was prepared. It provided vast autonomy for the national minorities of Ukraine and won recognition from a number of foreign states. Ukrainian troops were maintained on the front against the Central Powers.

Lenin and Trotsky, while paying lip service to national self-determination, were sending Communist agitators into Ukraine in order to prepare a Bolshevik take-over of the country. It was known that Lenin considered propaganda as the main weapon to spread communist ideas among the different nationalities in Russia as well as all over the world. His agitators were most efficient, crafty, and clever men. It was a familiar sight to see some stranger at the bar or on the village square surrounded by peasants who had a shadowy reputation in the village.

These newcomers usually spoke Russian, mixing a few Ukrainian words to make their arguments more understandable. They would select among their listeners outspoken audacious men, make them

fast friends, and treat them generously for several days. The seeds of discontent were planted. The advantages of undivided Russian and Bolshevik government were discussed and emphasized. A committee of unprosperous peasants would be organized, a village meeting called. The disadvantages of separation and the shortcomings of the Ukrainian government were discussed and criticized.

I remember I was present at one of these meetings. The main speaker was a local man. To prove his argument against separation, he put a broom on the table. "This is our country. All this multitude of twigs is different nationalities in our Mother Russia. We poor people suffered greatly from the tsar and his rich assistants. But now it is all over. Our brothers Bolsheviks bring us peace and prosperity on their bayonets. Beware of the Ukrainian Central Rada. This government is similar to the tsar's and will impose deprivation and destruction on you, and you will become like one of these twigs that can be easily broken and destroyed."

Such fifth columns were working all over the country, affecting millions of our uninformed, economically and culturally oppressed, disorganized people. The destructive activity of the Bolshevik agitators had no limitations. In many villages the estate palaces were burned. Libraries, beautifully furnished buildings, and picture galleries were robbed. The agricultural economy was broken. Domestic prized animals were killed. The Bolshevik slogan: "Rob the plundered" was heard all over the country.

The Russian Soviet government sent an ultimatum to the Rada demanding, among other things, that armed Bolshevik bands be stationed in Ukraine. When Rada rejected the ultimatum, Lenin and Trotsky launched armed aggression against Ukraine.

At the same time, the Ukrainian Government concluded a peace treaty with Central Powers by the conditions of which it received full-fledged recognition from Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria. These powers also provided military assistance to Ukraine against the Russian Bolsheviks. France and Great Britain also granted de facto recognition to the Ukrainian Government "Central Rada."

At the same time, life in villages and towns burst with activities. More Ukrainian schools, cultural centers, and consumers' cooperatives were organized. In a short time, people were trying to achieve what they had been deprived of for centuries.

The teachers attended intensive courses of retraining. These courses filled every day and many evenings in the summer. We did not have any Ukrainian books. They had been forbidden during the tsarist regime. We anticipated difficulties in teaching our children without books and tried to get as many notes at lectures as possible. The days were never long enough for us. Still, we were always present at choir rehearsals.

The singing was magnificent. In no time, we could learn a new composition. We especially enjoyed listening to our Ukrainian basso octava. They were known all over the world, and claimed that they were Russians. But the main attraction of our choir was our conductor, Mykola Leontovich.

This handsome, tall young man with his beautiful, brown, wavy hair, blue eyes, and gentle inspirational conducting, captured the heart of every girl teacher. Every little attention or kind word from him was a blessing to us. I was in heaven when he asked my permission to escort me home. I think Nikolai Gogol, our Ukrainian writer, whom the Russians claim to be Russian, was in love when he described our Ukrainian night.

Do you know the Ukrainian night? Oh, you do not know the Ukrainian night! Look at it. The moon gazes down from the middle of the sky; the immense dome of heaven stretches farther, more immense than ever; it glows and breathes. The earth is all bathed in silvery light, and the exquisite air is refreshing and warm and full of voluptuousness, and stirs an ocean of fragrance. Divine night! Enchanting night! The woods stand motionless, mysterious, full of gloom, and cast huge shadows. Calm and still lie the ponds; the cold and gloom of their waters are walled in by the dark green gardens. The virginal thickets of wild cherry timidly stretch their roots into the cold of the water, and from time to time their leaves murmur, as though angry and indignant when the sweet rogue--the night wind--steals up suddenly and kisses them. All the countryside is sleeping. But overhead all is breathing; all is marvellous, triumphal. And the soul is full of the immensity and the marvel; and the silvery visions rise up

*in harmonious multitudes from its depths. Divine night!
Enchanting night! And suddenly it all comes alive: the woods,
the ponds, the steppes. The glorious clamour of the Ukrainian
nightingale bursts upon the night and one fancies the moon
itself is listening in midheaven.*

Those were beautiful evenings, only too short, and we were always sorry when the small hours approached. I remember one evening in particular. Mykola Leontovich was reciting "I Hope Against Hope."

*Away, ye gloomy thoughts, ye autumn clouds!
Today about me is a golden spring!
And shall my youth be wrapped in sorrow's shrouds
And fly away on lamentation's wing?*

*No, I would smile though even through my tears,
And sing my songs amid my dark distress,
And cherish hope, when not one hope appears.
I want to live! Avaunt, my hoplessness!*

*Upon my poor and melancholy fallow
I shall sow harvests of resplendent flowers,
Sow even amid frosts, and gently hallow
With dew of tears their unaccomplished powers.*

*And from the burning tears I there let fall
The solid, icy crust will surely melt.
Perhaps the buds will blossom after all
And breezes of a happy spring be felt.*

*Up the steep pathway on the flinty hill,
I'll bear my rocky burden all day long,
And though I carry such a load, I still
Shall keep my heart and sing a happy song.*

*In the obscurity of pitch-black night,
I shall not for one moment close my eyes,
But seek my guiding star's unfailing light,
That radiant mistress of the nightly skies.*

*I will not let my heart fall slumbering,
Even if dark and grief around prevail,
For I shall find my spirit numbering
The deadly steps of death upon my trail.*

*Mortality will then press hard upon me;
A deadly mist will cover up the stars;
My heart beats harder: death will not outrun me,
Nor pen my eager pulse behind his bars.*

*Yes, I would smile, though even through my tears,
And sing my songs amid my dark distress,*

*And cherish hope, when not one hope appears.
I want to live! Avaunt, my hopelessness!*

He continued with most beautiful “Pearls.”

*I have seen many kinds of pearls
And many jewels large and small;
But there's one pearl among the rest
That is the fairest of them all.*

*Much money cannot buy the gem
Nor barter sate the seeker's itch,
It bides more often with the poor
Than in the coffers of them all.*

*From caves of earth you gain it not
Not yet the ocean's caverns borrow;
He only finds that precious pearl
Whose heart is sensitive to sorrow.*

*No hungry power can avail
To snatch that precious pearl away--
That jewel is the sacred tear
Shed for our hapless folk today.*

“Who was that poet?” I asked. “Is he a world famous genius?”

“This is our own Lesya Ukrainka,” came the answer.

“I am always inspired by her originality, dynamism, depth of thought. Her lyric creativeness inspires me greatly in my musical work,” he told me.

With all my heart I listened to him, and yet my voice kept on singing his “Carol of the Bells.” We had learned it at choir rehearsal that evening. My companion listened, his eyes looking in the distance.

“It did sound beautiful with the complete choir,” he said. “There was no effort to put it into music. I was walking on a street when boys and girls were carolling in the village. There were a group of girls singing by the church and another group singing approaching from a side street. The boys by the school were covering these melodies with tenors and basses. The bright stars in the sky, the glistening snow under my feet In enchantment I came home and put it to music.”

This was the most memorable evening I ever had in my life. Three years later I learned that Mykola Leontovich had been killed by two Russian Bolsheviks. They came to his father's home and had supper with the family. There was an amicable discussion at the table. When the parents took the dishes into the kitchen, they heard a shot. Running back into the dining room, they found their son dead on the floor. The Russians had left by the front door. This was the most tragic news I ever heard. Mykola was a Ukrainian genius who knew how to select and polish the diamonds of our folk songs and present them in a form that charms people all over the world. Such people the Russians would not tolerate. All competitors to Russian chauvinism were and are and will be discriminated against.

Our choir was the main attraction not only for us, the singers, but also for the town. Every Sunday and Saturday the church was filled to capacity. Our town people never heard such magnificent singing. At rehearsals, we always had a large audience which gathered in the school yard. Even anti-Ukrainians were friendly towards us. Then there came an unexpected blow.

In one suburb of our town there lived a group of people entirely different from the rest of the population. Their houses, clothes, yards, and fences were different. They even farmed differently. They did not speak literary but folk Russian.

They were the Old Rite Orthodox from Muscovy who had settled in our town and in a few other places in Ukraine to escape the persecution of Peter the Great when he was forcing the conversion of his people to the renewed Orthodox Rite. These refugees never mixed socially or intermarried with the local people. Many of them did not even send their children to school. We called them Katzaps because of their long hair and beards. Whenever I see beatniks on a street, it always reminds me of our Katzaps.

One Sunday after the church services, our teachers went to their field kitchen in the town square and found it all demolished. The Katzaps had broken the table, benches, stoves, and dishes. They had thrown food, groceries, and milk into a ditch. The foodless teachers were invited into the homes of Ukrainian families. Several

of my friends joined me for dinner in Matrona's yard to the delight of my nieces and nephews. Later we found out that this riot was inspired by Russians who opposed the Ukrainian movement.

In a few hours the field kitchen was in order again, ready for the teachers' supper. We took the riot as a joke and sang with more inspiration at our rehearsal. We were learning a new song, which was like a Ukrainian anthem to us and very appropriate to the day's events.

*It is time, it is time, it is time
To refuse to serve Russian and Pole!
For an end is at hand to the past and its crime;
Our Ukraine claims your life and soul.*

*It is time, it is time, it is time
All our alien bonds to disprove,
And to cast off the tsar, a despoiler in crime.
Our Ukraine lives alone in our love.*

*It is time, it is time, it is time
To reject all our quarrels profane
Let the phantoms of strife perish now in our prime!
Let us join 'neath the flag of Ukraine!*

*For the time that has come now is grand:
In a fight of the fiercest degree;
We will die for thee gladly, our dear native land,
Winning freedom and honour for thee!*

This was written by Ivan Franko who is second in importance only to Taras Shevchenko. We sang with great enthusiasm his "Spirit of Progress," which our composer, K. Stecenko put to music. Like some Western writers, Franko depicted the growth of capitalism and the workers' first attempt to obtain better working conditions. He had an idealistic faith in the people, and his works are characterized by the predominance of social themes.

*Eternal revolutionist!--
Soul that body spurs to action,
Progress, freedom, satisfaction--
He's alive, he's in our midst.
Neither clerics' whims or stalls*

*Nor the kindly prison walls,
Neither armies drilled to clatter
Nor the ready cannon chatter,
Not e'en spies' profession, trade,
Have yet led him to his grave.*

Franko's monumental poem **Moses** crowned his lifelong creative work. It is significant for its lyrical philosophy. In it, he presents himself as a dedicated leader who is destined to sink into despair and yet die with hope that his people will reach their goal. He was the "Moses" of Ukraine, facing the indifferent and rebellious mass of our people.

*My people, tortured thus by blows and stabs,
A paralytic at the crossroads lying,
Covered with human scorn as if with scabs,*

*I mark thy future out with fears and sighing,
The baseness that thy distant children blots
Destroys my slumber with its mortifying!*

*Is it some iron tablet that alots
Thy fate to be the refuse of the nations,
A draught beast harnessed to their chariots?*

*Yes, can it be thy silent imprecations
Are sentences to a feigned humility
In presence of those men who depredations*

*Have chained thee thus, and forced assent from thee?
Art thou alone not marked for some campaign
That might reveal thy power, full and free?*

*And have so many hearts all burned in vain
With the most sacred love for thee they bore,
Offering soul and body in thy train?*

*Has thy dear land in vain flowed deep with gore
Of thy defenders? And will none take pride
In freedom, wealth and beauty as thy store?*

*Is it in vain that in thy speech abide
The power, tenderness, despatch and wit
By means of which thy soul can skyward stride?*

*Is it in vain thy song alike can fit
Regret and laughter and the pangs of passion,
Bright tracts of hope, and joy most exquisite?*

*Ah, no! Not sighs and tears from eyelids ashen
Are thy sole fate! My faith is in thy power
And in thy rising in triumphant fashion.*

*Oh, that my word had force in some glad hour,
Potent in that blest point of time to heal,
And potent to break forth in flaming dower!*

*Oh, that my song could make the millions feel
Fate's inspiration, give them wings of might,
and lead them to our glorious commonweal!*

*If only! ... but for us whom sorrows blight,
Shattered by doubts, by shame made timorous--
'Tis not for us to lead thee to the fight!*

*Thy time will come, and thou, transcendent thus,
Set in the circle of free lands wilt shine,
Girt with Carpathians and Caucasus!*

Our Ukrainian history fascinated us. The events of the early glorious Russian history actually belonged to the glory of our Ukrainian ancestors. Vladimir the Great was a talented statesman. He cemented the unity of all Ukrainians into a single spiritual bond by introducing Christianity to his people in the tenth century. He promoted education and built churches and schools. Kiev became an important cultural center. His son, Yaroslav, promulgated the first code of laws, known as **Rus Law**.

I was overwhelmed by the description of the St. Sophia Cathedral which was built by Yaroslav.

“You should see it to appreciate it,” our conductor told us. “You feel music in it. When you hear our choir singing during liturgy, you visualize God’s dwelling from which Kiev receives her blessing. It is a shrine of which there is no equal in our neighboring lands. Our Grand Prince Vladimir II was crowned there with the diadem of the Byzantine emperors. The vast multitude of pilgrims from Ukraine and from foreign lands for centuries visited our St. Sophia, our palladium. Oh, it is magnificent!”

We were looking forward to visiting Kiev and St. Sophia. If only we could see Kiev with its beautiful churches, parks, and St. Sophia’s Square that for centuries has been the scene of state and ecclesiastical affairs and festivals. It was at this square, in 1648, that the solemn reception was held for Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky after his victorious campaign against the Poles. In 1918, the ever-remembered Declaration of Ukrainian Independence took place in this square.

For centuries, Kiev was sporadically plagued by the Mongols. Treasures in our churches and palaces were stolen. Even during the recent revolution, the cathedral was seriously damaged by

Bolshevic artillery. Valuable churches, monuments, museums, art collections, and the residence of our first president were destroyed. The Bolsheviks confiscated the most precious ecclesiastical objects from our churches and the treasures from museums and art galleries.

The period of the Cossacks, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was glorious. The Cossacks loved liberty more than their lives. They foraged in East Ukraine and established their headquarters in the Zaporozhian Sich, an island in the Dnieper River. From here they developed themselves into an armed force that grew in numbers and in influence. They retaliated against the Turkish raids and became the champions of oppressed Christians. With their great commander, Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky, they rose against the Poles and became the masters of an independent Ukrainian state. This Ukrainian state was apparently on the threshold of a great epoch. Unfortunately, Hetman Khmelnytsky signed a treaty of mutual alliance with Tsar Alexis. Moscow treated this alliance as an act of submission. Many of the Cossacks wanted to cancel this alliance, but history proved this desire to be futile. As a result of this treaty, Poland and Moscow subsequently manipulated the disintegration of Ukraine.

The modern Ukrainian state was only reborn in 1917 with the advent of the Ukrainian National Revolution. It engendered and developed the Ukrainian nation and the national consciousness of the Ukrainian people. Since this time the spirit of the Ukrainian Revolution lives on in the hearts and minds of the Ukrainian people.

* * *

Once again, I obtained a teaching position in a school near my home town, Braclav. This school had four teachers. I was happy that my girl friend Kathy was working in this same school. We planned to study together during the winter and then again during the summer vacation for the entrance exam of the university. We did not expect to be involved in school work from early in the morning until late in the evening.

We started our regular school. One day it happened that the

village committee solemnly came to the teachers living quarters and triumphantly informed us that they had obtained a permit to open two classes of secondary school in our village.

“Will you be able to get the classrooms?” we inquired.

“It is for this reason that we have come to you. Would you please reschedule your primary classes for morning instructions so the needed classroom space for the secondary classes will be available after two o’clock in the afternoon?”

“Do you have the teachers?”

“No.” Their eyes became sad and timid. “The Board of Education officials advised us to ask for your consent, if you would be kind enough to teach our older children a few hours every day. You do understand, dear teachers, that this is our school. We are masters in our own village, in our own country, and we desperately need to have our children educated. We want to manage affairs ourselves.”

Now we had duties in the afternoon. The primary school lessons did not need much preparation. We had had experience with them as they were very similar to the primary grade lessons of previous years. The transition from Russian to Ukrainian was not very difficult. We taught in Ukrainian, using the Russian texts only as program guides.

The lessons in the secondary school gave us many problems. The majority of our students were advanced in age. Many of them indulged in self-education by reading all the books and magazines available. Many times we had to do research and study for hours trying to answer their questions.

Then there was Maria with her pleading. Maria was our cook and she approached us and asked us to teach her many friends, the boys, girls, and older people of the village.

“You see, ladies,” Maria said, “I and my many friends learned to read and write in Russian in our childhood. We forgot what we learned because Russian was not our language. Now it is different. We have a desire to learn Ukrainian. How can we learn it without your help?”

Three of us volunteered to give two evenings a week from 8 to 10 o'clock. This did not leave us much free time for visiting or for receiving visitors. Our teacher friends from the nearby villages were critical about our activities. They argued that, with such a load of work, we would not be able to accomplish much. We were happy and felt that we could reach the stars in the sky.

At school, we hardly had any disciplinary problems. Our secondary school students were most apologetic. They realized that there was a shortage of teachers because of the establishment of many new schools. We explained to these students that we were not prepared to teach them and that we did not have the proper qualifications.

We really derived joy from our adult classes. In these classes, the students were like members of one family, eagerly helping each other to please me. Their witty remarks, compliments, and joyous laughter surrounded me after classes. At home, still grinning, I dropped into bed and slept soundly until the next morning.

This village was similar to one in which I had taught previously. The relationships, however, were quite different. We were invited into the peasants' homes. The women showed us their finest embroidery, ceramics, and clothes, and the men discussed their farm problems as if we were old friends. The boys and girls were jokingly patronizing when they were teaching us new songs or dances. Our girl friend, the daughter of a prosperous farmer, once dressed Kathy and me in some of her beautiful costumes, and we had a most wonderful time. We danced with everybody in the village square.

June of 1918 came all of a sudden. School ended, and Kathy and I diligently commenced pulling out the books and preparing for the university entrance exams. There was such a tremendous amount to cover that we were afraid to even think about it. The gap between our normal school curriculum and the university requirements was very wide. To prevent primary school teachers from entering schools of higher education, the university had a policy which applied to the curriculum of normal schools that was different from the policy toward the secondary schools and universities. The

study of the Old Slavonic language took many hours in the normal school system. This was not required in the universities; but world literature, science, and world history were required. This difference in programs discouraged many of my friends in their education at the universities.

We were desperate in trying to meet these requirements. We left the village at the end of August with heavy hearts and uncertainty. Our departure was met by the amicability, sincerity, and heartiness of the villagers. The head of the village committee of elders was patronizingly formal but friendly:

“Study hard and remember, we are expecting you to come back and teach in our high school.”

* * *

The city in which our university was located was beautiful. It was situated on the curve of a river. Kamianetz, a nine-hundred-year-old city with long winding streets, was founded on its sinuous and rocky course. A ravine separated the city from the castle which had once guarded the city from unwelcome approaches. The university was in a new section. While enrolling there, Kathy and I also signed up for the preliminary courses. We shared our room, having breakfast and supper at home and then sharing our one dinner.

Our schedule was filled to its capacity, but we found part-time work. Our savings were diminishing rapidly. When I told Kathy that I had joined the National Choir, she was alarmed.

“When are you going to study? Will our professors accept your singing rather than decent answers on your exams?” she asked in bewilderment. Study or no study, lectures or no lectures, I could not live without singing.

Within a few months, we learned that the National Choir was coming from Kiev on a concert tour. We procured our tickets and eagerly awaited this event. Although we had heard of their brilliant conductor and his equally brilliant performances, we had not anticipated the magnificence which we now heard. This was a new style of singing, very emotional and very close to my heart. I never saw the surroundings; I never heard the clapping of the audience. I was only aware of the lump in my throat and was filled with an unexplained, heartfelt sadness. Poor Nina, my Angel, my dearest friend, didn't they sing like your angels in heaven?



IN HEAVEN

Music and art are the most reliable tests of value in the cultural life of a people, revealing the finest manifestation of its highest ideals. They are universal, reaching beyond the barriers and frontiers of space and race. They unite the hearts of men in admiration of goodness, beauty, and truth. Essentially, these were the reasons why Simon Petlura, head of the Ukrainian Government, endorsed the organization of the Ukrainian Republican Capella and sent it on a concert tour around the world. Through Ukrainian songs, Petlura wanted to show the people of different nations our struggles for liberty and independence. When our soldiers were defending our country from the Bolsheviks and the White Invaders, he sent Ukrainian songs as the messenger pleading for help to the people of the world.

The Capella was organized in Kiev in 1918. The best voices available were selected. The rehearsals were in Kiev until it became necessary to transfer them to Kamianetz when Kiev was threatened with a Bolshevik invasion.

We were still overwhelmed by the beauty of a recent concert of the Kiev National Choir under the direction of Alexander Koshetz, and we anticipated the wonderful things that the new Ukrainian Capella would achieve. We heard that the Capella was holding an audition for additional singers.

“Why don’t you try?” my friends were urging me.

I consented to attend the audition, and my friend Timothy went with me to the hotel. He waited in the hall, and when I came out after the audition he asked, “Were there other sopranos auditioning?”

“No!”

“Whose solfeggio sounded so beautiful?”

“It was mine and I was accepted.”

I hugged him happily and we started on our way home.

Many of the songs in the Capella repertoire were familiar to me, and the unfamiliar ones I learned quickly. The Capella programs consisted mainly of Ukrainian folk music which portrayed centuries of its development. These folk songs elicit feelings of sympathy, tenderness, and a melancholy. Yet they are full of their own peculiar humor and merriment.

Rehearsals were one of the truly pleasurable experiences that I had. Our conductor was a true artist of music. I had a great affection for this man and his conducting. Through his direction of our voices, he created unique vocal interpretations of the folk songs. He was a perfectionist and made us work endlessly on some musical passages until the shading of our voices was perfect.

We received the bad news from the front lines. The Ukrainian soldiers were unable to withstand the attacks of the Bolsheviks who had superior numbers. The government institutions which were coming to Kamianetz were advised to emigrate to Western Ukraine, Galicia, which was a province in the Austro-Hungarian empire prior to the first World War.

I always wanted to visit this part of Ukraine with its beautiful Carpathian Mountains full of romance and legends. I can still visualize those moments on Christmas Eve when our Ukrainian soldiers were singing the same carol, “A New Joy,” on both sides of the front.

• • •

In these villages of Western Ukraine the people were like those who lived on our property during the war. They did not look different from our people. There were many people, priests, teachers, municipal workers, and high officials, who spoke Ukrainian. They had their own Ukrainian newspapers and magazines, and they published Ukrainian books. My book of Shevchenko, the one that Sasha gave me, was printed here and then

smuggled into Russian Ukraine.

When we arrived, we had the most cordial and amicable reception possible. The people were anxious to please us in every detail by emphasizing their joy in greeting us. After our arrival, we proceeded to have rehearsals, and in two weeks time we were ready for our first concert in Stanislav. We all realized that this was our great test. Our audience was generally well informed about music and especially their own Ukrainian music; for they had many glee clubs, several composers with European musical education, and good conductors.

We sang and received the most enthusiastic applause ever recorded. The people clapped and shouted their approval of our performance, and demands for encores were endless. The stage was covered with bouquets of flowers which were the symbol of the gratitude of the leading Galician citizens. We were in heaven.

We gave several concerts in various towns in Galicia, and wherever we went the concert halls were filled to capacity. All our audiences were enthusiastic about our performances, and we usually sang many encores and were greeted with flowers. This first part of our tour was a success; and many people wholeheartedly agreed with Petlura, our leader, that, by sending the Capella on tour, he had selected the quickest way to reveal the soul of our nation.

Our second test was to be more difficult than the first, for we were scheduled to sing in Prague. In Galicia, we sang for our Ukrainian people who treated us like brothers with love and understanding. But this was not so with the Czech people. The Czech language was unknown to us, and the Czech people had been under the influence of German culture and domination. They considered their songs and folklore the most outstanding among the Slavic people. We could just picture them saying, "Those unknown Ukrainians, could they bring us something new?"

We crossed the Carpathian Mountains and arrived in Carpatho-Ukraine. Here we met the same poor Ukrainian peasants with similar customs, songs, and language but more poor and backward under centuries of Hungarian domination. In my Ukraine, which

we call "Great Ukraine," the ruling class spoke Russian; in Galicia, the upper class spoke Polish; but in Uzhorod, the capital of Carpatho-Ukraine, we did not understand anyone; they spoke Hungarian. The Czech government in Carpatho-Ukraine did not fully grasp their influence as yet. After the war, the official language was Czech. We were careful when conversing with different people because there were many pro-Hungarian who opposed Czech domination.

In Carpatho-Ukraine, education was in deplorable condition. There was a different school of indoctrination in each village inhabited by Ukrainian peasants. Every school taught either Hungarian, Russian, or Czech, according to the teachers' political views. Besides this disconsolate situation, there was constant exploitation of the peasants. These poor peasants were seeking their consolation in liquor. Many tsarist Russian immigrants seized influential positions in the local government.

The management of the Capella decided that we should work on our repertoire and give a concert or two while in Carpatho-Ukraine and then move on to Prague. These were our plans, but the local pro-Russian officials had other plans.

It was a beautiful spring morning. We gazed with pleasure at the fields. In the distance the trees were silhouetted against the horizon. Someone suggested, "Let's go for a walk." We all agreed because rehearsal for female voices was in the afternoon. Happily we ran into the fields. The paths were sprinkled with bright yellow dandelions that smiled at the sun. The woods in the distance lured us farther on.

I started to sing a phrase. "It is a bright day in our souls without stormy clouds. The spring with its joy and sunshine and the soft sounds of song." Dainty bluebells were rising above the grass under the trees.

"Look at that combination! Bluebells and golden dandelions. It's like our Ukrainian flag, blue sky on the top and golden wheat on the bottom."

As we began to return for the afternoon rehearsal, we saw two policemen approaching in the distance. When they came near, they

told us to go with them. "Strange place, strange people," someone from the group remarked.

Without any protest, we decided to return with them, hoping that we could get in touch with our management. They led us into the prison, opened the door, and ... Oh Lord! The entire Capella was there. Everyone was laughing and joking, trying to conceal their discomfiture and tears. The charge against us was that we were Bolsheviks and were going to be returned to the Bolsheviks. This was the result of the activity of the pro-Russian officials who were against the idea of the tour of our Capella. This was also a blow struck against the movement of Ukrainian Separatism.

Fortunately, upon our arrival, we had become friends with Jaromir, a high Czech official. Somehow he learned about our misfortune and came to our rescue. To our amazement, he procured our release and a truck for our transportation. Late that same evening, we took our belongings, piled them in the truck, and drove three hundred miles to the Czech town of Koshitze. From Koshitze we went by train to Prague.

After driving the entire night in the truck and travelling by train the following day, we arrived in Prague tired and disheveled. In such an attire we looked very much like those Bolsheviks whom we were accused of being. In Prague, we were given money to buy new clothes and were advised not to walk on the streets in groups.

The next day we held a rehearsal. Everyone was excited about the activities of the past two days. We were comparing our new clothes, questioning each other on prices, and criticizing and joking freely. The conductor called for our attention, and we began to practice. Later it was announced that our next concert was scheduled in two weeks.

It was the spring of 1919, the first year of Czech independence. Prague looked beautiful. The people were congenial, friendly, and smilingly happy. I remembered with sadness the resurrection of the Ukrainian State two years before. I had never seen such a large city with wide streets, large buildings, and many people. We walked down the main street and looked at the large picture windows with their artistic displays. Boys and girls were walking everywhere in

their national costumes.

Gradually, we made many friends with the Czech people, their musicians, conductors, and composers. They attended our dress rehearsals and were enthusiastically expecting our performances.

The reaction to our concert was unexpectedly overwhelming. The Czechs applauded and their demands for encores were endless. The leading Czech statesmen and musicians were embracing and kissing our conductor Koshetz. The next day we all anxiously awaited the reviews in the newspapers and could hardly believe our eyes. We received the most lavish praises. Some of the press releases read as follows: "We should put our hands over our hearts and humbly learn to sing from these Ukrainians. We were witnesses of art in its purest form." "It is hard to criticize when the heart is singing." "The Ukrainians are not Russians. Oh, how different they are." "In some instances, nature itself was revealed in the songs--simple and pure in their presentation. This is indeed a culture created by the human spirit, and the test of a true culture is that it is derived from the soul of man. I found their songs to be like a prayer."

Many Czech families invited us to their homes. The younger people invited us on picnics, hikes, and trips. Some local boys and girls were dating members of our Capella.

I was very happy when Frank, the assistant conductor of a famous glee club, invited me out to see old Prague. I anticipated this trip with much joy, especially since I was to be in the company of a handsome young man. We walked along the quaint narrow streets with their small neat houses. On the top of one particular hill covered with trees, there stood a castle rising into the sky, the Hradchany. President Thomas G. Masaryk lived there. Frank spoke of him with great reverence and called him "dear Father Masaryk."

"For centuries we were subjugated by the Germans," he said, "and now we are so happy to develop and work for our own country."

"Oh! I know that. Two years ago during the establishment of the Ukrainian National Republic, we too were happy. Now, our poor soldiers are fighting desperately, defending our independence against a Russian invasion."

“I never knew that the Ukrainians weren’t Russians,” he said.

“You’d better learn it quickly,” I said, “because Ukrainians are not Russians and don’t like to be called Russians.” On our way to the castle through the park, we stopped at a bench and continued our political discussion.

“You are shattering all of my ideals,” he said. “We just gained our independence from Austria-Hungary, but how can our small nation surrounded by Germans survive? Wouldn’t it be better to unite ourselves with the great Russian empire?”

“That is exactly what our Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky thought. In 1654 he signed a treaty with Moscow for mutual alliance against foreign invaders. And this is the result. You didn’t even know that there is such a people as the Ukrainians.”

We were gay and happy that day. As an electrical engineer in a big company, Frank was active in the reorganization of its plant, replacing the Germans with Czechs. I tried to explain to him that, if the Czechs concluded a treaty with Moscow, then the Germans would be replaced with Russians and not the local Czechs.

“Many of your leading Czech patriots,” I told him, “would be put in prisons, sent to Siberia, or killed. The Russians wouldn’t let you have your own schools, businesses, sport and cultural organizations.”

Then I told him how my father was ruined by his Russian competitor and how my mother had to struggle to provide for us without any income.

“You know, I still love to climb the cherry tree and get cherries. I remember those days when food was scarce. My mother used to give us a piece of bread if there was enough to go around. It tasted delicious with cherries ... We didn’t even mind that the cherries weren’t ripe. And we used to pick small carrots or cucumbers. How delicious they were! But mother forbade us to ruin her vegetable beds.”

He listened to me with amazement, and then we walked back to the hotel in silence. I was afraid that he would not date me again. I

blamed myself for being too outspoken and truthful about the struggles of our nation. But I liked him and did not want to hide anything. The other girls of the Capella liked him, too, and everyone was glad to win his friendship.

I was waiting for Sunday with forboding. On that day our Capella was to go with our Czech friends for a train ride to a famous twelfth century castle. Frank joined us with members of his choir. During our journey, I was very happy and delighted to have Frank accompany me. I was searching my mind for something pleasant to tell him.

“Do you know that our poet Taras Shevchenko wrote a beautiful poem about the Czech reformer Jan Hus?”

“Who was Taras Shevchenko? I never heard of such a Russian poet.”

“You never heard of him because he was never a Russian poet,” I said. “It was the Russians who arrested and imprisoned him for ten years. When they released him, he was a broken man who died shortly afterwards.”

I noticed the ironic smile on his face. I thought to myself, “Why do I always get involved in arguments with political overtures?” I walked away from the group and sat by a niche in the castle window. From there I gazed down at the village below, nestled among the trees and lying on the riverbank.

“There you are!” I turned and saw Frank approaching me. “Why did you go away?”

I did not offer any answer immediately. We just walked around the castle parapet enjoying the magnificent view. We walked down outside the castle wall among the poppies that sprinkled the meadows. From the meadow we admired the architecture and setting of the castle.

Unexpectedly, he asked me where he could obtain a copy of Shevchenko’s work. I was surprised but promised him that I would get him a copy from the Ukrainian Embassy. Subconsciously, I thought “no more politics for today.” It seemed strange that,

whenever I started telling him something, there was always a collision of the relationships of Ukraine and Russia. I felt that this disturbed Frank, and I was intent on avoiding it.

A few days later, when I obtained a copy of Shevchenko's work, Frank and I read the poem "Jan Hus" along with a small group from the Capella.

The Heretic, or John Hus

*Glory to you, O noble sage, ...
Wise Czech and faithful Slav,
Who from the bottomless abyss
Saved all the Truth we have!
And presently your ocean fair,
This vast new Slavic Sea,
Will flow full tide; on it will float
A bark of liberty,*

. . .

*And in your glory welcome then
My verse, this trifling speck--
The stammering poem I have penned
About the saintly Czech,
That mighty martyr of his time,
The memorable Hus!
Accept it, sire! I'll softly pray
That God may grant to us
That all Slavs may brothers be.*

Frank was overwhelmed with the beauty and deep natural philosophy of the poem. With great sincerity, he said, "I have never had such an understanding of our martyr, Jan Hus; nor have I sensed such sympathy for our suffering people before."

"That's because our Taras Shevchenko was a martyr also. He vigorously protested the prevailing injustice in our country. It was strict censorship which prevented these poems from being published. They were circulated in Ukraine in manuscripts."

We began to discuss the work and talk about various topics. One of the topics was Pan-Slavism. I tried again to explain to Frank what had transpired on another occasion.

"Your imaginary ideal of all the Slavic people under the leadership of a mighty Russia is impractical. We did have such an organization, the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood, in Kiev eighty

years ago. Something like a Slavic United Nations with political, religious, educational, economic, and literary independence for each nation. Members of this brotherhood were young men imbued with a revolutionary spirit of Ukrainian autonomy at a time when they saw the very foundation of Ukrainian life being destroyed. The Ukrainian intelligentsia turned away from the people, but a few remained to draw wisdom and strength from the simple Ukrainian peasant. Shevchenko sympathized with the goals of this Brotherhood, and so what happened? The activities of the Brotherhood and its members were exposed. They were arrested as a subversive element. Many were given light sentences of exile, but Shevchenko, because of his poems, was exiled for ten years in military servitude in a remote region near the Caspian Sea."

I noticed once again the expression of unbelieving doubt on Frank's face. But I was deeply absorbed in our discussion. "If you don't mind, can I read you his poem, "The Dream"? This is his masterpiece. You can see for yourself how strongly he condemned the Russian aggression on subjugated peoples. Listen, especially, to how mercilessly he ridiculed the family of the tsar. The entire world should hear it."

*"Farewell, O world! Farewell, O earth,
Thou dismal, dreary land!
I'll hide my torments, fierce and keen,
Within a cloud-bank bland.
Then to thyself, my own Ukraine,
A widow sad and weak,
I shall come flying from the clouds
And with thee shall I speak;
From our communion, soft and low
My heart shall gain some cheer;
At midnight shall my soul come down
In dewdrops cool and clear.
We shall take counsel in our grief
Until dawn we see,
And till thy children grow enough
To rout the enemy.
And so, farewell, my mother dear,
Widow unfortunate!
Remember, justice lives with God
To make thy children great!"*

Frank was confused. He was uncertain as to what he should or could say. He did not even know whether or not he should defend

his mighty ideal, a great Russian empire.

“That was under the tsarist regime,” he finally answered. “The Bolsheviks are different. They will bring prosperity and liberty to all their nations. They are even called the servants of the people.”

“Liberty?” I shouted. “How can they bring liberty? Even now they are occupying Ukraine, which they invaded. If they bring liberty, then what are the Ukrainian soldiers fighting for?”

I was so agitated that I even forgot that I like Frank. This was not the first time that we had parted coldly. I felt miserable because I feared I would not see him again. Why was I so persistent in my arguments? I wondered if it was due to my reaction against our hardships and my brainwashing. I was tormented with the thought, “Why can’t we Ukrainians live in peace and harmony, masters of our own nation? Why the extremes: Shevchenko and millions of dedicated patriots or traitors like my poor brainwashed brother Ivan, serving their holy Russian Tsar without realizing what crimes they were committing against humanity? God forgive them!”

Frank did visit our Capella again. I had found out that he had met some of the people from the Ukrainian Embassy and had read some material on Ukrainian subjects. Even his Ukrainian was improving. I was overjoyed. It was like heaven. He asked me if I would accompany him to the neighboring town where his father was principal of the school. He thought that I would enjoy meeting his family. Later, I found out that they wanted to meet me. I was very hesitant about making such a trip, and many times I offered excuses in order to postpone it. How would I talk to them? Would they understand me, or I them? We were so far apart with our different backgrounds, cultures, religions, and nationalities. These barriers were too difficult to cross. But, even more, how could I come to agree with a Bolshevik sympathizer?

Our stay in Prague was near an end. We were next scheduled to appear in Vienna. When we parted, many tears were shed between the members of our Capella and the Czechs. There were many promises to correspond.

Frequently, our rehearsals were stormy. Of course, it was

presumed that we knew our music and words. Separate rehearsals were held for male and female sections with the assistant conductor Platonida. She was held responsible for our mistakes when we performed below standard in our rehearsals with our main conductor, Alexander Koshetz. The most difficult and longest part of rehearsals was the perfection of nuances.

Our conductor was one of the most eloquent and witty people that I had ever met. Whenever he heard a deviation in pitch, he would immediately detect the person and show him or her how to either raise or drop their pitch by pulling his ear up or down. This was one of his actions that was well-known to us. Whenever we had finished a passage in a practice session that was to his disliking, an unaesthetic remark would follow.

“Don’t show your intestines! Cover your mouth immediately when you see my signal to stop. Do you think, girls, that those boys in Prague will follow you if you coquette with them the way you are singing this passage? The Ukrainian peasant girls would laugh if they could hear you singing now.”

There would be a coquettish expression on his face, and then the playful pronunciation of the passage would follow. He fascinated us. When we were singing for him, space, time, and our surroundings were forgotten. We imagined ourselves singing in the village streets coquetting with our Ukrainian boys.

Our tenors and basses were magnificent, yet at times they were not good enough to satisfy our conductor. He would give the boys some admonition. “Show some defiance to Tsarina Catherine, the devil’s daughter, she who ruined our ever-remembered Sich. You should resemble those Cossacks in Illya Repin’s famous painting ‘Zaporozhtsi.’ ” Then he would mimic a few of the poses of the characters in that painting, “You would be thrown out of Sich if the Cossacks heard you singing so anemically.”

Then the indignant boys tried again, and their voices sounded like the swell of the deep sea. The diminishing chords at the end were magical. “Yes! Yes!” we heard him whispering. His eyes were shining with tears. Our eyes were glued to his. We watched with fascination every expression of his face and the movements of his

fingers, all of which were important instruments in his conducting. When Mr. Koshetz was directing, his mood could give a song a new and different sound from that which it had had in practice. Our hearts and minds were connected with his kind of telepathic correspondence. Each rehearsal and song provided us with a lesson.

There is one simple song which always brings a sweet memory. It was in Vienna. We had had a most receptive audience there. Our conductor was in a happy mood which reflected upon us. He raised his eyebrows and with his little finger indicated for us to start. It appeared that the audience had forgotten to breathe. Koshetz was at his finest, conducting us as we sang each song. We finished. The tremendous applause, bravos, and requests for an encore did not cease. He gave us a bright, triumphant smile, and we started singing again. This time, the same song with the same words was entirely different. The audience noticed it and their delight was expressed in their infinite applause.

Our Czech men from Prague did follow us to Vienna. Once, after a rehearsal, we saw Jaromir and Frank entering our rehearsal hall. We showered them with embraces and kisses. Although they explained that their arrival was because they missed our singing, deep in our hearts we knew that Jaromir, who rescued us from the prison in Uzhorod, had come to see his girl friend and Frank to see me. Everyone teased us about it. Our meeting was thrilling and touching. We had missed each other terribly.

“When did you arrive?” I asked.

“Yesterday, late in the afternoon.”

“Then why didn’t you come to see me? I was free, and we could have spent the evening together.”

“I just walked and walked through the streets, unconscious of time. My heart was bleeding because of the splendor of these beautiful parks, statues, and palaces. To think that all this wealth and beauty was taken from those nations which were subjugated by Austria.” He broke off.

“Oh, I know, and I do sympathize with you. The beautiful city

of Leningrad, which was the monumental project of Peter the Great, was erected on the corpses and bones of our Cossacks. The affluence of beauty which is now Moscow and Leningrad was the product of Ukraine. Imagine forcing our Cossacks from Sich, on the Dneiper's rapids and the lovely surrounding areas, to the miserable, damp, cold climate of the north. Thousands died during the construction of Leningrad. Then, when our Cossacks were driven out from Sich, Catherine II settled the region with German farmers."

Frank's face was clouded with a sad nostalgia. There I was, with my incessant politics again. What did it matter if he was a pro-Russian with Bolshevik ideas and I was a Ukrainian who fervently opposed Bolshevik domination and invasion? He had always said that a man and wife could live together happily despite differences in nationality, religion, or political views. Hadn't he come to Vienna to marry me so I could return to Prague when our concert tour was over? It was very difficult to resist his convincing arguments. Never had I met a person with such a beautiful soul and an understanding personality. Yet, I was afraid to make our marriage miserable simply because of a difference of opinions.

We parted with great sadness. He pleaded with me to take good care of myself and always remember that he would be waiting faithfully for me. We corresponded quite often. He learned to write in Ukrainian so I could comprehend his thoughts more clearly. His letters were tender, brimming with encouragement, love, and understanding. Many times I would not agree with his statements, but his replies would cause me to be indecisive once more.

Vienna was unique in its magnificent splendor. Its scenery and edifices were adorned exquisitely. Since my German was poor, I felt strange and lonely.

We faced our first concert with apprehension. Realizing our audience would be one of musical sophistication, we knew that we would not be successful unless we impressed them with something special. As usual, Alexander Koshetz was at his best. At the beginning of the concert, the Viennese were cautious. They were astonished by the simplicity of our style. The applause was meager.

A mysterious smile persisted on our conductor's face. In response, we continued our unpretentious songs, describing in them the beauty of earth, sun, human sorrows, and joys. Canticles, Christmas carols, and spring songs blended the pagan with the Christian. The history of a nation was disclosed.

The volume of the response increased. By the finale, each arrangement was worth an encore. Koshetz felt victorious. We had conquered the Viennese musical society. The following morning, all the newspapers contained reviews. There was not one critical phrase. In fact, we were deeply moved by their warm appraisal: "The highest form of art is simplicity, direct enough to be enjoyed naturally and so strongly emotional that it is possible to move the most learned of men. One loses all notion of space and time, even forgetting the ordinary hall. One imagines oneself in some sacred temple, assisting at marvelous and unknown rites of eternal beauty."

By a strange coincidence, our choir had been compared to instruments, symphonic instruments or great organs, in nearly every major European city and in South and North America. We sang ourselves into the hearts of people.

* * *

Our national leader, Simon Petlura, was wise in his choice of our folk songs' propaganda. The organization of Ukrainian Republic Cappela directed by Alexander Koshetz, was closely united with the music department of the ministry of the national education organization of the Ukrainian Republic. The head of this department was our well known composer, Cyril Stecenko, and the head of the ethnographic section was the famous Ukrainian conductor, Professor Alexander Koshetz.

We were fulfilling our mission successfully. In songs we revealed the spirit of our people, of our customs, traditions, religious feelings, lives, and thoughts. In our performances, we convinced people of the justice of our national aspirations. Our folksongs revived the traditions of our people that were rooted somewhere in the distant past. This is the art of our people.

A Belgian review said, "It is naked beauty which does not blush

at having tested of the tree of science.”

I remembered a concert in Antwerp. We sang for an audience of over five thousand. The request for encores was becoming part of the act. The crowds on the streets were so enthusiastic that we had some difficulty returning to the hotel after the concert. Our conductor was transported from the hall to the hotel on the shoulders of the appreciative people.

The Paris reviews were aesthetic:

“We no longer witness singers, obeying their conductor prosaically; these are the priests and priestesses of a deep religion, reverently bowing before a Demiurge who projects and transmits his own flame with eloquent and dominating gestures, subsequently, impressive, tragic, wrathful, or imploring.”

“He plays upon his choir as he would upon an organ, handling imaginary keys in space. He combines and counterpoints a thousand unsuspected sources of his human instrument, obtaining absolute pianissimo, perfect fortissimo. He develops a primitive and semi-scientific ingenuity. He is a virtuoso, but his singers are virtuosi also.”

* * *

England. **Sunday Times**, 8/11, 1920.

“Undoubtedly the musical sensation of the past week was the singing, at Queen’s Hall on Tuesday and Friday evenings of the Ukrainian National Choir. This choir is a highly efficient organization which rightly specializes in folk music. The conductor, Mr. Koshetz, has brought his forces to a high level of excellence.”

Germany. **Deutsche Tageszeitung**, 27/IV, 1922 Berlin.

“... Under his vibrant directorship, Alexander Koshetz produces his native folk music with beloved pureness and sparkled freshness, and leads the charm of the ethnographic authenticity to the artistic qualities.”

U.S.A. **The Sun**, Friday, October 6, 1922 New York.

“... Dr. Alexander Koshetz has been guiding his Ukrainian National Chorus for the last three years around appreciative Europe. Last night he introduced it to America, and the introduction gave off sparks of jubilation. It is a chorus of at the most forty men and women, who wear their bright,

colorful and heavy native costumes in defiance of death, despot and sunstroke, and who possess remarkably fine and facile voices. It was left to Dr. Koshetz to prove what wonders can be drawn from such throats and hearts."

Canada. **The Toronto Daily Star**, November 16, 1923.

"Ukraine sang at Massey Hall last night. ... They were a patch of the Ukraine plucked out of native haunts and set down on a simple tierage of two rises in the middle of Massey Hall stage, with a swallow tailed conductor-Koshetz—who had no baton, but fingers that seemed to be turning keys, and pulling down limbs, and plucking flowers, and twisting corkscrews, and swinging skipropes, and throwing lariats, and prodding holes in the singers; such intimate and expressive conducting that much of the time it was a dance to which the singers made the music."

Our Alexander Koshetz was a virtuoso. He was a genius, and these are not often born to a nation. Such virtuosos as we were are equivalent to thousands of Ukrainians endowed with voice, musical ability, and love for our songs. We were just fortunate to be selected and to become "imaginary keys in space" for our beloved conductor.

* * *

Koshetz was the soul of the choir! He expresses genuine enthusiasm which ignites the choir to give it all—with utmost confidence.

Koshetz himself seems reborn, becomes part of the song, its creative soul, which brings out every sound from the most delicate meance to a thundering bass octave.

Koshetz was extraordinary: his hands, fingers, head, feet, imitate and move with the music. He is bewitched by it! He plays with the voices, captures them with breadth or with inconspicuous gestures; awakens them to reflect a fountain, or tenderly puts them to sleep and makes them die out He expresses a divine spark with his genius!



PROF. ALEXANDER KOSHETZ
Composer-Conductor

DISAPPOINTMENTS

The second year of our tour was coming to a close. We were all tired of the applause of our audiences. We were irritable and homesick. Unfortunately, we could not return home. There was no home for us. We were forced to remain abroad if we valued our lives. The young Ukrainian Republic was crushed by the Soviet military might. The Ukrainian patriots were ruthlessly suppressed and murdered. Our government went into exile and could no longer financially provide for our concert tours. It was uncertain how long we would remain inactive.

I was married to Leo Bezruchko, a member of our Capella, in Berlin. We were of the same nationality and religion, and we shared the same ideal of freedom for our beloved Ukraine. With the fall of the Ukrainian National Republic, tens of thousands of Ukrainian political refugees left their country and settled in Europe. My husband and I shared this fate.

Concurrently in Carpatho-Ukraine, under Czechoslovakian rule, there was a surge in education and a general strengthening of Ukrainian consciousness.

The rehearsals of the Capella were terminated as well as the concerts. A reorganization occurred in the Capella and twenty of us decided to go to Carpatho-Ukraine, the "silverland," as it is called because of its beauty.

We were accepted by the congenial people of Uzhorod. My husband and several other members of our group were employed in the bank, in the library, and in consumer-agricultural cooperative. The week-ends and evenings were devoted to cultural activities, concerts, lectures, and plays. As a result of favorable reviews, we had wonderful success. In fact, after a few months, we were offered the opportunity to make a concert tour. Once again, we were in heaven. The small town concerts were met with sizeable and appreciative audiences. With apprehension, we anticipated our arrival at Koshitze, the well-remembered town where we had anxiously awaited the train to Prague two years ago.

The concert hall was rather huge. Our small group had to try different places on the stage which would be to the best interest of our singing.

Evening approached. Everyone was dressed up and smiling just like the good old days of the Capella. Yet, as concert time neared, there was not a soul in the auditorium. Even after a half hour delay, nobody appeared. Eventually, the impresario came behind the stage where he informed us that, because of a war regulation which had been announced just before the concert, all of the people had been requested to remain in their abodes. Anyone on the streets after 8 p.m. was to be arrested. So the impresario invited us to a good restaurant and especially asked that we release him from the contract. He also said that he had certain information which provided that this empty welcome would be repeated in every town on the concert itinerary.

Our heaven was short-lived. Our pro-Russian “friends,” highly positioned municipal officials, had mastered the situation. They had successfully executed their plan to curtail our tour.

Therefore, we returned to Uzhorod to work for our living in the daytime and devote ourselves to more cultural interests in the evening.

To the joy and delight of the entire group, our daughter was born. Although my husband and I had wanted to name her after her aunt, our group had decided otherwise. So, she was called Oksana.

The big enclosed porch that adorned the house we occupied with a few other members of the chorus was convenient. Here we had our rehearsals. Anyone who had some free time received the task of caring for Oksana. The general prediction was, but only in jest, that she would be an excellent musician. However, they were right and Oksana expressed wonderful musical feeling.

My husband usually had the leading roles in our plays. This required extra work other than rehearsals and his employment in the bank. Unnoticeably, his health began to deteriorate and finally he was placed in a tuberculosis sanatorium. I replaced him in the bank, leaving Oksana with a babysitter. As Oksana grew fonder

towards the babysitter and my husband's health improved, I found myself losing all my precious mementos of the concert tour. The cause was the babysitter's decision that these valuables would serve a better purpose in her house rather than staying here in boxes and suitcases under the beds or table. The possibility of making other arrangements was not available, so I had to succumb and sacrifice my belongings.

Terrible news came from home. The persecution of the Ukrainians by the Soviets was unparalleled in the history of mankind. Statesmen, writers, intellectuals, and soldiers were either persecuted or fled to settle in Poland or Czechoslovakia.

Our famous actor producer, Mykola Sadovsky settled in Uzhorod. This was a great chance for us to acquire the coach we needed for the production of our plays. Our heavenly ecstasy was renewed when he accepted the invitation to join us. As Koshetz was a genius in conducting, Sadovsky was a genius in understanding and bringing to life human suffering, aspiration, struggle, and joy. Rehearsals were strenuous, especially when added to a full day's employment, but they were so interesting and constructive that we were unaware of our fatigue. The very first performances proved to be laudable. People who had no nationality to claim became Ukrainians. We were invited to Prague for a few performances.

After a few months in the sanatorium, my husband came home. I continued to work as he took care of Oksana. After recuperating, he was selected for leading parts again that still required extra attention other than rehearsals.

In Prague our Czech friends from the Capella came to see our successful performances and praised them generously. My sojourn to Prague this time was desperately sad. My husband was returned to the sanatorium a second time by the doctor. I met Timothy who some three years ago had escorted me to the audition of the Capella. I recognized him immediately, and he asked with some agitation,

“What's the matter? Are you ill?”

“My husband is in the sanatorium,” I said. “How are my old friends at the university? And the National Choir? Where is my dear Kathy?” I asked.

“Would that Kathy were dead! She has joined the Ukrainian Bolsheviks and, as a school supervisor, is instrumental in the deaths of many of our Ukrainian teachers. She reports them to the center.”

Poor Kathy! She was just another victim of Bolshevik brainwashing.

The last performance was completed. My husband left for the sanatorium. It was at this time that Frank came to see me. We went for a walk. Our meeting was very sad. We simply did not know what to say to each other. He mentioned the compositions he had written and his favorite one which he would like to play for me. Coincidentally, his apartment was on that street.

“I would really love to hear you play; but my husband wouldn’t like it, and I don’t want to disturb him during his illness.” Frank understood. He didn’t insist. We never saw each other again.

After the Bolshevik occupation, our Ukrainian soldiers were forced to retreat west. The Czech government assigned some money to the political refugees for their education and means. One may wonder at this liberal offer to and interest of the Czechs in the foreign refugees. Its reasons were two-fold. The first was based on the principle of humanity; the second requires a longer explanation.

During World War I, Czechoslovakia, as a puppet state of Austria, was forced by its monarchs to fight Austria’s enemy, Russia. The Czechs who were not interested in the war to help Austria escaped into the Russian country. When the movement for freeing Czechoslovakia started, the Czech soldiers who escaped into Russia organized legions and determined to move to their own land and fight for their independence.

The legions organization required a tremendous amount of material and equipment. A considerable number of the Czech legions were organized in Kiev, then the capital of the Ukrainian government which evolved after the Russian Revolution. The Ukrainian government gave the Czech legion financial and material support for their activities. Thus after this legion joined the Czech army and won their freedom, they remembered the Ukrainian refugees bound in the same predicament in Poland in 1922 and gave the immigrants material aid.

There is no need to emphasize the appreciation of the Ukrainian immigrants for the needed help and opportunity for cultural development. Many of them took advantage of this by attending Czech schools. Few Ukrainian schools were organized. We firmly believed that the Red Regime would not last and we would be able to return and aid the development of our country. My husband and I decided to join these refugees and enrolled in the Ukrainian Polytechnic Institute. Our rugged life in Uzhorod was terminated, and we moved to the town of Podebrady where our school was located.

Before school started a babysitter was unavailable, and I was forced to bring Oksana along with me whenever I had business to do. Once while I was at the hall of our school, I met the president of our Institute. I greeted him in Ukrainian while trying to retain Oksana from running around.

“Are you a student?” he asked.

“Yes.”

“And this is your child?”

“Yes.”

“How will you be able to study, and when will you find the time?” he asked.

“Oh, it’s not too difficult. She is already one and a half years old.”

Little did I know or even suspect the difficulties that I would have. We occupied a one-room apartment, and Oksana would not go to sleep if the light was on. I used to go to bed with her at seven o’clock. At two or three in the morning, I would get up to study until she woke up.

Oksana herself found a babysitter. Once I asked a woman on the street if she knew of anyone who would take care of my daughter while I attended lectures. Just as I was asking this, Oksana ran up to her and hugged her. They liked each other instantly, and the woman said she was available for babysitting. This solved my problem.

There were many other problems with which I had difficulty. One such problem was with Oksana’s playmates, for they were Czechs. Once I watched them from the window in our apartment.

They were building sand castles, and then they ran into the orchard picking and eating the ripe currants off the bushes. They forbade Oksana to do this. She stood outside in the yard watching the Czech children with envy. Then she ran upstairs and poured out her questions to me.

“Why do they have everything they want and we don’t?”

“Because they are Czech children and it is their house, their country. They belong here, and they have the right to act as they please,” I offered as an answer.

“Then why are we here?” she again questioned.

“You know that our home is in Ukraine. There your grandfather also has a big house and a big orchard. Now the Bolsheviks are there, and they may have us sent to Siberia, just as they sent your uncle and aunt. If you were there, you could enjoy all that your grandfather would give you; but maybe your parents could not be there. Would you like that? Let us be grateful to the Czech people and not expect more than they are willing to give. Go downstairs and play by yourself. Show the Czech children that you are not envious. Be proud that you are a little Ukrainian girl.”

Our life in Czechoslovakia was poor. We lived in a furnished room most economically. With little or no employment, we were forced to live on our scholarship, and this provided merely the bare necessities of existence. Yet we suffered no discontentment. Our rich intellectual life, education, and the aspiration to return to a free Ukraine in the near future made the years spent as university students happy ones.

There were thousands of immigrants in Czechoslovakia like our small family. Many took advantage of the educational opportunities. Education became for us a thing of great importance. We all hoped for the immediate overthrow of the Red Regime and the re-establishment of a free Ukrainian Republic. It was towards this end that we dedicated our life of education. My husband was majoring in agriculture. I was studying economic cooperatives. We both planned to contribute to the economic development of our country when it became free. The other Ukrainians living in Czechoslovakia also realized that only an educated people could rescue our beloved Ukraine.

Finally that day came when our proximate goal was accomplished. We had received our diplomas and degrees, the certificates that we knew our professions. Now we were faced with a new problem. We were economists, chemists, engineers, agriculturalists, etc. and had studied with the intention of applying our knowledge in the service of our country. What were we to do? We were in a country that was our home temporarily but, nevertheless, a country which really did not want us to make ourselves too much at home. We were faced with the choice of returning to Ukraine and risking execution or of forgetting home.

By this time, Ukraine was incorporated into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as one of the "equal and sovereign constituent republics." In theory, Ukraine was an independent state and even became one of the charter members of the United Nations. However, in practice Ukraine is a colony of Soviet Russia. The so-called Ukrainian government in Kiev was a puppet government imposed upon the Ukrainian people with the pretention of developing Ukrainian culture. Many exiles did return, and during the early twenties there did occur a flowering of Ukrainian culture. "Away from Moscow" was the motto of those days. Many of our colleagues who believed in the sincerity of our puppet government went back home. Everyone of them was exterminated during the following years.

My husband's pro-Russian brother, who used to argue with us about Ukrainian independence, sent a messenger to us in Czechoslovakia trying to convince us to return to Ukraine. My husband rejected his invitation, offering the excuse of his poor health.

A few months later, I received a letter from my dear nephew, Dmitry, in which he wrote: "Our country is in great need of educated people who can bring about a cultural development. Your ideals are always to serve our people. Stop giving your ability and education to the capitalists. Please come, we need you home."

I was agitated by his letter. When his letter came, my husband was in the sanatorium again. I was bewildered. I did not have anyone with whom I could discuss this letter. I just remembered the old days of having many sincere discussions with Dmitry. For the time being, I forgot the Bolshevik police, censors, and

sympathizers like my brother Ivan or Kathy. Openly I wrote and told him that it was my deepest wish to return home, but how could I trust the Bolshevik regime who arrested and persecuted my friends who did return? I cited the example of Michael Hrushevsky, the first president of the free Ukrainian Republic. He was promised freedom to practice his historical research in Kiev, but he is now in Moscow under house arrest.

I mailed this letter and never heard from either Dmitry or my beloved sister Matrona. Two years later, my other sister wrote to me. Between the lines, I understood that all my pictures and letters that I ever sent were confiscated. Matrona and Dmitry were imprisoned for several months and considered enemies of the people upon their releases. Dmitry's medical career was ruined. Even now, the memory of this incident makes my heart heavy with sorrow.

About one year later, I was approached by a Bolshevik agent operating in Czechoslovakia with the proposition to work for the Soviets. At that time, I was employed in Prague at the Slavic Library where I was doing research work on the Bolshevik Revolution. This agent offered to double my salary if I would change my loyalty and work for the Soviets.

This same type of incident was repeated twice. The Bolshevik agents offered me a good salary and excellent opportunities. They even asked me if I would work for them here in the United States. This shattered my belief in the honesty and dedication of some of our Ukrainian leaders. If the Bolsheviks were so anxious to have me who has neither an outstanding leadership ability nor a dynamic personality on their side, imagine how hard they were trying to tempt our political, professional, and cultural leaders. Maybe our goal was the same, independent Ukraine; but definitely our means were different and, at times, contradictory. The Bolsheviks were working hard to weaken our unity, and this is our most impending danger. They were trying to put into practice the adage "Divide and conquer."

Under Stalin, the GPU grip tightened. Every vestige of Ukrainian life, art, and culture differing from Moscow's was regarded as a manifestation of Ukrainian nationalism and was ruthlessly nipped in the bud. Any cultural movement by the

Ukrainians was suppressed and mercilessly persecuted. Thousands died: poets, novelists, scientists, journalists, clergy. There was a pogrom of those Ukrainian cultural leaders who stood for freedom and creativity. Even Ukrainian communists were not exempted from this purge. Many of these who still valued Ukrainian traditions shared the same fate as the Ukrainian Nationalists, extermination by their own hand or by the party. Non-communists were silenced or wiped out whenever they dared express themselves in the merest whisper.

* * *

The Bolshevik agrarian reform system was an abomination. It was a system of legalized terror. Collectivization and the requisition of agricultural projects brought about the famine which caused the deaths of nearly ten million people during the Stalin regime. In his memoirs, Winston Churchill wrote about this horrible event in human history:

“The collective farm policy was a terrible struggle,” said Stalin.

“I thought you would have found it bad,” said Churchill, “because you were dealing with ... millions of small men.”

“Ten millions,” he said, holding up his hands. “... we took the greatest trouble to explain it to the peasants. It was no use arguing with them. ... (the peasant) always answers that he doesn’t want the collective farm.”

“What happened?” I asked.

“Oh, well,” he said. “... some of them were given land ... in the province of Tomskoor, the province of Irkutsk, or farther north, but the great bulk were ... wiped out.”

. . .

I record, as they come back to me, these memories and the strong impression I sustained at the moment of millions of men and women being blotted out or displaced forever.

Between the years 1929-1932, the well-to-do honest and industrious farmers were destroyed because they opposed the Soviet regime and its policy of collectivization. Farmers were sent to the north where they were allowed to die of hunger, cold, and disease, deprived of even the most elementary of human rights and dignity. Entire families were uprooted and sent to this northern

wasteland, old men and women, young children and babies; none was spared. In transit to the north, many died. Mothers were not allowed to bury their children who died on the road. It was not at all uncommon to see dead babies being thrown into the snow because there were no coffin for burial and no priest to administer the last sacraments. Many of those same parents who buried their children in the snow were in turn buried in like manner by well-meaning friends. With the bones of these Ukrainian children and their mothers, Stalin paved all the roads and wildernesses of the immense "Mother Russia."

During the imposed famine in Ukraine, the grain elevators in the USSR were bursting with Ukrainian grain. The Bolsheviks depressed the world market by dumping grain. At that time, the dying Ukrainian villagers who went to the capitals to beg for alms on the streets were hunted down by the Red police and then thrown outside the city limits to perish along the roads.

This is a terrible page in Ukrainian history. This artificial but well planned famine caused untold suffering and sacrifice for our people, who wanted nothing other than freedom and independence. Stalin was also destroying the spiritual elite who inspired our people to social justice. He subjected them to a terrible inquisition which finds no parallel in any of the inquisitions during the Medieval Ages. By the use of terror, the Bolsheviks were striving to mold 100 nationalities into the so-called "One Soviet People," which means in actuality "One Russian People." The baseness, cynicism, and cruelty of the Bolsheviks knows no limits. "The end justifies the means" is actually their true motto, and they are ever ready to use any means. During Stalin's five-year plan for the reconstruction of the man, there were eleven million people in Russian prisons and concentration camps.

* * *

The chance for obtaining employment in Europe was extremely poor. Jobs were difficult to find and, if found, hard to secure. This was true not only for the immigrants but also for the native born citizens.

At this point, the idea of emigration occurred to us. As an agricultural engineer, my husband was granted a visa to the United States. We hoped that America would justify our efforts to make

the most of opportunities. Naturally, the primary economic factor affected our decision. We were seeking security and freedom from the oppression which our beloved people in Ukraine were experiencing. We loved the democratic way of life which respects individualism and promotes self-reliance and confidence in one's personal life and in the life of one's nation. For us it stood as a symbol of freedom, welcome to all who seek it. When we sighted the Statue of Liberty, it was the culmination of all our hopes and ambitions.

Arriving in the United States, we went through a painful readjustment and a basic transformation. We settled in New York among Ukrainians who were American in their physical and external aspects. They were different from us culturally and socially.

With no financial reserves we were forced to seek immediate work. Working among the lower classes and doing the lowest type of work did not give us much security. While we parents were at work, our children were left alone to the influence of the American educational system and the children of other national extractions. This greatly weakened our family ties. Children did not understand the components of the parents' personalities: nationality, culture, personal aspirations, etc. Parents were left alone, unable to influence their children.

We organized a Ukrainian school for the children of Ukrainian descent. I felt at home again exercising all the ability of my beloved work, teaching. The children of our school had pleasant experiences singing Ukrainian songs, reading, writing, and having performances for our own enjoyment and for our audiences, which consisted mainly of the children's parents and friends.

For the financial support of our family, I was a dressmaker. My education, which was geared for teaching economics, was of no use to me. Neither was a course that I had taken in dressmaking in Prague. My small income derived from dressmaking helped supplement our living expenses that consumed most of my husband's salary. Oksana was coming along beautifully in school. She was also learning to play the piano and studying art. She did not make friends with the neighborhood children since we were different in background and in our way of thinking. Years went by spent in manual labor and in hardship. My husband deceased.

It was a difficult day for me in the dress shop.

“What is the matter with you today? Can’t you do your work properly so you wouldn’t have to rip it again? When are you going to finish those hems? We need those dresses for tonight.”

I could not concentrate on my work. My thoughts kept straying back to our little apartment on the fifth floor of a tenement building in the Slavic ghetto on the Lower East Side of New York City. At 16 Oksana became ill.

The doctor told me that Oksana was to remain in bed with perfect quiet until such a time as he could make arrangements for her to be sent to a tuberculosis sanatorium. There was no one at home to take care of her, and I could not leave my job because I would not be able to get it back. The main thing was that this was our only income, and with it we had to pay our rent and meager expenses.

One day I hastily bought our food on my way home from work, took the mail from the mailbox, and ran upstairs. Suddenly, I saw a familiar handwriting on one envelope. “Not from Prague? What is he doing in Ukraine?” Yes, it was from Frank. I made an effort to remain calm and cheerful when talking with Oksana during supper. I excused myself, saying that I was tired. I went into my small room, closing the door behind me.

He wrote me that upon the invitation of the Soviet Government, as a president of a Czech electrical industry, he was visiting a new hydroelectric station on the Dnieper River. The country greatly resembles the description he had envisioned from my stories and from the songs of our Capella. He was only sorry that I could not see it now. Ukraine is now heavily industrialized and is taking a leading place in the production of electricity, coal, steel, pig iron, etc.

I had a long soothing cry. Couldn’t he see the misery, suffering, and cruelty which were underlying that shining surface? Didn’t he know that all the prosperous farmers perished in the concentration camps and prisons? Didn’t he hear of the devastating famine in Ukraine which consumed millions of Ukrainian lives? Why are his eyes filled with darkness concerning those events? Why do Russians fill the political, military, technical, scientific, administrative, and cultural cadres? Doesn’t he ask himself where are the Ukrainians

who should hold these positions? Where is the Ukrainian intelligentsia? Doesn't he know they fill the prisons, labor camps, and concentration camps. Oh! If only he could see my despair and indignation.

I did not have time to ponder over the letter. Oksana was waiting to talk with me. I had to pack a few of her belongings as our doctor had made arrangements for her to go to a tuberculosis sanatorium in upper New York State.

This was the last letter that I ever received from Frank. I had no desire to answer it until a few years later when Czech President Benesh gained the status of a satellite country from Russia. I knew that there was an intensive "Russification" of Czechoslovakia accompanied by the reorganization of national industry aimed at the incorporation of Czechoslovakia into the Soviet Empire. I was curious to know of Frank's reaction to these events. I did not want to write and jeopardize his safety as I had done to my nephew Dmitry. I merely wanted to send my regards. My friends in Prague informed me that he was not there any longer. Was he eliminated as a Czech patriot?

* * *

"There is always a silver lining behind dark clouds," said Oksana's doctor in trying to console me.

The silver lining came to us with my determination to better our condition. After ten months Oksana's health was improving, but she had to be transferred from the private to the municipal sanatorium. I doubted if the transfer and problem of readjustment would be beneficial to her health. In her letters, Oksana begged me not to send her to the municipal sanatorium. I obtained consent from the doctor to keep Oksana at home but definitely not in a fifth floor apartment in an East Side tenement. I rented a larger place and bought furniture from the Salvation Army to help furnish our rooms and three furnished rooms which we subleased in a big comfortable house in New Jersey.

We spent happy days in that apartment. Oksana followed her schedule at home just as if she were in the sanatorium. She had her daily rest, watched her diet, and took her walks. The three rooms which we sublet paid for our rent, and two or three hours of

housework at forty cents an hour was enough to pay for our food. The rest of my day was spent with Oksana. After several months, she was well enough to resume her classes in the high school of Music and Art continuing her private piano lessons. She had an excellent piano teacher who prepared her for music competitions in which she won various awards. This required hours and hours of practice.

My dressmaking job and housekeeping did not provide us with enough income for survival. Factory work was difficult to find. I was inexperienced as a sewing machine operator and was fired in my first three places of employment. Eventually, I gained some experience with each job. I decided to apply for a job in a fourth factory near our home.

Oksana graduated from the high school of Music and Art with honors and accepted a position in an art studio against my insistent protests. I was afraid that she was not well enough for the job and that this type of work was too strenuous for her eyes. I felt guilty that I was unable to offer the opportunity and means for her higher education. I was healthy and capable of almost any kind of work by which I could earn additional funds.

Gradually, I gained speed and became neater in my factory work. My pay checks were increasing; and when I was receiving eighteen dollars a week, I decided that Oksana should go to college. This would be enough for our living and Oksana's tuition and books. I made all of our clothes, utilizing many designs and combinations.

I remember the morning Oksana was leaving for college. She was dressed in a black jumper which I made from a turned-over coat and a white embroidered blouse. I had mended this blouse several times and thought that I should throw it away. It made me sad to think that I could not afford better clothes. I was really surprised that evening when Oksana told me about her eventful day. Her art teacher had called her to the front of the class and indicated the taste and neatness of her clothes. I was happy to hear this but wondered whether or not the teacher had also seen her mended blouse.

I derived immense satisfaction from my ability to send Oksana to New Jersey State Teachers College. While Oksana was attending

college, I was introduced to the American intellectual way of life and the trend in education. Oksana and I were very close. She would tell me her secrets and related her inner thoughts and her opinions of her teachers and student friends. There were also those times when I would help her with her homework, term papers, and essays.

She did make a strong attempt to conquer math. She was a straight “A” student in all the other subjects. As an honor student, Oksana was asked by the head of the art department to work part-time as an assistant researching her material for her Ph.D.

Our life was happy together. I worked⁶ and Oksana attended school. My daily activities kept me busy. I worked in the factory in the morning, and during lunch hour I would hurry home and clean the furnished rooms, then return to work until three or four in the afternoon. In the evenings, I taught Russian in the Berlitz School of Languages. This was a very swift pace for me to keep up. My heart refused to accept the speed of my daily activities, but I did not have the time to see a doctor. The pain in my heart began to regulate my movements and activities. I moved slowly and lessened my walking speed.

The factory job and the cleaning of my furnished rooms were necessities for our income. Teaching in the evenings gave me great satisfaction and intellectual exercise which I was lacking for quite some time and had greatly desired.

At the Berlitz School, I think I enjoyed my classes and students more than they did. I utilized many shortcuts in my teaching method that I had applied when teaching Russian to my Ukrainian students some years ago. I really desired to go into teaching full-time. When I was inquiring for a position and references, one of my students, a prominent American, agreed to give me a recommendation; and he added, “With your ability, you can teach even a horse to speak Russian.”

The week Oksana graduated from college is very memorable for me. She won the Piano Artist’s Award from the Griffith Music Foundation as an artist pianist, and she received her Bachelor of Arts from New Jersey State Teachers College in Fine Arts. (Later she received her M.A. in Art Education from Columbia University, New York, establishing her career in teaching. She finally received

her Ph.D. in the Ukrainian Free University in Munich with her dissertation on the Ukrainian Sculptor Alexander Archipenko.) On Sunday of the same week, she was married and left with her Brazilian husband for San Paulo. I was left alone.

My home became empty and terribly sad. Gone were all those beautiful, inspiring musicals that we had had in our living room periodically. Oksana and I loved the First piano concerto of the Ukrainian composer, Tchaikovsky. This was our favorite composition. In it, Tchaikovsky utilizes the primitive themes and barbaric melodies of Ukrainian song, telling of the return of spring and how it is welcomed. Gone also were the parties and dinners which we had given for Oksana's friends. I loved all those young people and their gatherings they had in our home. Now that Oksana was married, such gatherings would be no longer. Many friendships would begin to dissipate. The thought of this grieved me. Oh, how happy I would be if I could go home to my sisters and brothers, nieces and nephews. I desired greatly to see all the family to fill the gap of years in which we did not correspond.

World War II intervened. During the German-Soviet War, both Stalin and Krushchev, having heard of their disloyalty to the Russian Regime, ordered executions of Ukrainian patriots and political prisoners. The war was the Russian excuse for the oppression of Ukraine. A large number of political refugees emigrated from the Ukraine to Europe. Over two million Ukrainian soldiers deserted from the Soviet Army to behind the German lines in order to escape their oppressors. Several thousand Ukrainians joined the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, a powerful Ukrainian underground resistance movement which fought against both the Nazis and the Soviets in Ukraine. This army continued its anti-Soviet resistance for many years.

At the Twentieth Party Congress, Krushchev stated that Stalin had desired to deport all the Ukrainians but there were too many of them and no place to which he could deport them. He wanted also to silence every sign of independent expression by his reign of terror because the Ukrainian intellectuals centered around Kiev were becoming a threat to the Russian Bolsheviks. Stalin wanted to stop the process of freedom of thought, expression, and creativity.

We were indignant at Stalin's actions and depressed because we

could not do anything to ease the inhuman treatment of our brother Ukrainians. While we lived in a country which respects human dignity, our countrymen were being subjugated as if they were cattle. Stalin wanted to turn every individual into a mere “screw” in the machinery of the state, a victim in a soulless world of automation, a blind follower of party directives. The rights and freedom of the individual were considered to be orientations toward the West, sympathetic with capitalism, and definitely contrary to the communistic way of life. It was painful, but the fact was obvious that Stalin’s cult of personality had a very deleterious influence. We still remember and can never forgive the Russians for murdering our leaders such as Simon Petlura, head of the Ukrainian National Republic and the Ukrainian government in exile, Colonel Eugene Konovaletz, head of the Ukrainian Nationalists, and thousands more. In recent years, Dr. Lev Rebet and Stefen Bandera were killed by a Russian trained agent who defected to West Germany and confessed to the crime of killing these leaders.

My hope for the resurrection of a free Ukraine never subsides. It increased when I became more familiar with the ideals and aspirations of the American government and its people.

It was these same ideals that I stressed in my application to the School of Industry and Labor Relations at Cornell University. To the question of my previous employment and experience, I stated that I was a teacher, singer, actress, executive secretary of the Ukrainian archive, and a historical researcher in Slavistics and had held positions as an educator, machine operator, houseworker, housekeeper, and teacher of Russian at the Berlitz School of Languages. I was accepted at the University and granted a scholarship.

I never suspected that I would have so many difficulties with my studies at Cornell University in New York. The American way of life is started in primary education and indoctrination increases throughout high school and college. Everything was new to me to the point that twenty-four hours a day for lectures, studies, and reading was too short.

In a private conversation with my history professor, he told me, “You are the first Russian that I have met who doesn’t speak

perfect English. All of my Russian friends, professors and high officials in Washington, are fluent in many languages and well-informed in many fields.”

“I am not a Russian,” I told him.

“Oh! So what about minor differences,” he protested. “Why do you bring in complications with your different languages, dialects? It is difficult enough to learn the Russian language.”

I desperately wanted to tell him how little he knew about the situation in the “Russian Empire.” The Russian elite, his friends, having all the privileges which accompany wealth, governesses, travel abroad, etc. were indoctrinated in the best of European art, languages, and culture at the time when I was brainwashed in my studies or was busy brainwashing poor Ukrainian children in my school. I felt that he would not understand my arguments; and, besides, he was my professor in American History.

It was only with great difficulty that I finished this first year of studies. Intellectually, I had reached the saturation point and was scheduled to have a serious operation. After the operation, at the beginning of the second year, I felt that I could not continue with this strenuous pace in my studies. In desperation, I left Cornell and became an assistant interviewer for the New York State Unemployment Insurance Agency.

The work was strenuous and depressing there. The majority of the unemployed felt unhappy by accepting unemployment insurance. They wanted to prove their ability and earn self-respect by working hard toward their success. Those workers wanted to direct their lives economically and in an orderly manner themselves. Some recipients were irritable, arguing for their rights when they misunderstood the rules. The work was physically and mentally exhausting. Sometimes I desired to go back to the clothes factory and take a job as a machine operator where my thoughts could be carefree, but I had lost my experience and the nimbleness of my fingers.

World War II brought devastation and ruin to Ukraine and everything Ukrainian. Once again, Ukraine attempted to secure its independence but was torn between the plans of Germany and Russia. These two countries wanted Ukraine to be a source of cheap slave labor and raw materials.

Again, a new liberation movement arose. Working in the German rear, the liberators wrought great havoc in the German communication lines. The Stalin regime, in order to arouse the Ukrainian population against the German invaders, gave license to the Ukrainians to strike up a patriotic tune. In fact, Stalin demanded that a passion for their land be stirred up in the people. V. Sosura, a prominent Ukrainian poet, took the Soviet leaders at their word and wrote the lyric, "Love Your Ukraine." Because of its concentrated patriotism, Stalin became apprehensive about the results of the poem's influence. The poem caused a storm over Sosura's head.

*Love your Ukraine, love as you would the sun,
The wind, the grasses and the streams together ...
Love her in happy hours, when joys are won,
And love her in her time of stormy weather.*

*Love her in happy dreams and when awake,
Ukraine in spring's white cherry-blossom veil.
Her beauty is eternal for your sake;
Her speech is tender with the nightingale.*

*As in a garden of fraternal races,
She shines above the ages. Love Ukraine
With all your heart, and with exultant faces
Let all your deeds her majesty maintain.*

*For us she rides alone on history's billows,
In the sweet charm of space she rules apart,
For she is in the stars, is in the willows,
And in each pulse-beat of her people's heart,*

*In flowers and tiny birds, and lights that shine,
In every epic and in every song,
In a child's smile, in maidens' eyes divine,
And in the purple flags above the throng ...*

*Youth! For her sake give your approving laughter,
Your tears, and all you are until you die ...
For other races you'll not love hereafter
Unless you love Ukraine and hold her high.*

*Young woman! As you would her sky of blue,
Love her each moment that your days remain.
Your sweetheart will not keep his love for you,
Unless he knows you also love Ukraine.*

*Love her in love, in labor, and in fight,
As if she were a song at heaven's portal ...
Love her with all your heart and all your might,
And with her glory we shall be immortal.*

During the days of the cooperation between the Allies and the Soviets, Stalin wanted back millions of Ukrainians who had been forcibly taken to Germany as slave laborers. Western statesmen had promised it to him at Yalta. This terrible news reached us from a camp for displaced persons. There were fights in which these displaced people resisted with all their might--their teeth and nails, tincans, sticks, and other primitive weapons--the armed soldiers who were trying to herd them together and deliver them to the Russians according to the Yalta agreement. Many Ukrainians preferred suicide, not wanting to return because they knew that punishment would be inflicted upon them; and they were right. The Pamphlet of Ivan Bahriany eloquently expressed the displaced Ukrainian's view:

"I am one of those hundreds of thousands of the Ukrainian people who do not want to go home under Bolshevism and so startle the whole world.

I am a Ukrainian, 38 years old, born in the region of Poltava of laboring parents, and now I am living with no fixed residence, in constant want, wandering like a homeless cur around Europe--hiding from the repatriation committee of the USSR, who want to send me "home." I do not want to go "home." There are hundreds of thousands of us who do not want to. They can come for us with loaded rifles, but we will put up a desperate resistance--for we prefer to die in a foreign land rather than go back to that "home." I put that word in quotation marks, for it is filled for us with horror, for it shows the unparalleled cynicism of the Soviet propaganda directed against us: the Bolsheviks have made for 100 nationalities one "Soviet home" and by that term they are building the terrible "prison of peoples," the so-called USSR.

. . .

My native land is Ukraine, one of the republics with "equal rights" in the federation called the USSR. I am not only not a criminal against my native land but, to help it, I have spent one third of my life even before the War in Soviet prisons and concentration camps.

I dream of it every night, and yet I do not want to go back to it.

Why?

Bolshevism is there.

Soviet Ukraine, according to the census of 1927, had a population of 32 million and in 1939 (twelve years later) ... 28 million.

Only 28 million? What happened to 4 million people after 1927? Where is the natural increase which in 12 years should have been at least 6-7 million?

That means more than 10 million? What happened to those 10 million of the Ukrainian population? What happened to them in the "land of flourishing socialism"?

That is why I do not want to go back under Bolshevism.

Through the fact (that is, Bahriany was the son of a Ukrainian proletarian) I have been not only a witness of what happened to those 10 million of the Ukrainian population, but also a part of those other millions who with them were murdered and impoverished systematically through all the years of Bolshevism.

. . .

In the years 1929-1932, Bolshevism declared war against the entire wealthy farming class with the slogan of "the annihilation of the kulak as a class." In reality this meant the annihilation of a colossal mass of people, the hard-working dirt farmers. That means the annihilation of the Ukrainian country population. The annihilation of the "kulak as a class" was in reality for us the annihilation of Ukraine as a nation, for the Ukrainians were 70% agricultural. Through this slogan of physical annihilation there were destroyed literally millions of Ukrainians, not only of the so-called "kulaks" but of the poor people, intellectuals and workmen.

. . .

In 1933 the Bolsheviks artificially organized a famine in Ukraine. Before the eyes of the whole world the Ukrainian village population died out in whole villages and regions. More than 5 million Ukrainian village people died that terrible death by famine at that time. No one in the Kremlin raised a finger to save these unfortunate people. This artificially prepared famine demanded colossal sacrifices from a people who wished for nothing but freedom and independence. That is why I hate Bolshevism and do not want to go "home."

. . .

In the years 1932-1939 the Bolsheviks annihilated the entire Ukrainian intellectual class; scholars, writers, artists, military men, political workers, and thousands and thousands of thinking people who formed the highest stratum of the people. Many of them were Communist who had fought heroically in the October Revolution, for its slogans of liberty and justice, equality and brotherhood, and who had during the entire time been true to these slogans.

I do not want to return to my native land because I love my native land. And love for one's native land, for one's people, that is national patriotism, and in the USSR is the greatest crime. It was so 25 years ago, it is so now. This crime is called in Bolshevik language--in the language of the red Moscow fascism--"local nationalism."

. . .

I do not want to go back to the Stalin "home," because the baseness, cynicism and cruelty of the Bolsheviks know no bounds. The party slogan which is expressed by the proverb "the end justifies all means" actually does not overlook any means.

A man under this regime is deprived of human dignity and the most elementary human rights. When the NKVD arrests a citizen (without regard to his age, status, or service to the people), no one can intercede for him or defend him. The true institution of defenders in court actually does not exist. There have not been open trials for political prisoners. Millions of people have been put to death when they did not know what they had done.

. . .

I do not want to go to the USSR because a human being there is not worth as much as an insect. In destroying people for nothing and for trifles, for a spoken word, an anecdote, a complaint at the hardness of life and in doing it with open cynicism the Bolsheviks put forward this formula:

"In the USSR there are enough people and there is no need to be fussy" and "it is better to break the ribs of one hundred innocent people rather than allow one guilty person to escape."

. . .

I do not want to go back under Bolshevism because I have been in prison with priests of various religious denominations and I have seen how they were beaten and murdered. At the order of Stalin they were destroyed in the USSR, and the churches were ruined. They beat out of human souls the slightest signs of the Christian religion and in a brutal loathsome manner.

. . .

I do not want to go back to the USSR because the Stalinist "socialistic" USSR is a social concentration camp of the enslaved people of 100 nationalities--people without rights--terrorized, frightened, hungry and poor.

. . .

I will return to my native land with millions of my friends, brothers and sisters, who are here in Europe and there in concentration camps in Siberia, when the totalitarian bloody Bolshevik system is wiped out like that of Hitler."

Soviet pressure upon the Ukrainians had increased. The old persecutions, liquidations, and deportations continued. The accusation of Ukrainian nationalism had been redoubled. Once more, Stalin renewed his efforts to eliminate all traces of Ukrainian tradition, attempting to mold Ukrainians into the Russian-Soviet models with their industrial and technological successes which are the ideal of the Bolsheviks.

When the truth about Soviet action began to be realized, those Ukrainians still in displaced person camps were allowed to remain. Even under the difficult conditions in the camps, they established Ukrainian schools in which a new literature and art began to flourish in a free exchange of thoughts and ideas among a creative people. It was a revival of the spirit of freedom and unfettered thought of audacity and creativity.

* * * * *

It was Christmas Eve. Peace on earth. I was sitting in my room alone trying to enjoy the Christmas carols sung over the radio. I turned to several stations to hear my beloved "Carol of the Bells." I succeeded and heard it twice on two different stations. I remembered when the Ukrainian Republican Capella sang it at almost every concert, usually with encores. I daydreamed and recalled the memory of when we sang it. This carol was the most beloved number in our repertoire everywhere--in Europe, in South America and in the United States. I was still listening when the announcer said "This is a Russian carol written by the Russian composer, M. Leontovich." How imprudent. M. Leontovich devoted his life to the creation of Ukrainian music. He was one of the millions of the outstanding Ukrainians victimized by Russian imperialistic policy. He was killed by the Russians and now his beloved "Carol of the Bells"--a Russian carol? It hurts to hear of such injustice and distortions of the truth. How can peace be achieved with such distortions?

* * *

Peace was far away from mankind. The United States was engaged in a cold and intensive war with the implacable enemy of our freedom and of our civilization as well. The Voice of America was initiated to combat Soviet lies with the truth and to get

information across the Iron Curtain to inform all that the American people are the friends of all enslaved people.

I was employed with the Voice of America in the Ukrainian section as translator-announcer. Our Capella had brought a message to freedom-loving people of our love for truth, liberty, and brotherhood. Now the Ukrainian section of the Voice of America would respond to the Ukrainian appeal to help promote the resistance against Moscow's determination, I thought--

Disappointments started from the very beginning. The Voice of America had failed to make proper use of its potentialities in the psychological campaign of encouragement of the peoples behind the Iron Curtain "because of senile dictatorship by the State Department personnel" (UKRAINIAN WEEKLY, July 21, 1952.) They were not senile towards Moscow. They knew that more than half of the Soviet population is composed of non-Russian peoples who were conquered by Moscow and are kept in subjugation. These people are the weakest link in the Soviet system. Ukraine and its natural resources are a springboard for aggressive Russian imperialism.

We translated our programs word for word from the Russian programs. We were especially abused by our editor. He was a Russian professor of numismatics with a limited acquired knowledge of Ukrainian. He was not familiar with the Ukrainian idiom, bright colorful expressions, which he usually eliminated from our translation because they did not coincide with his translation which he did prior to ours with the aid of a Russian-Ukrainian dictionary.

The Ukrainian organizations and the press were defiant about the Ukrainian broadcasts. The Vice-President of our government-in-exile wrote an open letter to the press stressing the harmful service the Voice of America was doing to the Ukrainian cause and insisted that it be curtailed because it deprives the Ukrainian people of the hope in American justice.

There was not much merriment among our workers. We hardly looked at each others eyes. I felt that I had received my salary for Judas work, selling my abilities and patriotism against the Ukrainian cause. I did not have the desire to buy new clothes, treat myself to some goodies, or even to attend the theater with this

money. To quiet my conscience, after every payday I sent packages with food and clothing to the displaced Ukrainians in the camp in Germany. In return I received many beautiful embroideries and wood carvings which still adorn my home and remind me of those days which were full of disappointments.

I suggested that the open letter of our Vice-President be translated into English. I asked the employees to write a petition which endorsed this letter. This petition was to be sent to the State Department in order that they would promote a policy with the Voice of America that would be more beneficial to the American government as well as the Ukrainian people.

One employee, Maryna, said: "That's the most ridiculous suggestion I have ever heard. They'll surely fire us all and merely replace us with others."

Once again I felt the pain which accompanies the feeling of being alone. Hardly anyone spoke to me. Once in our powder room, Tania, our secretary, approached me and tried to explain her feelings. "Please understand. I have nothing against you. If I am seen talking to you, it will effect my good standing here at the office."

I took it upon myself to translate the letter and sent it to senators, congressmen, and other high officials. Several Ukrainian organizations endorsed it. There was no response. Gradually, my work days became less and less, from three to two days a week. I mailed another suggestion and signed it.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE UKRAINIAN BROADCAST OF THE VOICE OF AMERICA

I have been employed by the Ukrainian Unit of Voice of America since November 1949. The careful following of our broadcast and the reaction to it of the Ukrainian listeners and Ukrainian press gave me a great experience and understanding of how we can create and promote a good will with the contents and presentations.

It is very important to remember all the time that people behind the Iron Curtain risk their lives by listening to our programs. Therefore, Ukrainian Broadcast should create an interest and give

the Ukrainian people encouragement, moral support, and assurance that their struggle for liberation is just.

We do not know how the Ukrainian people behind the Iron Curtain react to our programs. The only glimpse of this reaction we can detect among the Ukrainian emigrants scattered all over the world and especially recent refugees, formerly oppressed by the Soviet regime.

Although in overwhelming majority the opinions of the Ukrainian Press and organizations about the Ukrainian Broadcast are negative, they have many constructive suggestions which are in complete coordination with the policy of the Department of State. For instance, if we carefully follow the Memorandum from Mr. Alfred Puhan of December 10, 1951, a "Style Book," we would benefit in our style and eliminate the criticism for our writing and presentations. Our broadcast will greatly improve if we take all this constructive criticism into careful consideration.

However, there are many writers in the Ukrainian Press who criticize our work and are not familiar with the content of our broadcast. It will be a great advantage to our cause if we send our scripts regularly to Ukrainian organizations and newspapers. The editors would be able to check and correct a groundless criticism, and it would give them a possibility to use our material in their newspaper, stating its source. Our broadcast will benefit by this, and it will add to our cause.

During the few hours of our programs, the Ukrainian listeners are anxious to hear news, features, and comments adapted specifically for Ukrainians. There are many criticisms that the Ukrainian programs are dry translations and mere repetitions of Russian material. We should stress as frequently as possible in comments, current events, news examples of American culture, political and economical life, the hope and understanding of the Ukrainian struggle for liberation. This we will achieve much better by using original American sources, selecting and adapting them accordingly to the Ukrainian cause.

The Ukrainian broadcasts are of great interest to and stimulate discussions among the Ukrainian emigrants. They realize that these broadcasts should portray the policy of the Department of State to create a good will and understanding of the Ukrainian cause. The

honest and sincere work of the Ukrainian Unit toward those goals will be acknowledged and greatly appreciated by the Ukrainian listeners.

I hope you will take my suggestions into consideration and will give me the possibility to explain them in detail orally.

Very truly yours,

Sophia Haevska

Shortly after this letter, I was informed that my employment at Voice of America was terminated.

If there were many disappointments in my life, they all were insignificant compared with this, even if they were all put together.

I was so depressed after this incident that I didn't even have the spirit to claim that justice be done. My friends and some Ukrainian organizations advised me to reciprocate. I asked them to please leave me alone and told them that only the passage of time would help to heal this desperation and bitterness which I now felt.

Is the State Department so blind or stupid that it cannot comprehend what is a Russian problem? I learned to respect and love my adopted country. I learned to appreciate the aspirations of the Government of the United States--justice for all. The justice due to me or all those victims of Russian colonialism, first under the Tsars and later under the Bolsheviks, was nowhere to be found. There are about fifty captive nations enslaved by Soviet Russia. They struggle for their God-given rights of freedom and independence. They look to the free world and especially to the United States for moral support, guidance, and encouragement. Why don't the United States government and the American people extend their helping hand to these captive nations that are their true allies?

I kept on repeating "prison of nations." In English it does not have the eloquent ring as in Russian "turma narodov." This is the best known expression among the captive nations for Soviet Russia. It is not said in their native languages because it loses some of the color and significance in translation. "Turma narodov. Turma narodov."

To sooth my indignance, I decided to seek manual labor. I obtained a housekeeping job for a business couple and their son. It

was very suitable. My duties were to clean their large house, but I found myself doing extra chores, mending clothes, etc. In the evenings when the family was home, I was cheerful and pleasant. But when left alone, I cried.

Several months later, I met an employee from the Voice of America. I was surprised by his pleasant and friendly attitude toward me. Never had he spoken to me before in the office, especially the last few weeks of my employment.

“How is everything?” I asked.

“As usual. We even did a translation from a Russian script about Shevchenko.”

“Why didn’t the Ukrainian section prepare it?”

“Don’t you know?”

“How is the head of the Slavic department?”

“Fine. Do you know he says he’s Ukrainian also?”

“And Maryna?”

“Maryna is not with us anymore. She had an argument with our editor about some of the phrases she used in her translation. She forgot herself and in desperation threw an ink well at him.”

Now it was my turn to call her ridiculous. If she and our other co-workers would have supported me in my suggestion to translate the letter of our Vice-President, maybe everything would be different now.

I met one of my former co-workers one day who gave me this bit of information. “The chief editor of VOA is seriously ill in the hospital.” It was not long afterwards that I found out that he died. Poor man, I thought, it was not easy to sell his patriotism, even if it was for a good salary.

An article in the NEW YORK TIMES, January 4, 1953, gave me some consolation too: “State Department Demotes Kohler.” Mr. F. D. Kohler was the director of the broadcasts. “He was arrested for drunkenness following an automobile accident. Found locked in the trunk of his car at the time of the accident were two secret documents.” Had he been asked to work for the Soviet Union as I was asked four times to work for them? The ideals of a nation are not always congruent with the people who represent them.

I remembered the Bolshevik follower in my village in Ukraine who brought a broom with him to support his arguments. Pointing to the bristles of the broom and showing how they were connected he said, "If we were united, neither the Germans nor any other enemy would defeat us." Men such as this ignorant peasant knew the real weakness of the Soviet Empire, but the State Department and the U.S. Government poured billions into the Cold War against Bolshevism, in Berlin, Korea, Vietnam and where next? The Holy Mother Russia is dear to every Russian regardless of his political views. Those Russians in the State Department are for an undivided Russia also. They are "well informed and fluent in many languages," as my history professor at Cornell told me. They also are good entertainers. Did the Bolsheviks approach only me to work for them? And besides, as my professor at Cornell University said, "Why all these different languages?"

The freedom loving world dearly pays for its ignorance and fails to comprehend the Bolshevik subversive sets. The prodigious irony of the current situation is the fact that beneath the surface of most of the Soviet accomplishments and strong points rest their most profound weaknesses. The basic and real decision is to meet the Cold War challenge of Moscow's colonialism and emphasize the defense of freedom in the subjugated nations.

The Soviet Russians have developed the art of propaganda. When Lenin was shaping the Soviet Union more than half a century ago, he said that propaganda was the most important of all the activities. It could influence the minds of many people. It works wonders by combining the ideal of a popular writer with one of the favorite themes of the regime. Regardless of the cleverness, there do exist deep and fundamental weaknesses in Moscow's ideological propaganda. After centuries of indoctrination, millions of Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians, Tartars, et. al. still consider the Russian Empire as "Turma narodov." The Voice of America has a good opportunity to demolish the image of the Russian Empire, the emptiness of the so-called communist ideology, the colonial exploitation of the captive non-Russian nations.

Moscows's paramount goal is imperial rule and power, yet beneath the surface of this imperial power grows the genuine

patriotic nationalism of the captive nations. Krushchev was furious at the Captive Nations Week Resolution passed by Congress in 1959.

The ultimate weapon is still man with his loyalties, morale and will, although the Russian Empire threatens the free world with “global missiles” and there are those pacifist groups who naively propagate the Soviet propaganda. Even our leaders invoke from time to time the pangs of “nuclear power.” It is painful to observe how we continue to miss our opportunities for eventual Cold War victory.

* * *

After the birth of my grandson, Victor, Oksana was very ill for several months, and she asked me to help her with the baby. I had completely forgotten how to care for a baby. It was almost entirely new to me. Our neighbors, young American mothers, were wonderful. They were very proficient in helping me to become an expert in baby nursing. It was heartwarming to watch my grandson growing, trying to get up on his feet, smiling and moving perpetually.

I found out that the Tolstoy Foundation had many requests for Russian teachers. I went to inquire about a position. At my interview I told them I am a Ukrainian who had been educated in Russian schools and had many years of experience in teaching the Russian language. One of the women present in the office during the interview asked, “Why don’t the Ukrainians like the Russians?”

“It is not a matter of like or dislike,” I said. “The Ukrainians want to be masters of their homes, villages, cities and towns, and their own country.”

. . .

HOPE

Our favorite Ukrainian author Mykola Ponedilok relates this story that actually happened to him in the bookstore where he was employed. Here are some excerpts from his story:

Near closing time one day, a customer came in. He was rather special for he was from Kiev, from the Ukrainian Soviet Embassy. We began talking and soon I was asking questions and reminiscing about my homeland. "It has been three weeks since I left Kiev and came to the United States."

"How are things in Kiev?" I asked.

"Chestnut trees are blooming. Sun, flowers, green trees..."

"And queues for salt and for buttons," I completed. He didn't show his anger, rather he smiled at my wit. I hurled questions at him: How are things there? Are they the same as they used to be? Do people still report each other for a careless word? Are they still working on the collective farms for wages next to nothing? Does the "black cow" still seize innocent sleeping people whom the Bolsheviks drag out of their homes during the night?

"Not exactly the same," he answered.

"And how 'not the same'? Not as many arrests? What methods? More or less?"

Skillfully, as any diplomat would, he directed the conversation to a more pleasant level.

. . .

"You are wasting away here. Home in the Ukraine, you would have graduated from the institute with a good profession and would be living a luxurious life. But here you are in America dusting these books and relishing an alien bread far from your homeland."

"Yes, probably I am perishing. But you know the saying: 'It is better to die standing than to live on one's knees.' Or as it goes: 'A freedom loving foreign country is better than a subjugated motherland.'"

The diplomat retreats again.

. . .

He then changed to a more general conversation. He said

that I have distinct diction and an expressive face.

"You should have seen my face during the first of the five-year plans. In 1933, during the famine, it wasn't I but my skeleton. You know about that horrible famine in Ukraine. I am sure that you have seen it."

"No, I didn't see it."

"I know that you didn't see it. For if you would admit that you have seen that famine, they would change your foreign diplomatic passport to Siberia. But I, sir diplomat, have seen the famine. I myself was starving.

Concerning our discussion, it is good that we talked here in America." I purposely emphasized 'here' in order that he might put me to the question as why.

"Why do you stress 'here'?" he asked. "We could have met in a bookstore in Kiev and had our discussion there, not only here."

"We could have? Of course, there is only a little difference. Here, after our discussion, I will go to sleep without any worry. There, I and everyone who heard our conversation would be conducted through the rear entrance. You know, sir diplomat, where we would be taken?"

"Where?"

"Somewhere in the cellar and there, probably someone like you, curly, dignified, educated, intelligent, would break my bones."

We exchanged sharp glances then he turned to disappear. But my co-worker who had been listening and didn't say a word during our conversation unexpectedly said to the diplomat as he was leaving, "Comrade or mister, whichever you prefer, I would like to ask you something."

"Go ahead, please."

"Tell me, is there an Insurgent Army in Ukraine?"

He answered sharply, "No, there is not!"

"That's not the truth," I interrupted. "There is an Insurgent Army."

"You say there is?"

"Yes, diplomat, there is."

"May I know the quantity of this army?" He meant this to be a pun.

"Millions, millions," I said.

"Maybe you can tell me where this secret army is hiding. In

what woods?"

I opened my coat and placed my hand on my chest. "There, deep in the corner of my heart, that army is hiding. It is waiting for the appropriate time when it will explode stronger than any bomb or cannon. It will overthrow you and the real emissaries from Kiev will be born."

"I believe in it, diplomat. Would you like to hear more?"

"What?"

"I can see in your eyes that you believe in that Insurgent Army also."

He blushed with embarrassment; then disappeared without another word.

* * *

Clarence A. Manning, Professor of Eastern European Languages at Columbia University, said, "The story of the Ukraine throughout the ages is the tragic story of a great people who have been doomed to suffer for nearly a thousand years every form of oppression and denationalization that the mind of man can create."

"With it all, Ukrainians have clung to their own land and their language and traditions. Every time there was a swing in the pendulum of fate, they have responded to it and have sought to secure the right of being masters of their own destiny.

"World War II was merely another devastating development, exactly as the Cossack wars of the seventeenth century and World War I, which almost saw their independence.

"The story of Ukraine makes us realize something of the problems of Eastern Europe. It is rich in figures of first rank in every field of human endeavor. It shows clearly that the way to world peace, even in the atomic age, cannot be cleared by unjust and hypocritical compromises but that man, if he is to continue and develop, must remain loyal to the principles of the moral law and work at whatever cost for the triumph of justice and right."

The Soviet oppressors are doing everything possible to give the impression to the world that Ukraine is not captive but that it is a "sovereign and independent" state which may secede from the USSR of its own volition.

Moscow continues, with reinforced vigor, its traditional policy

of the Russification of Ukraine, aiming at the cultural and linguistic genocide of the Ukrainian people. The Russian language is imposed everywhere as a “language of a higher culture and international significance.” Many Ukrainian intellectuals perpetually are arrested, tried, and sentenced for their use of the Ukrainian language.

Top-ranking Bolsheviks recently warned the Ukrainian youth against listening to Western radio broadcasts, but deep in the Ukrainian heart is hidden the Insurgent Army.

“Loss of courage means loss of human dignity,” said the late Ukrainian poet and rebel, Vasyl Symonenko. His flaming poetry seldom passed the Soviet censors. His verses were copied, mostly by hand, and circulated illegally throughout Ukraine. A diary of the poet also was kept out of Soviet hands. The main figure in his poems is a Ukrainian peasant, old, sick, deprived of his rights, damned to slavery on a collective farm. Old and hungry, above all hungry, not only for bread but for justice and love. From the field, the old man has taken a few ears of corn. Symonenko defends the “accused” and names as the real culprits the “demagogues and liars.”

A son of a Ukrainian peasant, Symonenko sees the Bolshevik agrarain reform systems as one of perpetual horror, a system of legalized terror in a gigantic prison country.

*Where the warden jangles his keys
and the protecting gate creaks.
Executioner with bloody swords
in coats as black as the night
play with oddly-shaped bells,
with heads guillotined from shoulders ...*

*Blood flows beneath phlegmatic
ramparts,
the cry dies on the lips ...*

*A century's scorn and outrage
cause the dead to turn in their graves.*

Symonenko's works, which are winning ground and causing unrest among the people, and their reception are an unmistakable sign of the centuries-old idea of a sovereign Ukrainian state from the Sian to the Kuban, from the Pripet Marshes to the Black Sea. The young poet had written of his Ukraine:

thousands of times by Ukrainians, old and young. Ukrainians are members in many Ukrainian-American organizations, clubs, fraternal lodges, veteran and youth societies, women's and sport groups, as well as cultural, social, church and political organizations. They dedicate their ability and knowledge to the world and the people of their adopted country. Many of them are prominent in their professions and have continued many scientific discoveries. The President of the Communication Satellite Corporation, Dr. Joseph V. Charyk, is one such man.

He was raised among Ukrainian customs and traditions. "You see," he said, "much of what I have been able to achieve in my life, I owe to my Ukrainian parents."

The late sculptor Alexander Archipenko is one of the first to apply the aesthetics of cubism to the creation of new sculptural forms. He was an original and accomplished artist who has secured a place in the history of art because of his accomplishment in our generation. He was a Ukrainian and remained close to the visual and spiritual values of Ukraine. He was one of the masters of modern sculpture. We can go down the list and name more accomplished Ukrainians. Our youth is growing, and all their achievements will be shared in America and the free world culture.

* * * * *

June 27, 1964 will ever be remembered to Ukrainians at home and abroad. For on that day was dedicated a memorial to our beloved Ukrainian poet-martyr, Taras Shevchenko, in Washington, D.C. We showed the world our strength and devotion to our great heritage of which our Poet Laureate reflects the great light, continuation, perpetuation and the best of our cultural heritage.

This was one of the most heartwarming tributes to our Bard. There were many thousands of participants with hundreds of flags and numerous bands marching from the White House to the dedication site at the corner of P and 22nd Streets. It was one of the most colorful and orderly parades Washington has ever seen. In the parade there were 40,000 participants. This march was the momentous beginning of the day-long festivities associated with the dedication of Shevchenko's statue. The marchers came not only from the United States but also Canada, Latin America, Europe, and even Australia. Their faces lighted with joy and excitement in

anticipation of the historic event.

Representatives of all Ukrainian central, national, and local organizations, as well as from other nationalities, paraded along with thousands of uniformed youths and masses of people to the tunes of Ukrainian and American marching songs. The All-Negro Royal Sabres Drum and Bugle Corps, one of many non-Ukrainian groups, participated in the Shevchenko parade. What an array of colors. This was indeed Taras Shevchenko Day. The day of the proud manifestation of strength, glory and unity. The day of solemn tribute to the great hero of Ukraine's glorious past. The day of firm resolve that his prophecy must and will come true. There was a seemingly endless sea of people.

Those people from Canada, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay; from Germany, England, Belgium and France; from New York, Chicago, Cleveland, San Francisco, and Detroit--all of them came to greet their Taras Shevchenko in the capital of the land of the free.

The distant noise of a bustling city intruded into the enveloping silence which accompanied the solemnity of the unveiling of the statue. A crowd of a hundred thousand filled the neatly landscaped plot, maintaining a mood of composure and restraint while watching the ceremonies with sincere gratitude and humble tribute. The American and Ukrainian national anthems were followed by speeches from former President Dwight Eisenhower, who called for "a new world movement ... dedicated to the independence and freedom of people of all the captive nations of the entire world." Another inspiring feature was the message of President Lyndon B. Johnson. Following these were the speeches of high ranking dignitaries and representatives of various Ukrainian organizations. As the speeches and addresses came to an end, Ukrainian girls in solemn procession carried a stainless steel urn down the aisle and placed it at the base of the statue. The urn contained a handful of soil from Ukraine's poet laureate, Taras Shevchenko's, mound in Kanive, Ukraine. It also contained all pertinent historic documents that will tell of the great saga of the monument to Taras Shevchenko.

In complete silence the urn was placed into the prepared opening by two men, sculptor Leo Mol and architect Radoslav Zuk. They made this noble feat possible. A special place of honor was given to

Dr. Bohdan Olesnytsky of Maplewood, N. J., who, as the leading individual contributor to the Shevchenko Memorial Fund, represented thousands of donors and contributors throughout American and other points of the world. This concluded the official ceremony of dedication and legal transfer of the memorial under the care of the capital authorities.

The unveiling of the Taras Shevchenko statue is in line with the interest and prestige of both a free and independent America and an enslaved and captive Ukraine.

Moscow, the jailer of Ukraine, had been doing everything possible to undermine and defeat the project. It is no accident that the statue of Taras Shevchenko has been erected in our nation's capital. For his monument in the capital of the free world is a living symbol of our heritage and our most priceless traditions; the heritage of freedom.

Shevchenko firmly believed in the political philosophy of our founding fathers. His statue is also a fitting contribution of the American nation to the nineteenth century Ukrainian revolutionary poet because his basic political tenets and philosophy were part and parcel with our tradition of personal freedom and national independence.

Shevchenko's statue in our nation's capital will be a powerful reminder that the man it honors now symbolizes the global quest of mankind for freedom. We, as a nation, have a moral and political responsibility not only towards Ukraine and its captive people, but to all other captive nations languishing in the prison of nations, "turma narodov," which is now the Soviet Russian empire. For us it is like a "New Statue of Liberty" that symbolizes our sheltering of poor immigrants and those who seek freedom from oppression and tyranny.

The brilliant voice of Shevchenko, his powerful works and patriotism continue to inspire the Ukrainian people. It symbolizes that all of Eastern Europe is under the iron heel of Russian communist totalitarianism. The monument to Taras Shevchenko is a bridge linking the captive people of Ukraine and other enslaved nations with a free and unfettered America. As long as half of the world is in the clutches of Russian colonialism and oppression, there is a need for the fiery and vehement yet graceful and freedom-

breeding works of Taras Shevchenko.

Then with only the Stars and Stripes of the United States and the blue and gold of Ukraine flowing softly in the breeze, the entire throng of the hundred thousand sang: "When I die ..."

*When I shall die, pray let my bones
High on a mound remain
Amid the steppeland's vast expanse
In my belov'd Ukraine:
That I may gaze on mighty fields,
On Dnieper and his shore,
And echoed by his craggy banks
May hear the Great One roar!*

*When from Ukraine that stream shall bear
Over the sea's blue sills
Our foemen's blood, at last shall I
Forsake the fields and hills
And soar up to commune with God
In His eternal hall.
But till that Day of Liberty--
I know no God at all!*

*Bury me thus I pray, and rise!
From fetters set you free!
And with our foes' unholy blood
Baptize your liberty!
And when in freedom, 'mid your kin,
From battle you ungird,
Forget not to remember me
With a kind, gentle word!*

We hoped that our mighty singing would carry our message and encouragement to our subjugated Ukrainian brother at home.

*When shall we get ourselves a Washington
To promulgate his new and righteous law
But someday we shall surely find the man.

And our human spirit dies not
And our freedom dies not
And the greedy man ploughs never
Fields beneath the ocean,
Does not bind the human spirit
And the living word,
Does not carry off the glory
Of Almighty God.*

This is inscribed on the monument and this hope is inscribed in our hearts.

SOME FACTS ABOUT UKRAINE

Location	Ukraine is located in the South-Eastern corner of Europe, North of the Black sea and the sea of Azov.
Capital	Kiev, the modern and ancient capital of Ukraine, is located in central Ukraine on the banks of the Dnipro River and has a population of almost two million. Although settled since the stone age, the city of Kiev was found 1508 years ago, in 473.
Major Cities	Other important Ukrainian cities are: Lviv, Kharkiw, Donetsk, Luhansk, Odessa, Zaporishya, Dnipropetrovsk, Chernivtsi, Zhitomir, Kryvyi Rih, Yalta.
Territory	Ukraine, with over 232,000 sq. miles (603,700 sq. km) is the largest country within Europe, just a little larger than France.
Population	almost 50 million of which 77% are Ukrainians; other groups are Russians (17%), Jews (2%), Poles (1%), and other.
National Emblem	The gold trident of St. Volodymyr (919-1015), the King of Rus, was adopted on March 22, 1918 as the emblem of Ukrainian National Republic.
Flag	The national flag of Ukraine consists of two broad horizontal stripes of sky blue over yellow (field of grain) officially adopted by the Ukrainian governments on March 22 and November 13, 1918.
National Anthem	<u>Sche ne Vmerla Ukraina</u> (Ukraine Still Lives), written as a poem in 1863 by Paul Chubynsky, music by Michael Verbytsky, adopted as the official anthem of Ukraine by the independent government in 1917.



About the Author

Dipl. Eng. Sophia Haevska is well known among Ukrainian communities in North America as a philanthropist for the Ukrainian cause. She has devoted her whole life to the preservation and development of Ukrainian science and culture in the FreeWorld always through her generous donations to various learning institutions such as the Ukrainian Free University in Munich, Ukrainian Studies at Harvard University, the Ukrainian Free Academy of Science, et. al. Many Ukrainian students benefit from the scholarships established by the Sophia Haevska Foundation.

Since leaving her beloved Ukraine when it was subjugated by Soviet Russia about sixty years ago, Sophia Haevska has always been active in helping the Ukrainian immigrants to survive in both ways, physically and spiritually: she sent food and money to many so called "displaced persons" in Europe after World War II and helped them to come to the United States; promoted many cultural activities among Ukrainians establishing schools and donated a considerable amount of money for many civic and church institutions such as the Ukrainian National Rada (Ukrainian government in exile), St. Sophia Seminary and others. She also helped to preserve the masterpieces of prominent Ukrainian authors who are persecuted by the Soviet government. Many such publications have been financed with the help of Mrs. Haevska.

This book, which is a recollection of her personal experience with Russia's imperialistic practices and Ukraine's struggle for freedom and independence, is also Mrs. Haevska's gift to the Ukrainian institutions in the United States. It represents her effort to encourage young people to study Ukrainian history, to appreciate Ukrainian culture--especially the beautiful Ukrainian songs--as Treasures of the Centuries, and to understand the necessity of a free and independent Ukraine for the benefit of not only Ukrainians but also the whole peace-loving world.

The Editor

