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Ukraine, the 1930s:
Conceived, Lived, Perceived**



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Image from cover: The facade of the House of Writers “Slovo” (*Budynok Slovo*). Summer 2008 (Kharkiv, Ukraine).

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The House of Writers in Ukraine, the 1930s: Conceived, Lived, Perceived

In 1936, Mykhailo Proskuriakov, the interrogator assigned to the Ukrainian artists known as the Boichukists, said of Ivan Lipkovs'kyi, an artist and professor at the Kyiv Art Institute, that his guilt resided in “drinking his tea somewhere where he should not have.”¹ The “somewhere” in question was the home of Mykhailo Boichuk, Lipkovs'kyi's teacher. Boichuk once stated that a great wall, similar to the Great Wall of China (“a barrier even for birds”), should be erected between Russia and Ukraine so that Ukrainian culture had an opportunity to develop. When this statement reached the NKVD,² friends, colleagues, and guests of the world-famous artist began to disappear one by one. Ivan Padalka and Vasyly Sedliar, both of whom were friends with Boichuk, were arrested by the NKVD at that same time. They happened to live in an equally dangerous place: Budynok Slovo (the House of Writers).³

In the early 1930s, having tea in potentially dangerous places like Boichuk's residence was considered a conspiratorial act; the Soviet secret police characterized such gathering places as “nationalist nests” to be eradicated. In the 1920s, Ukraine constituted a broad and largely indeterminate battleground in terms of geography, culture, and intellect, but the 1930s flattened the social landscape and marked the triumph of Stalinist values. Subsequently, political and cultural discourses adhered to the most recent Party resolutions. State violence swept away thousands of people in Ukraine.⁴ Precisely during this decade, the fate of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and Ukrainian identity was ultimately forged for generations to come. This temporal context (the 1930s) is as important as the spatial one (the Budynok Slovo). A close and thorough examination of places of state violence—where the creation of the new Soviet intelligentsia and destruction of the national intelligentsia occurred—provides us with a nuanced understanding of various human experiences under Stalinism.

Space and place are reasonably new concepts in contemporary historical analysis. However, historians employ them more and more frequently as metaphorical and methodological tools to investigate various topics ranging from state violence and nationalism to festivals and food studies. Soviet studies, especially, has benefited from a spatial approach, as it has helped scholars analyze the complexity of the Soviet Union/region/city as a geographical place and, most importantly, as a cultural phenomenon.⁵ This approach proves to be particularly useful in the Ukrainian context because it reveals the specificity of the place and the interplay of regions/borders/cities/places, people's borderland experiences, ethnicity, fluid identity, and local politics.

As Raymie E. McKerrow reminds us, “little imagination is needed to see space-time as potential tools of regimentation and discipline: the ‘right place’ and ‘right time’ function ideologically to keep order within society.”⁶ The Soviet secret police divided Kharkiv into “right” and “wrong” places in the early 1930s, and any affiliation with these places could be beneficial or fatal for those who chose to be there. This study considers Budynok Slovo as a space and place of societal control and manipulation. Despite the stigma attached to the building as a “nationalist nest,” the residents, known as *slov’iany*, invested the place with special meaning. Their physical home shaped their self-identification, which, in turn, tied them to the Ukrainian cultural landscape and determined their social and political behavior.⁷ A study of the material culture of the building, the social status of the residents, and spatial regimentation implemented by the state helps to explicate the behavior of members of the intelligentsia when facing the threat of violence in prison. The confusion and dismay they experienced in relation to Budynok Slovo overlapped, amplified, or caused the confusion and dismay they experienced in relation to their own identities. This subsequently led to moral degradation and suicides.⁸

Despite their different ethnic backgrounds (Russian, Ukrainian, and Jewish) and different aesthetic, artistic, and social values, the *slov’iany*—among whom were writers, theater directors, artists, and state officials—represented for the state a multi-bonded group who shared the same space, and more importantly, the same language. These spatial and linguistic ties molded their identities both individually and collectively; for the secret police their potential for local solidarity and patriotism was ultimately read as local nationalism. The nationalism of a vast populated region/area/place such as Ukraine/Kharkiv/Budynok Slovo was a major concern for the Party in general, and Stalin in particular.⁹ The significance of the regional/national/spatial in the intelligentsia’s cultural makeup helped state officials locate places where nationalist saturation had reached what they considered a critical level.¹⁰ In their view, repression would help prevent the further dissemination of nationalist tendencies that had allegedly been produced and cultivated in Budynok Slovo.

The spatial practices, traditions, and aesthetics of Budynok Slovo and the secret police prison became intertwined and entangled in the 1930s. Disillusioned and frightened, the intelligentsia shouldered and perpetuated the terror, which shaped their future in many ways. The spatial fixation of the state and the secret police on Budynok Slovo led to a certain emotional condition among the *slov’iany*: denunciations and betrayals became commonplace. All residents were categorized by the secret police as “nationalists” and “fascists” whether they were loyalists, staunch Communists faithful to the Soviet system and ready to combat local nationalism, or

“oppositionists” who had earned a reputation as Ukrainian nationalists (even those who were not ethnic Ukrainians). The history of the House of Writers reveals that the physical removal of the *slov’iany* was a state operation designed to eliminate the nationally conscious and critically thinking section of Ukrainian society. The state applied this disciplinary measure in order to clarify the rules of existence in Soviet (not Ukrainian) space for all other literary practitioners in Ukraine or elsewhere who served as propagandists of Soviet culture and institutions.

Information about the Budynok Slovo and human experiences in that place is fragmentary. Approximately 90 percent of its residents were repressed in the 1930s. Those who survived changed their last names, place of residence, and in most cases, country of residence. The last of those who remember what happened in the House of Writers in the 1930s have passed away or are nearing the end of their lives; with their passing a piece of their family history and, importantly, national and regional history, will disappear. Previous historical studies have been primarily focused on individual histories of several particular intellectuals, and as a result several dozen literary figures who lived in this building still remain in the shadows.

In 1923, the Soviet government announced the policy of Ukrainization as part of the broader campaign of “indigenization,” according to which the Ukrainian language and culture would be promoted in the republic. However, after 1926, the Soviet secret police began to methodically arrest, exile, and execute those Ukrainians who were active advocates of Ukrainization. They were labeled Ukrainian “nationalists and deviationists.”

Western scholarship on this topic is currently dominated by a narrative that portrays the Soviet government as making sincere attempts to promote national cultures. For instance, Terry Martin has offered the term “the affirmative action empire,” and Yuri Slezkine uses the notion of “ethnophilia” to illustrate this point.¹¹ Similarly, the terror against national minorities is often explained as a result of Communist leaders who lacked experience in socialist construction and cultural knowledge about the periphery. The violence and vigor of the secret police in hunting down the Ukrainian intelligentsia is interpreted as a product of chaotic, ad hoc measures that stemmed from local bureaucratic misrepresentation and misunderstanding of the center’s decisions. Contrasting scholarship representing the polar opposite of this view considers repression as a carefully planned operation in the context of the growing centralization of power in Moscow.¹² The ongoing discussion of the question “why terror?” has produced heated scholarly debates, and the issue of the intentionality of state violence, with various accompanying rationales, remains largely unsettled.

New archival data—especially state archival materials, the secret police’s operational documents, and rehabilitation materials obtained from the former KGB archives—suggest that the idea of “ethnophilia” is inconsistent with what was happening in Moscow and Ukraine in the 1920s–1930s. According to this evidence, the state and secret police viewed the Ukrainian intelligentsia as a potential force of resistance against the complete subjugation of Ukraine as an independent political and economic entity. State power was not invisible or subtle; it was open, aggressive, violent, and persistent in demanding loyalty to the center, and it shaped the secret organs as an instrument of its political will. Secret police records demonstrate that the state launched counter-Ukrainization in 1926 (not in 1932–1933 as many Western commentators argue), and police considered it one of the major secret operations in Soviet Ukraine. Bolshevik policies toward national minorities exhibited the features of a “distinctive ethno-national cleansing”¹³ rather than an “ethnophilic” nature. These policies led to tremendous cultural disruption in Ukraine, evidence of which can be found even today in Ukrainian society.

The notions of space and place highlight the specificity of Soviet policies that were intrinsic to Ukraine/Kharkiv/Budynok Slovo. Other spatial concepts (such as region, border, and boundary) alongside aesthetic notions (such as talent, feelings, emotions, and patterns) prevail in the discussion about the experience of Ukrainian intellectuals under Stalinism.¹⁴

A multiplicity of sources suggest an interpretation of Soviet policies in Ukraine that differs from the Russocentric views that dominate Western discourse and are rarely challenged. Yet all sources comprise particular complexities. Memoirs and diaries often misremember or overlook experiences that are painful or shameful for the narrator. Moreover, they are usually constrained by official discourse or the narrator’s fear of punishment for telling the truth, which was a common concern in socialist societies.¹⁵ To mitigate these problematic aspects of memoirs, they are analyzed here in combination with an appraisal of the conditions and circumstances under which they were produced.¹⁶ Moreover, to avoid a one-sided view, the memoirs of people of various social status, educational background, and professional affiliation have been included. Among them were individuals who immigrated and those who did not, those who survived the terror and those who were never repressed, those who were rehabilitated and those who were not, those who were staunch Stalinists, Ukrainian nationalists, and apolitical individuals, and finally those who lived in Budynok Slovo or who were a part of the literary and artistic discourse in the 1920s–1930s.

Major works by poets and writers of the Red Renaissance (also known as the Cultural Renaissance of the 1920s) shed light on the worldview of the *slov’iany*, as

well as on their understandings of aesthetic, ethical, and moral issues. Narrative topics and forms of creative expression were especially instructive in analyzing the effects of repression by the regime. Personal archives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia from the State Archives of Literature and Art (TsDAMLiMU), the Kharkiv Literary Museum, and the State Archives of Kharkiv Oblast (DAKhO) helped identify important biographical points previously unknown to scholars.

Individual and group criminal files of the Soviet secret police, located in the HDA SBU archive in Kyiv and the AU SBUKhO archive in Kharkiv, and especially rehabilitation materials that are included in these files were of great importance for this study. GPU/NKVD criminal files present some difficulties for researchers because these documents are compromised by forgery and fabrication. However, despite concerns about the reliability of GPU documents, they reveal the timeframe of events and the Soviet agenda on Ukrainization policies. GPU/NKVD strategies in prosecuting the *slov'iany* play a significant role in an analysis of the norms and aesthetics of the Soviet secret police and its agenda. Operational materials helped identify the modus operandi of the secret police, and the correspondence between the Lubianka, the OGPU headquarters in Moscow, and the Kharkiv GPU illuminated the center's role in planning mass repression against "oppositionists." GPU-NKVD documents constitute amazing supplementary material for studying the methods used in repressing the intelligentsia and the ideological motivation of their tormentors. Rehabilitation testimonies collected at the height of the Khrushchev Thaw, a period of relative freedom, shed new light on people's subjectivities, and their perceptions of Stalinism.

For the purpose of this study, the terms "purges," "repression," "terror" and "exile" should be clarified. As far as Soviet terminology was concerned, "purges" (*chistki*) commonly referred to Party reprimands and the so-called administrative penalties (*administrativnye vzyskaniia*) that often were extended to exclusion from Party membership.¹⁷ These *chistki* were implemented in the primary Party cells of various institutions and factories by special regional Party commissions. Precisely this meaning of this term is employed in this study.

Although Stalin's protégé in Ukraine, Pavel Postyshev, identified "repression" as a "crucial method of 'administration,'"¹⁸ this term should be understood here as acts of political prosecution that were carried out by the GPU/NKVD in the form of arrests, imprisonment, subsequent preliminary investigations, and punishment by rudimentary court organs. In the context of Stalin's acts of repression, imprisonment and preliminary investigations are associated with physical and mental abuse, torture, and brutality to which prisoners were subjected by the secret police. The notion of

repression implies here criminal cases, usually fabricated against individuals, and large-scale operations/criminal cases, fabricated against a substantial number of people (dozens, hundreds, or thousands).¹⁹

Repression was the “subsystem of terror,” as Oleg Khlevniuk has emphasized, and aimed, among other things, to ensure complete control and regimentation of society through fear. In other words, the regime sought to suppress all dissenting and opposition voices in order to maintain the “sole authority of the leader.”²⁰ The Soviet terror therefore provided an opportunity to fully exercise power in order to accomplish ideological, political, and economic tasks in ways that the dictator envisioned them.

The term “exile” is employed here in the context of the verdicts by dvoikas, troikas, and the Military Collegium that prescribed punishments for “nationalist deviations” and membership in various nationalist organizations to which the *slov'iany* allegedly belonged. The Ukrainian “nationalists” were usually exiled to Northern labor camps, the Urals, and Kazakhstan for three, five, seven, or ten years. The majority found themselves in the infamous Solovets’ki Islands, known as Solovki.

Careful scrutiny of the logistics of events, critical attention to the language of GPU officials, and a constant alertness to underlying motives are necessary to appreciate the documents of the Soviet secret police. What has helped in the present research in filtering half-truths, part-truths, and lies is what might be called cross-reading. The same factual detail was checked in a range of sources, and texts composed by the GPU were analyzed and compared in hundreds of group and individual criminal cases.

The internal intricacies, human behaviors, and relationships in Budynok Slovo were examined through the protocols of the Ukrainian Writers’ Association “Slovo” (stenographic reports that convey the speeches of the writers verbatim), Party documents, and documents of the Union of Writers from the former Party archives in Kyiv (TsDAHOU). Ukrainian periodicals helped analyze the cultural and political atmosphere in Ukraine during the 1920s–1930s, which will be briefly introduced below.

The Ukrainization campaign proclaimed by the XII Congress of the RKP(b) in April 1923 facilitated the unprecedented development of the Ukrainian culture and language known as the Red Renaissance.²¹ It culminated during 1925–1928, the period of the Literary Discussion, when many new names emerged on the Ukrainian cultural landscape; one of these was the Ukrainian writer Mykola Khvyľovyi, who became the central figure of the polemics. The discourse embraced not only literary topics and new visions of Ukrainian culture, but also focused on Ukrainian national liberation and anti-colonial sentiment in Ukraine.²² For the first time, the Ukrainian intelligentsia could reach the peasants who were rapidly proletarianized in big urban



Mykola Khvylovyi. Courtesy of the TsDAMLIMU. 271-1-301-1.

centers such as Kharkiv and the Donbas region. The center feared these influences.²³ Moreover, for the Bolsheviks, esthetics was tightly linked to politics, and art was considered subservient to the regime. Those who disregarded this requirement were attacked by the state through literary critics and amateurs who were encouraged to vilify political dissent on the pages of the Soviet press.

Indeed, the participants of the Literary Discussion were concerned with a broad spectrum of fundamental national, economic, and political questions related to Ukraine. Their discourse included social and political implications of the Ukrainization campaign and focused on two painful questions: Ukraine's speedy industrialization, as formulated at the fifteenth conference of the VKP(b), and collectivization, which was launched in December 1927. The underlying essence of these debates was the dilemma of whether to pursue independence from Moscow and the preservation of cultural distinctiveness or to affect a complete surrender to the center in the political, economic, and cultural spheres.²⁴ Under pressure from Moscow, the necessity for writers to take sides in these debates gradually became clear.

Khvylovyi's ideas of a culturally sovereign Ukraine, which were expressed in his publications during 1925–1926, infuriated Stalin as well as the Party and “official” writers, although the Ukrainian Party leaders Oleksandr Shums'kyi and later Mykola Skrypnyk supported Khvylovyi's ideas.²⁵ In Stalin's eyes, the Ukrainization campaign had gotten out of control and produced a rather dangerous phenomenon for the center: a Ukrainian intelligentsia that “looked” to the West and spoke of a culturally independent Ukraine. On April 26, 1926, Stalin wrote a letter to Lazar Kaganovich and the members of the Politburo of the KP(b)U Central Committee criticizing the position of Khvylovyi. Stalin suggested that Shums'kyi did not fully understand the danger of Khvylovyi and like-minded individuals:

[I]n the Ukraine, where the Communist cadres are weak, such a movement [Ukrainization], led everywhere by the non-Communist intelligentsia, may assume

in places the character of a struggle for the alienation of Ukrainian culture from All-Soviet culture, a struggle against “Moscow,” against the Russians, against the Russian culture and its greatest achievement, Leninism, altogether. I need not point out that such a danger grows more and more real in the Ukraine. I should only like to mention that even some Ukrainian Communists are not free from such defects. I have in mind that well-known article by the noted Communist Khvyľovyi in the Ukrainian press. Khvyľovyi demands that the proletariat in the Ukraine be immediately de-Russified, [. . .] his ridiculous and non-Marxist attempt to divorce culture from politics—all this and much more in the mouth of this Ukrainian Communist sounds (and cannot sound otherwise) more than strange. [. . .] Khvyľovyi has nothing to say in favor of Moscow except to call on Ukrainian leaders to run away from Moscow as fast as possible. [. . .] The extreme views of Khvyľovyi within the Communist ranks must be combated; comrade Shums’kyi does not understand that only by combating such extremisms is it possible to transform the rising Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian social life into a Soviet culture and Soviet social life.²⁶

Several months later on September 4, 1926, following Stalin’s order to combat Ukrainian national tendencies in the republic, the Ukrainian GPU issued a secret circular entitled “On Ukrainian Separatism,” which marked the starting point of counter-Ukrainization.²⁷ Erroneously, many historians date the sharp reconceptualization of Moscow policies of indigenization to the year 1933.²⁸ However, as studies such as the one by Iurii Shapoval have demonstrated, counter-Ukrainization was launched in 1926, and by 1933 it was largely completed:

[F]or Moscow, what was of primary significance was not the analysis of real national-cultural processes, but the constant struggle with different kinds of ‘national deviations,’ and manifestations of ‘bourgeois nationalism.’ [. . .] When did the actual counter-Ukrainization really begin? For a long time scholars thought the beginning to be 1933, the struggle with so-called Skrypnykism, that is, with the consequences of ‘nationalistic deviations.’ [. . .] However, the document [“On Ukrainian Separatism,” 1926] proves that the countervailing force to the policy of ‘Ukrainization’ began significantly earlier.²⁹

Through a cascade of criminal cases fabricated by the GPU, thousands of people, especially those who promoted and implemented Ukrainization policies, were arrested and exiled to labor camps. The GPU created a narrative of conspiracy, according to which there was a nationalist underground network, members of which plotted assassinations of Party leaders and the secession of Ukraine from the Union.³⁰ Conspiracies were fabricated one after another under code names: the SVU, the UNTs, the UVO, the OUN, the UNFO, the AOUE, and hundreds of others.³¹ A witch hunt

for nationalists followed a precise plan outlined in the 1926 GPU circular and was closely supervised via orders from Moscow.³² The repression targeted the adherents of Ukrainization, the Ukrainian intelligentsia, and those who returned or planned to return to Ukraine to work for Ukrainization.

By the late 1920s, the general Party line was firmly established, broadly publicized and propagandized in Ukraine, and impossible to misread: Ukrainian literature provided space only for the glorification of the revolution, the Party, and the new socialist future.³³ The borders of the permissible were strictly identified, and the rigidity of the message made it easy for the Party to trace those who deviated from this course. Moreover, active advocates of the Ukrainization campaign were treated as “nationalist deviationists” and “counterrevolutionaries.”³⁴ As a result, many writers were asked to estimate the ideological value of a work to ensure that it was consistent with the Party line and avoided national spirit or flavor. Khvylovyi was no exception. By the time he moved into Budynok Slovo, he had become “quieter.”³⁵ Nevertheless, Stalin’s growing concerns that art in Ukraine had become more national than socialist and that the influence of the Ukrainian intelligentsia on the Ukrainian Party leadership had increased resulted in a number of repressive operations initiated by Moscow and implemented by the secret police.³⁶

Under these circumstances, writers publically repudiated their views and published repentance letters in the central Ukrainian press. To avoid Party ostracism and repression, they began to join the ranks of VUSPP (the All-Ukrainian Union of Proletarian Writers—Vseukra’ins’ka Spilka Proletar’skykh Pys’mennykiv), which was perceived by the Party dogmatists as propagating a legitimate view of culture.³⁷

The turning point for Ukrainian artists and intellectuals was the SVU show trial. While it took only a few weeks to play out in Kharkiv’s Opera Theatre between March 19, 1930, and April 9, 1930, it represented three years of work and preparation by the secret police. Forty-five individuals associated with the government of the Central Rada and Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR) of 1917–1920 were accused of SVU membership.

The trial launched a mass operation against Ukrainian intellectuals: thirty thousand “nationalists were arrested as UVO members all over Ukraine.”³⁸ The unpredictability of the lives of those who resided in Budynok Slovo produced collective chronic stress. Memoirs of residents there during the 1930s reveal that the scale and barbarity of the terror were so great that it became paralyzing; when confronted with state power, the intellectual elite practiced acquiescence and conformism and exhibited moral resignation.³⁹ For the *slav’iany*, the discrepancy between their hopes of creating a new Ukrainian culture and the terror to which they were now subjected

was more than sobering; most were plunged into deep personal crises and depression.⁴⁰ By 1930, many of the *slov'iany* were blacklisted, and from 1931 on, publishing houses (both state and private) stopped accepting their works, even for translation.⁴¹ Thus, these writers could not support their families. In the 1930s, the Budynok Slovo became a place of conflict and painful inner turmoil.

It had not, however, always been that way. There was a time in which Budynok Slovo epitomized the writers' hopes for a new Ukrainian culture.

In the middle of the 1920s, housing cooperatives and private apartments were seen as a progressive step forward in Soviet state schemes for arranging people's *byt* (everyday life).⁴² The August 19, 1924, Law "On Housing Cooperatives" launched the popular cooperative movement that reduced the socialist value of the commune and communal life.⁴³ By October 1, 1925, there were fifteen housing cooperatives in Kharkiv, and people began to move from communal apartments to their own private apartments. In 1926, forty-five apartment buildings were built, and 441 people received new apartments. By April 1, 1927, 114 housing cooperatives were created, and Kharkiv became a massive construction site.⁴⁴

The 1925–1928 literary debates about the future of Ukrainian culture produced animosities among writers. The intellectual elite desired calm, comfort, and privacy. They took advantage of the mass cooperative movement, and in February 1927, a group of Kharkiv writers created a cooperative association called "Slovo," whose purpose was to build a five-story apartment compound for writers—Budynok Slovo.⁴⁵ This dream was encouraged by the fact that the state granted greater benefits to private builders who constructed cooperatives to help solve the housing problem in Ukraine.⁴⁶

Many literary clubs and organizations focused on the material needs of writers and artists and nourished the idea of building living quarters for intellectuals. The Kharkiv literary organization Pluh, led by Serhii Pylypenko,⁴⁷ Ostap Vyshnia, and others, managed to realize this dream first. Established in 1924, Pluh built a one-of-a-kind, exclusive home for Ukrainian intellectuals—the first apartment compound for writers and journalists in the Soviet Union within the cooperative scheme.



Serhii Pylypenko—the founder of the cooperative Slovo. Courtesy of TsDAMLIMU. 271-1-310-31.

Although in Russia, the intelligentsia created many centers of cultural life, such as the House of Litterateurs (*Dom literatorov*) and the House of Arts (*Dom iskusstv*) in Petrograd and the All-Russian Union of Writers and the Free Academy for Spiritual Culture in Moscow,⁴⁸ there had been no apartment buildings constructed by a community of writers. The cooperative movement was curtailed by the state in the early 1930s, although it was not abolished until 1937.⁴⁹ Too much autonomy seemed like a dangerous phenomenon to the Party, and the House of Writers in Kharkiv remained a unique project in the history of the Soviet cooperative movement.

In later years, the Soviet intelligentsia, mostly writers favored by the state, resided in buildings specially erected for them within the state scheme. After the creation of the Union of Writers of the USSR in 1934, the Litfond constructed several buildings and resorts, using an initial state donation of one million rubles that the Union of Writers received in 1934.⁵⁰

Interestingly, the cooperative “Slovo,” which assumed communal and common professional values, produced a residence that physically separated its members in private, secluded, luxurious apartments. The material logic of the intellectuals’ existence and their needs for solitude and comfort (in order to be able to create) outweighed the writers’ ideological upbringings and their faith in collective values.

In the same way that Moscow and Petrograd became artistic and literary meccas in Russia, Kharkiv became “the capital of arts” in Ukraine.⁵¹ After 1923, when the Soviet policy of Ukrainization generated an emotional and creative upheaval in the intelligentsia, many Ukrainian intellectuals moved to Kharkiv with new expectations and hopes. Numerous Ukrainian literary associations and groups that were founded in Kharkiv in the 1920s attracted a constellation of talented youth. Many scholars have argued that the overall cultural atmosphere in Kharkiv in the 1920s was optimistic and promising, despite the Party’s attempts to condemn “nationalistic” groups. However, some authors caution against such a view. During the turbulent 1920s, many writers had already buried their enthusiasm and their hopes for the free development of Ukrainian culture. They skillfully hid their artistic intentions as external and internal censorship forced them to codify their individual understandings of aesthetics. State pressure on intellectuals created the “foundation for [their] pessimism, alienation, [and] the deterioration of personality.”⁵² The disillusioned artists craved spatial isolation, trying to avoid the sensational cacophony of artistic and political debates.

The competition for working and living space in Kharkiv was fierce in the 1920s. In 1927, the population in Kharkiv increased from 155,000 to 409,000 people. According to the calculations of Kharkiv statisticians, the average living space was 5.7

square meters per person, which constituted approximately two-thirds of the space needed to be considered sanitary.⁵³ Most people shared communal flats that were wildly overpopulated. Sheds, summer houses, cellars, and attics were inhabited by several families each.⁵⁴

The communal lifestyle, so favored by the state in the early 1920s, was now criticized for fostering potential anti-Soviet conspiracies, “petit-bourgeois self-absorption, anti-social-mindedness, vulgar egalitarianism, egotism and Trotskyism,” and therefore lost its attractiveness to the populace.⁵⁵ According to Victor Buchli, the housing cooperative movement—manifested largely as self-sufficient apartment buildings with domestic services including a laundry and a cafeteria—survived longer than other state approaches to organizing *byt*.⁵⁶ The expediency of housing cooperatives for the state was quite obvious: while communal living had depended upon the funds of the state or Party, the construction and maintenance of apartment buildings were fully supported by a collective of like-minded people or a union.⁵⁷

Recent studies on the Soviet housing cooperative movement show that although the state promised many freedoms to Soviet members of housing cooperatives, multiple laws and regulations actually constrained people’s slightest collective or individual initiatives.⁵⁸ Housing cooperative members had to report administrative and financial decisions to the All-Union Organization Bureau on Housing Cooperation and obtain official approvals for construction repairs, even though such maintenance was financed by members’ monthly fees. Any residential moves or housing exchanges were supervised by the chief of the building (usually a GPU associate). State decisions and approvals were based on political and ideological evaluations of each petitioner and often depended on his or her Party membership and connections. Housing cooperatives were required to join the Central Union of Housing Cooperatives and to pay state fees; moreover, according to state injunctions, cooperatives were to hire only state construction companies.⁵⁹

These constraints, however, were not part of the conception or planning stages of the Budynok Slovo; they surfaced only in the early thirties. In the 1920s, prior to the cooperative’s start, most future members were living in poor conditions, sharing tiny rooms with friends or strangers. For instance, Iurii Smolych recalled that in the early 1920s, before he became a professional writer, he was an actor in the Ivan Franko Drama Theatre in Kharkiv and lived in a dormitory. His room, which held his bed, a little table, and a chair, was three meters long and two meters wide. There were no windows that faced the yard, and above his door was a narrow transom open to the common corridor. In the past, this room had served as a storage room for a cafeteria. At night, after rehearsals or performances in the theater, Smolych would

sit in this tiny room and write.⁶⁰ Similarly, Mykhailo Bykovets' and Vasył' Sokil lived in extremely poor conditions, sharing a tiny guard room in a secondary school.⁶¹ Already famous by 1923, the Ukrainian poet Pavlo Tychyna resided in a small room in the editorial headquarters of the newspaper *Visti*. The room was near the public toilet and previously served as a shower room. There was space only for a table and a chair. Tychyna slept atop a pile of old issues of *Visti* which he covered with a blanket. To prevent the resident rats and mice from devouring his manuscripts, which were piled on the table, the inventive Tychyna placed the table's legs in condensed milk cans filled with water. These mini-moats guarded his work as the rodents regularly drowned, trying in vain to climb to their supper. Tychyna later moved to a bigger room, which was in fact a kitchen. The stove served as his table and the oven as his bookcase. For his manuscripts, he found a safer place: he stored them in a large metal pot for bleaching linen that was embedded in the wall over the stove.⁶² During the same period, the Ukrainian writer Teren' Masenko and his wife rented a room through which the owners of the apartment regularly marched and then moved to a four-room apartment (with three other writers, Pavlo Tychyna, Leib Kvitko, and Ezra Fininberg) where they enjoyed a separate room and shared only a communal kitchen and bathroom.⁶³ Budynok Slovo as conceived by the writers was clearly an improvement and a privilege for the Ukrainian intelligentsia.

The construction of Budynok Slovo was completed in December 1929, and the first residents moved to their private, spacious apartments. It is intriguing that the construction was handled by Ukrpaistroi (the All-Ukrainian Shareholding Construction Association), which nominally was created and maintained under the NKVD umbrella. In the 1920s, there were a great number of construction companies in Kharkiv, state and private; whether Ukrpaistroi was assigned this project by the writers of the cooperative Slovo, the city authorities, the bank administration that loaned the initial funds for the project, or the Komhosp (the state administration that supervised the cooperative movement) remains unknown. Rumors have circulated for decades that the GPU embedded special surveillance equipment (including special wiretapping and telephone circuits) within the walls of the building, but an expert evaluation of the building codes, of the materials, and somewhat unusual architectural features has never been performed.⁶⁴

Everything inside and outside the building promised comfort and luxury. Structurally, the House of Writers went beyond the accepted construction norms and standards— despite Party suggestions to economize on materials and construct no more than four-story buildings.⁶⁵ The rooms were three-and-one-half meters in height. To make the walls soundproof, a thick layer of wool fabric was installed

between the two constituent parts of the wall. The staircase was wide and not steep, and its oaken handrails still survive.⁶⁶ Sufficient room was left to install elevators in every staircase, though this idea never materialized due to a lack of funds.⁶⁷

In contrast to the plain barrack-like buildings in the neighborhood, the Budynok Slovo included balconies. These served as social meeting places and helped the residents be involved in the communal life. Five entrances (*pid'izdy*) adorned the building: the back entrances were accessed through the courtyard, and massive, oak façade entrances faced the street.⁶⁸ Imitating the European tradition, an elegant board was installed downstairs near the façade doors including the names and apartment numbers of—and doorbells for—each resident.

The two wings of the building created a cozy and safe internal yard, which could be theoretically accessed from the front doors (although, according to some accounts, the façade entrances were often locked).⁶⁹ The internal yard played a significant role in residents' lives. There, children played while their mothers watched from balconies, wooden tables and benches accommodated chess competitions, visitors discussed the latest news and rumors, volleyball games ensued in summer, and, in winter, children skated in a seasonal ice rink.⁷⁰

There were sixty-eight apartments, made bright by the big windows in each room. Each apartment contained a living room, a study, one or two bedrooms, a kitchen, a pantry, a separate bathroom, and a long hallway that often served as a bicycle race track for children.⁷¹ The heating system was centralized for the whole building and ran on coal that was piled high in the basement to last for the entire winter.

The most luxurious and rare objects were the telephones in each apartment and the solarium shared by all the residents. These amenities were unheard-of phenomena in 1930.⁷² The solarium, which had ten showers and a locker room for ten to fifteen people, was extraordinarily popular, especially with the children who suntanned and played with the water on the roof during summers. For them, the solarium was a special subject in conversations with their peers who could not believe that such a miracle existed in Kharkiv.⁷³

Another remarkable feature in Budynok Slovo was a kindergarten, which many children of resident families attended. Staff took excellent care of the writers' children; they were regularly fed and provided with a daily dosage of vitamin D (fish oil), a substance hated by all pupils collectively without exception.⁷⁴

The cooperative also established and subsidized a cafeteria specifically for the residents of the building. Raia Kotliar, the wife of Jewish poet Iosif Kotliar, was in charge of the cafeteria, and the meals it provided for the *slov'iany* were of excellent quality.⁷⁵ Residents also enjoyed the affordable prices of the food and the cafeteria's



Budynok Slovo 2[1].

convenience and atmosphere. The cafeteria reinforced the feeling of belonging to a club of intellectuals where people could casually chat without paying attention to the literary ranks or honored achievements of their colleagues.

Other common facilities in Budynok Slovo included a beauty salon and a laundry room. Few details are available about the specific features and patterns of work of these facilities but the services that the residents received were subsidized and having them readily available saved a great deal of time. Since many *slov'iany* were employed simultaneously in two or three places and used night hours for their writing, they appreciated such conveniences.

The euphoria of 1930 that accompanied the move by residents into Budynok Slovo was followed by hopes for better lives, new literary achievements, and improved financial statuses. The epoch of minimalism and modesty in private life began to fade away, and proletarian writers and artists felt entitled to some financial security

for all their suffering during World War I, the revolution, the Civil War and the first Soviet years of material deprivation and hunger.

However, in order to maintain the building, the cooperative established high fees for the apartments, and monthly payments became unaffordable for many families. In order to pay for their comfortable lives, some families shared apartments to reduce the burden of payments.⁷⁶ Thus, although the apartments provided apparent privacy, many residents in fact lived in a big dormitory and were involved in common activities during everyday life. This generally prevented isolation or estrangement or at least made such feelings difficult to maintain. Greeting and talking to their neighbors several times a day, the *slov'iany* knew everyone's daily schedule and usually were aware of local rumors, family scandals, and the slightest changes in the private lives of all residents. Their living conditions were incomparable with most Kharkivites, who shared rooms with between five and eight relatives in communal apartments with twenty-five to forty strangers, quarreled in lines while waiting for one collective bathroom, and prepared meals in a shared kitchen.⁷⁷



Budynok Slovo. Kharkiv, Ukraine (2012).



The internal yard of Budynok Slovo. Kharkiv, Ukraine (2008).

Previously, the *slov'iany* had been impoverished artists—unsettled and poor, but in many ways free. Edward W. Said maintained that the lonely condition of intellectuals, unburdened by material possessions and awards from the state, was always better for their mind, soul, and art than the conformism they developed in the process of turning into literary dignitaries.⁷⁸ Belonging to Budynok Slovo codified the behavior of writers and influenced habits and tastes. Stepping over its threshold, they became members of the middle-class elite who were involved in intellectual labor, and many led a privileged lifestyle. Many writers were office holders and entitled to special food rations (*paiky*). The jobs of the *slov'iany* who had to support their families became an anchor that held them in one place. Budynok Slovo was also a place where many close and distant relatives of the writers resided. The *slov'iany* invited them to share their spacious apartments because in rural areas and small towns they had a poor chance of surviving the hardships of collectivization. These conditions made the Ukrainian intelligentsia “immovable.”⁷⁹ They were tied to their desks and salaries⁸⁰ and, after 1930 when they moved to Budynok Slovo, they became hostages of the bigger burdens of a luxurious apartment and family members to support.

Fancy clothes, hunting guns, writing implements (typewriters, pens, paper) and big libraries became an inseparable part of the material world for the *slov'iany*. The culture and practices of the building prescribed the material norms, and the residents became accustomed to them. For some writers, the “myth” and prestige of the building, and therefore of their social status, became more important than its “reality.” Many *slov'iany* worked at night, writing and translating in order to pay for their lifestyles, which were barely affordable for most of them.⁸¹ Yet consumerism did not dominate their behavior. According to the *slov'ianyn* Teren' Masenko, although hedonism and the bohemian lifestyle were not alien, most writers were “ascetically modest,” and their desires were not limited by a comfortable *byt*. They borrowed money from each other unconditionally, without any expectations of collecting or returning debts in the future. Their minds were preoccupied with art, and Masenko characterized the writers' existence as “the happiness of joyful lightness.”⁸²

Indeed, for many *slov'iany*, the desire for intellectual freedom and creativity was more powerful and unwavering than material wealth. They believed that the right to individual freedom and prosperity had been granted them by the revolution.⁸³ Although their everyday needs grew more than those of other Soviet citizens, their passion for fashion, expensive habits, and comfortable lifestyle hardly produced anti-intellectualism. It did, however, generate social fragmentation and a hierarchy among them.

Theorists of *byt* and socialist material culture have argued that during this period, the meaning of private property was easily manipulated and adjusted by demagogues to fit the profile of either a true Bolshevik or an enemy of socialism.⁸⁴ Such discourse manipulations unraveled before the eyes of *slov'iany* and were also adopted by them in their intergroup literary struggle. Luxury items or clothes could be seen as defining either petit-bourgeois consciousness or proletarian consciousness; the emphasis and meaning shifted depending on which person became the center of the discussion.

While the first months in Budynok Slovo were joyful for most *slov'iany*, a rising hysteria against “nationalist deviationists” in the press destabilized their



Ukrainian writers--slov'iany. Courtesy of the TsDAMLIMU. 815-1-10-1 COVER.

existence. Most residents of Budynok Slovo embraced Ukrainian culture and spoke Ukrainian. Yet several *slov'iany* spoke Russian. Among them were the Russian and Jewish writers Volodymyr Iurezans'kyi, Raisa Troianker, Leib Kvitko, and David Fel'dman, who used the Russian language in their everyday lives.⁸⁵ They also felt vulnerable. Although they mastered several languages, including Yiddish, Russian, and Ukrainian and had multiple identities by virtue of being born in Ukraine, they were fully immersed in Ukrainian culture and could be accused of “nationalist deviations.” The Literary Discussion of the 1920s helped to identify “nationalists” and to strengthen the Party’s distrust of Ukrainian writers, among whom the national ferment proved to be so powerful that it could not be simply exorcized or banished by invoking the sacred ideals of the revolution or mitigated by concessions granted in the form of temporary freedom in artistic space. From the state’s perspective, the “souls” of the writers were corrupt because they had been exposed for a decade to a harmful “nationalist deviationist” thinking that was the product of Ukrainization.

The changing political climate catalyzed a momentous conflict for artists, reflected in a compartmentalization between artistic and social spaces. George O. Liber noted, “unlike Russian writers, who were committed to Bolshevik state-building in the 1920s, Ukrainian writers were involved in nation-building,” which in the early 1930s was branded as “nationalism.”⁸⁶ Party purges and routine administrative harassment in the late 1920s transformed the behavior of the *slov'iany*, producing bifurcated personalities that were outwardly conformist and inwardly resistant. Under the fear of Party purges, the writers’ enthusiasm and rebellious spirits survived in their limited social space but disappeared from art. Such divisions marked the first step toward the pliability that manifested itself later in the writers’ surrender to the state during GPU interrogations. The drastic contrast between their lives in Budynok Slovo and the realities that were occurring in interrogation rooms confused and quickly broke them.

Constant surveillance and the first arrests in early 1930 transformed the building into a dismal place. “Outsiders” had started gaining residence through connections, and their presence exacerbated the writers’ feelings of insecurity and fear. Many *slov'iany* attributed the constant presence of two individuals in the internal yard of Budynok Slovo to the GPU’s surveillance. Observing the same solitary individual smoking under their balconies for days, some decided to act before it was too late.⁸⁷ Hryhorii Epik wrote the novel *Petro Romen* glorifying the new proletarian man. Maik Iohansen created a poem about Lenin, contributing significantly to literary Leniniana. Khvylovyi publicly denounced several writers as bourgeois sponges, and

in a 1932 foreword to his own book lamented that his disarmament (*rozzbroiennia*) occurred too late.⁸⁸

By 1931, the state had destroyed almost all free literary associations in Ukraine.⁸⁹ The writers began to realize the danger of stubborn adherence to artistic and political principles and the benefits of ideological elasticity. Their professional integrity and personal dignity were undermined by fears of being eliminated as “formalists” and “counterrevolutionaries.” Repentant public letters published in the Soviet press and self-criticism in various literary forms became a common practice among writers.

The fear felt by *slov'iany* was not ungrounded. Declassified GPU operational materials demonstrate that several secret agents (*seksoty*) followed each *slov'ianyn* from the moment people inhabited the building.⁹⁰ The reports reflect the residents' regular contacts, habits, and daily working schedules. It appears that Moscow paid special attention to those who understood the central power and its intentions and could articulate and convey their thoughts to others. The danger emanated from those who had an indisputable reputation as talented writers, scientists, and scholars, especially those who had established themselves as independent original thinkers and who had knowledge of three or more languages.⁹¹

Mass arrests of alleged UNTs members in 1930–1931 and arrests at the same time in Budynok Slovo itself fragmented its community into groups and subgroups. Some were united by their closeness to the Party elite, others by their distance from it. For instance, Ivan Mykytenko—leader of the pro-Soviet literary organization VUSPP—together with Ivan Kyrylenko, Ivan Kulyk, and Ivan Le represented the group of official writers and Party functionaries. Among *slov'iany*, they were called the “four Ivans” because of their ideological unity and equally perceived mediocrity. Mykola Kulish, Mykola Khvylovyi, Arkadii Liubchenko, Oles' Dosvitnii, Iurii Ianovs'kyi, and others belonged to a group of writers who saw the development of Ukrainian culture proceeding along a different path from that prescribed by the Party line.⁹² The harassment of the latter group by the Party eventually led to the writers' complete compliance and surrender. Cerebral and talented, they gradually lost their roles as independent thinkers. Chained by material possessions and by a place that they could not abandon, they no longer could be, in Marshall Sahlins's terms, free “hunters and gatherers,” for whom movement meant life.⁹³ They became settlers, and Budynok Slovo became for them a space from which they could not escape.

By mid-1933, following the suicides of Mykola Khvylovyi and Mykola Skrypnyk, GPU activity ceased to be clandestine. The authorities announced that the façade doors would be locked “for safety reasons and in the interests of the residents, respected writers of Ukraine” to prevent robberies; subsequently, the beautiful doors were



Mykola Khvylovyi committed suicide on May 13, 1933. Courtesy of the TsDAMLiMU. 271-1-301-2.

shut and cross-nailed with two rough wooden planks. Residents could enter the building only from the internal yard, on both sides of which there were always at least two young individuals, whose faces after some time became familiar to the residents.⁹⁴ These additions to the building's population occupied their places twenty-four hours a day.

Daily and overt surveillance intensified fear among the residents; a friendly conversation between two neighbors was considered by the GPU a group conspiracy, and the appearance of three people talking in the internal yard was classified as an organizational meeting.⁹⁵ The famous writer Ostap Vyshnia stopped going out for any reason other than official publishing affairs. His wife Varvara always kept him company.⁹⁶ Mykola Bazhan, who each night expected visitors from the GPU to infiltrate his apartment, spent a year sleeping in his clothes and always had a small suitcase packed with necessities nearby. He rejected the very likely possibility of standing naked in front of GPU agents.⁹⁷ The residents began to burn personal correspondences, manuscripts, and books that could compromise them. Their fear paralyzed them to the point where they could not write.⁹⁸

From a place filled with joy, laughter, and comfort, *Budynok Slovo* had been transformed into a prison for its residents; the *slov'iany* referred to it as “the building of preliminary imprisonment,” or the BPU (*budynok poperednioho uv'iaznennia*).⁹⁹ Escape was virtually impossible. No one, with a suitcase or without, could leave the building unnoticed. Even if someone decided to run, his or her actions would only confirm their alleged guilt and desire to avoid punishment. Each family member was a potential hostage for the GPU. In Walter Benjamin's terms, residents began to expect a “very definite death [, , ,] at a very definite place.”¹⁰⁰

The *slov'iany* realized that their status and privileges were provisional and meaningless in the face of being arrested, deported, or shot. Nights spent wakeful and writing were replaced by a tortured waiting for arrest.¹⁰¹ The life of the mind was

reduced to the elementary existence of physical bodies in a physical place, which they called survival.

The writers developed distrust toward their neighbors; almost all oral contacts and social activities were cut off. People stopped inviting their neighbors and colleagues over for a cup of tea or for a game of chess. The internal yard was abandoned and appropriated by GPU agents on duty. For writers, who often perceived reality through a tragic lens, fears were magnified to the point of delirium.¹⁰² Montaigne posited that escaping from the cruel world or changing a place of residence forces people to negate their inner core and to discover it again in isolation, reawakening desire for the future as opposed to brooding on the past. Only then might isolation free an individual instead of enslaving him.¹⁰³

The fates of the *slov'iany* became unexpectedly entangled with the fates of their interrogators, and this fact vested Budynok Slovo with a tragic—and simultaneously mystical—aura. The involuntary synchronism of their lives and deaths provides some foundation for the future analysis of the third party involved, the State, and its role in mass repression.

The *slov'iany* doubted the state's primacy and challenged it through their art and thinking; the interrogators, to use Henri Lefebvre's terms, "prepared themselves to hold on to the State [...] preserving its importance [...] [and] maintain[ing] the State as an absolute."¹⁰⁴ The state clashed with the preexistent cultural space in Ukraine and, in its attempts to reshape it, defined its own circle of "insiders" and "outsiders" and its system of values. It simultaneously hierarchized, homogenized, and fragmented social spaces and places, and then consigned residents of these places to the trash bin of history as an obstinate, aging, used, and unnecessary material. Thus, spaces that were originally conceived and utilized as opposing social spaces—creative: the intelligentsia/ destructive: the secret police—rapidly and unswervingly approached each other until they collided, diffusing all aesthetics and practices.¹⁰⁵

Pressured by the state's regulatory mechanisms, the *slov'iany* and their interrogators produced a new common space of social interaction in which each party left its mark and in which realities on either side bordered on the phantasmagoric. Yet, perceptions of the new common space differed. For the *slov'iany*, it was fragile and confusing due to fear of the state's "monumentality" and power; for the interrogators, it was durable and emboldening because the interrogators identified themselves with the state. Few sincerely believed in the future of such a space, and by 1937 the lies about "national conspiracies" had become transparent for both parties.¹⁰⁶

Nevertheless, the narrative of alleged conspiracy and crime constructed by the GPU had been written into detailed individual dossiers of residents of Budynok Slovo

and was solidly embedded in the existing practices of the secret police. The dossiers were not an invention of the 1930s. Surveillance practices had been established during the preceding decade when the Kharkiv GPU had gained valuable experience in dealing with all kinds of enemies of the Soviet regime: *kurkuli*, religious figures, Zionists, wreckers, nationalists, and the bourgeois intellectual elite.¹⁰⁷ These materials were collected over a period of two or three years. In interrogation rooms, GPU operatives worked efficiently and quickly to obtain confessions from prisoners. As Merle Fainsod has stated, “the extraction of real confession to imaginary crimes became a major industry.”¹⁰⁸

In 1930, the GPU began to arrest the *slov’iany*. Their confessions facilitated the elimination of Ukrainian society’s intellectual base, which represented, in the NKVD’s view, fertile soil for the growth of resistance movements. The psychological breaking began during the night of the arrest. The procedure of searching an apartment and arresting an individual was designed to discredit and humiliate the suspect in front of his neighbors and family members. In many cases during arrests, all written or printed materials, cash, and personal possessions were confiscated, and often no receipts were provided to relatives of the arrested.¹⁰⁹

Those under arrest commonly surrendered to interrogators and fully confessed to anti-Soviet activities. In her book *Police Aesthetics*, Cristina Vatulescu has examined the reasons for mass confessions in Soviet prisons in the 1930s and has concluded that many were rooted in feelings of spatial disorientation produced by the loss of familiar cues and connections to the everyday environment. Such confusion was skillfully created and manipulated by GPU interrogators. The absence of familiar routine practices, recognizable faces, and even personal material possessions induced inner tension and even panic in prisoners.¹¹⁰

Vatulescu’s example of the 1963 CIA *Kurbak Counterintelligence Interrogation* manual is instructive: it mirrors the GPU tactics employed in the 1930s, although Soviet secret police interrogators outdid their CIA counterparts in barbarity.¹¹¹ The manual outlines important steps and techniques that interrogators employed in their daily practice to break the suspect’s will. The most significant point emphasized is the importance of cutting “the suspect’s ties to the outside world.”¹¹² GPU agents exacerbated prisoners’ inner moral sufferings by creating physical and bodily inconveniences, even confiscating underwear. The level of demoralization in Kharkiv prison cells produced prisoners’ stupor or even suicide.¹¹³

Under Prosecutor General Andrei Vyshinskii, confessions determined the sentence of the arrested. In this vein, GPU associates designed special techniques for extorting confessions.¹¹⁴ Several months of detention, isolation, and humiliation

exhausted the physical and moral inner resources of even the strongest individual. Daily screaming and shouting by the interrogators often plunged the suspects into a hysterical state, and prisoners willing to sign pre-prepared self-indictments. Physical torture became an indispensable dimension of preliminary investigation for the most obstinate prisoners in the Kharkiv GPU prison.¹¹⁵ If prisoners resisted the torture and proved recalcitrant, intimidating tactics, such as verbal threats of retaliation against family members, were employed.¹¹⁶ Mock murders of relatives in front of the suspect or the real raping of relatives in their presence, as in Kosior's case, became favorite methods of extracting confessions. The suspect was subjected to multiple personal confrontations (*ochnye stavki*) with his former friends and coworkers who betrayed him in his presence for fear and exhaustion from similar physical and mental tortures. These methods provoked a certain “twilight” state in which the prisoner became indifferent to everything and everyone.



Behind the fence--the former Kharkiv GPU prison. Kharkiv, Ukraine (2012).

A written admission of guilt by the arrested was usually preceded by several days, weeks, or months of “persuasion” and torture. The disruption of the suspect’s perception of reality through “conveyer” interrogations (sleep deprivation) or physical and chemical irritants (such as high or low room temperature, bright light or complete darkness, loud cries or noises, or excessively salty or sweet drinking water), led to psychiatric conditions in which normal mental control and moral judgments became difficult to retain.¹¹⁷ As many memoirs reveal, prolonged exposure to bright light or darkness caused pathological psychiatric symptoms such as hallucination,

aggressive behavior, irritability, delusions, paranoia, memory lapses, the desire to be alone, and so on. Even natural darkness in prison cells, if there were external windows, seemed extremely depressing to prisoners.¹¹⁸

Violent beatings were common in the Kharkiv GPU/NKVD prison, but in 1937–1938 these methods became mandatory and were encouraged by the interrogator’s supervisors. Fiodor Fiodorov-Berkov, former assistant head of the fourth UNKVD [the administration of the secret police] department in the Kharkiv region and the Gulag inspector of the NKVD in the USSR, stated that the main GPU/NKVD headquarters in Kharkiv was awash in blood especially in that year, when screams, moaning, beating noises, shouting, and puddles of blood and urine in interrogation rooms were a routine everyday experience.¹¹⁹ The evidence collected in Berkov’s criminal case confirmed many witness accounts about the secret police’s treatment of prisoners and also demonstrated that agents were engaged in falsifying investigative materials. Berkov, Lev Reikhman, and Abram Simkhovich were especially inventive. Berkov testified that unfounded arrests were a common practice and that the prison was so crowded that he systematically arranged what he called *avraly* days, when he gave twenty-four hours for a special *troika* to try fifty to one hundred cases.¹²⁰

The responsibilities of the interrogators were precisely identified and carefully planned. The brigade of Drushliak, Kamenev, and Gorokhovskii was responsible for providing physical “assistance” to prisoners who denied accusations. The investigator Gol’dshstein was put in charge of the process of the falsification of interrogation protocols, and the NKVD associate Epel’baum checked and approved “confessions” fabricated by the interrogators. Epel’baum’s own portfolio from the early 1930s contained more than one hundred criminal cases against intelligentsia and religious figures. V. I. Lenskii, the former NKVD associate and a witness in Fiodorov-Berkov’s criminal case, confirmed that all members of all NKVD sectors and departments administered beatings. There were no exceptions.¹²¹

Boris Frei, former assistant head of the fourth NKVD department in the Kharkiv region, employed particularly bizarre methods of extracting false confessions. The former regional prosecutor M. I. Bron testified that Frei systematically called Bron “a fascist dog” and forced him to crawl into a tiny space and bark or simply stand there for days. Bron testified: “On the fifth or sixth day of standing there, blood went through my throat and I fell unconscious.”¹²²

Similarly, in his appeal to the prosecutor of the UkrSSR, former prisoner Timokhin wrote that Frei, together with two other associates, tied him to a chair, burned his nose and ears, and forced him to eat paper, dance, and imitate a rooster. The three of them systematically beat and kicked him with their boots.¹²³ Testifying

in court against Frei, Lenskii noted that in 1937–1938, “the situation in the GPU/ UNKVD was such that the entire building was shaking from screams and moans.”¹²⁴

Ivan Drushliak, known as the most vicious interrogator in the Kharkiv NKVD prison, interrogated several *slov'iany*. Several people died in prison from lethal injuries caused by Drushliak's beatings. He had his own favorite tool, a thick stick made of oak that he called “Rondo” and used routinely. Knowing that Lidiia Bodans'ka, the former associate of the Kharkiv obkom, was pregnant, Drushliak forced her to stand in his office for hours, run around the room, or bark like a dog while staring at the light bulb in the ceiling. He also had a habit of spitting into the mouths and faces of the arrested.¹²⁵

After a confession was obtained, another stage usually followed; the prisoner had to disclose the names of all accomplices with whom he had planned to assassinate leaders of the Ukrainian government and Party or with whom he conspired to organize a military uprising against Soviet power in Ukraine.¹²⁶ Intimidation and threats to wipe out the prisoner's entire family led to the required depositions.

Although the personalities of chekists in the 1930s should not be overlooked, their methods were shaped under the influence of the central secret organs at an early stage of their development.¹²⁷ In the 1930s, the NKVD agency was multifunctional and implemented not only investigative and punitive functions but also supervised educational, economic, and agricultural activities in the republics through various People's Commissariats.¹²⁸ But certain departments that executed repressive and punitive policies of the Soviet government occupied special positions within the structure of the Soviet secret police and had extraordinary privileges and freedoms.¹²⁹ The NKVD in the USSR supervised all structural changes, functions, and everyday activities of the regional secret organs through written correspondence, phone calls, and combined meetings of central and regional authorities.¹³⁰ The center, through the constant rotation of secret police cadres on the republican level, encouraged an atmosphere of distrust and denunciation within the secret organs. In turn, GPU/NKVD associates adjusted their activities to the changeable politics of the agency, which was manifested in the degree and intensity of repression and violence in Ukraine. In 1937–1938, many chekists, including top leaders in the NKVD in Ukraine, were executed as part of conspiracy plots in the Ukrainian secret organs.¹³¹

Several Ukrainian writers survived arrests and labor camps, including Ivan Bahrianyi, Hryhorii Kostiuk, and Ivan Maistrenko, described the Kharkiv GPU prison. In the early 1930s, a newly built prison in the internal yard of the Kharkiv headquarters in Radnarkomivs'ka Street was hidden from the public eye. The administrative building surrounded the entire perimeter of the prison. The large cells

had parquet floors and big windows, features that seemed absolutely inappropriate to the inspection commission from Moscow.

The commission characterized the prison as a resort, and the administration immediately found a solution. The most “dangerous” individuals were kept at Radnarkomivs’ka Street, while those who were under preliminary investigation were placed in an older, less comfortable prison in the Kholodna Hora district. Every day, a truck delivered the prisoners to Radnarkomivs’ka Street for interrogation. The Kholodna Hora prison’s poor conditions and moldy cells were more suited to the Moscow inspectors’ conception of a proper prison environment. However, the commission was dissatisfied with the beautiful view from the cells’ windows. Its members ordered all trees in the internal yard of the prison to be cut and the windows to be covered by special hoods. Green grass, trees, and blue sky connected prisoners with the external world, which was in clear violation of police norms, rules, and aesthetics.¹³²

The arrests of 1930–1935 in Budynok Slovo followed a pattern common throughout the republic. In addition to Stalin’s “long-standing suspicions of Poles,” xenophobia, and general distrust of foreigners, the Galician Ukrainian intelligentsia that immigrated to Soviet Ukraine en masse from the mid-1920s to the early 1930s were perceived as Ukrainians with a strong sense of national identity. These attitudes were reflected in the early arrests in Budynok Slovo and within the scheme of group cases fabricated against Ukrainian nationalists by the secret police.¹³³ In fact, in 1933, at the November Party Plenum, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the KP(b)U, Stanislav Kosior, proclaimed: “The Ukrainian nationalists are preparing an intervention against the USSR. The majority of those counterrevolutionaries and nationalists that have been uncovered recently came to us from abroad, from Prague, Galicia and other places [...] those Galician nationalists [...] were sent here to prepare the intervention from inside.”¹³⁴ Thousands of Galicians were arrested and exiled to labor camps, and many were executed.¹³⁵ Mykhailo Iashchun, who received ten years in prison as a Galician member of the UVO, suggested the reasons for such tactics:¹³⁶

The arrival of Galicians in Ukraine and their occupation of leading positions on the cultural front were not politically expedient for Moscow’s imperial politics, and therefore, it was necessary to eliminate Galicians who were authentic carriers and promoters of Ukrainian culture. Moscow is not interested in [the cultural domination of Galicians], and the Party slogans about Ukrainian culture are a screen behind which the russification of Ukraine occurs. Arrests of Galicians are the continuation of tsarist politics, and are aimed at the extermination and oppression of national minorities.

Russia has always been famous for violent feudal massacres, and now its violence is aimed at Galicians.¹³⁷

Recent studies of the repression of the Galician Ukrainian intelligentsia and the ethnic composition of Solovky prisoners in the beginning of the 1930s support Iashchun's analysis.¹³⁸ Some observers noted that those Galicians who survived the terror into the mid-1930s were recruited by the secret police or were protected by some influential figures in the GPU.¹³⁹

The arrests of Western Ukrainians began in various cultural institutions in July and August 1929.¹⁴⁰ In Budy-nok Slovo, the GPU began to arrest the residents three weeks after they moved into their new apartments. During the night of January 19, 1930, the secret police came to apartment 27 to arrest the Ukrainian actress, writer, and teacher Halyna Orlivna (Mnevs'ka). She was born in the village of Kalandentsi in Poltava oblast' in 1895 and in 1920 moved abroad to Lviv. She published her first prose in Ukrainian journals in Vienna, Prague, and Lviv, and, before returning to Soviet Ukraine in 1925, published two collections of short stories.¹⁴¹ She married the young writer Klym Polishchuk in 1920 while living in Poland. The Lviv period became very productive for both writers. Ukrainization encouraged the couple, together with their daughter Lesia, to move to Kharkiv; the capital of Ukrainian culture was perceived to be the perfect place for young literary talents. Klym was hesitant and reluctant; he anticipated repressions. Halyna was optimistic and adamant in her decision to move to Kharkiv. Later Klym rebuked Halyna for her thoughtlessness and shortsightedness. In his December 14, 1934, letter to Halyna, he wrote:

I should have done what I thought was right [. . .] I would not have done this [. . .] if not for your desire to return as soon as possible there [. . .] I had to agree because I loved you and Lesia, and could not allow myself to stay there by myself [. . .] I could not allow this but I knew the consequences of this decision, I could predict them, and saw them in my dreams.¹⁴²



Halyna Orlivna. Courtesy of the Holob's'ka Village Library. Volyn' oblast, Ukraine.



Klym Polishchuk. Courtesy of the SBU Archive in Kharkiv oblast. File no. 035261.

In Kharkiv, Klym wrote only what seemed to him insipid and colorless prose. The theme of the revolution, a feature of his earlier work, disappeared. His characters became hesitant and confused.¹⁴³ On the other hand, Halyna advanced her talent and grew professionally. The year 1929 was extremely productive for her and marked a qualitative change in her literary skill. She joined the literary association Pluh and published the novel *Emihranty* (Emigrants), which Pavlo Tychyna edited.¹⁴⁴ Halyna conceived a novel about collectivization, a popular subject among writers at the time, and traveled to many collective farms in Poltava, Kharkiv, and Myrhorod oblasts to study the problems and successes in the countryside. The result was unexpected. In the beginning of 1930, she published two works—*Nove pole* (New Field) and *Babs'kyi bunt* (Women's Uprising)¹⁴⁵—that depicted the peasants' distrust of Soviet collectivization and resistance to the methods of forcible collectivization employed by the regime. The publications had tragic consequences for both Halyna and Klym, although their marriage was deteriorating and they eventually separated. Klym was arrested on November 4, 1929, accused of Ukrainian nationalism and counterrevolutionary activity.¹⁴⁶ Halyna was “doubly” guilty. She was identified as a relative of a counterrevolutionary and, because of her novels, as a Ukrainian nationalist. She was arrested in Budynok Slovo three weeks after she moved there with the Russian writer Volodymyr Iurezans'kyi, her new inspiration and love.¹⁴⁷ The GPU put her in Kholodna Hora prison, and not long after she was exiled to Kazakhstan for five years.

Halyna continued to write in Kazakhstan and even sent some of her work to Kharkiv but soon realized that she would never be published. Her mother brought Lesia to Kazakhstan but died soon after making the trip. Halyna served her sentence and then went on to teach in the Martunsk high school in Aktiubinsk oblast. The GPU/NKVD prohibited her return to Ukraine. She was able to visit Kyiv and Lubny only after the war in 1948. She died in Kyiv on March 21, 1955, and was buried in the village of Holoby in Kovel' region (Volyn' oblast), the native village of her second husband, Iakov Voznyi.¹⁴⁸

Klym never lived in Budynok Slovo, but through Orlivna his life is obliquely connected with the place and its residents. Some commentators argued that Halyna denounced her ex-husband, but Klym's warm letters from labor camps give no indication of his wife's betrayal.¹⁴⁹ On January 29, 1930, he was sentenced to ten years in labor camps by the OGPU Collegium.¹⁵⁰ Before that sentence was served, however, Klym's case was reopened, and, along with many other *slov'iany* and Ukrainian intellectuals, he was shot as a Ukrainian nationalist on November 3, 1937, in Sandarmokh (Karelia). That date is one of the most tragic for Ukrainian culture; in total, 265 people were shot on this day when the UNKVD troika in Leningrad oblast

issued order no. 103010/37. Of those executed, 134 were Ukrainian literary figures and artists; the reason for the executions given by the NKVD was to “celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.”¹⁵¹

Although neither Klym Polishchuk nor Halyna Orlivna was born in Galicia, each had spent time abroad and was considered to have absorbed Galician influences. The secret police included them in a dangerous circle of nationalists from Western Ukraine who had to be neutralized, along with their “nationalist” art. Moscow understood that even under Polish occupation, and perhaps because of it, Western Ukrainians had preserved a strong sense of national identity. They cherished their cultural roots and national heritage, and could stimulate Soviet Ukrainians to follow a similar path; that influence, as far as Moscow was concerned, had to be prevented.¹⁵² The repression of Galician intellectuals became a strategic operation with intense and vigorous dynamics in Soviet Ukraine.¹⁵³

Although he had lived with Halyna Orlivna, Volodymyr Iurezans’kyi survived the terror without ever being targeted and continued to live in Budynok Slovo after Halyna was arrested. In late 1933, when Budynok Slovo was being shaken by nightly arrests, he left for Moscow.¹⁵⁴ Apparently, the GPU had reasons for granting him freedom, despite the fact that Halyna had been accused of being a Ukrainian nationalist. He spoke Russian, wrote extensively about Dniprobud, glorified Soviet industrialization, and became an expert in the history of that construction site.¹⁵⁵ The Party needed him to promote Soviet successes in industrialization.¹⁵⁶ Before the Great Terror, Iurezans’kyi moved to the Urals and worked for various newspapers. After World War II, he resided in Moscow. He died there on February 9, 1957. In his biographical statements, the Ukrainian period is totally erased; one can only learn about his career in Ukraine by examining his body of work.¹⁵⁷

The changing political climate in Ukraine and witch hunts for Ukrainian nationalists, often highlighted in the press, disillusioned writers. Many suffered from depression and an inability to write. Self-denunciations did not protect the *slav’iany* from further Party reprimands and harassment. In January 1928, Khvyľovyi wrote to Mykhailo Ialovyi: “We wrote a ‘repentant letter,’ didn’t we? Yes, we did. What else do they want from us? To suck someone’s ass, or what? As for *Val’dshnepy* [Khvyľovyi’s novel], I am certain that if *Val’dshnepy* had not been written, they would find something else to accuse me of.”¹⁵⁸ This letter, as well as years of friendship with Khvyľovyi, played a significant role in Ialovyi’s life.

In fact, Mykhailo Ialovyi was the first *slav’iany*n to be accused of anti-Soviet activity and membership in the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO). He was a recognizable figure in Kharkiv’s literary community: in 1926, he was the first

president of VAPLITE (Free Academy of Proletarian Literature/Vil'na Akademiia Proletars'koi Literatry), the literary group that gained fame for its opposition to the state-sponsored literary associations *Molodniak* and VUSPP. As a *vaplitiianyn*, Ialovyi fought against anti-Ukrainian attitudes and, in 1929, he published his novel *Zoloti lyseniata* (Golden Fox-cubs), which deals with the Ukrainian revolution and the Borot'bists.¹⁵⁹ He also edited the journal *Chervonyi Shliakh* and was an editor at publishing houses *Literatura i mystetstvo* (LIM) and *Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Ukrainy* (DVU).¹⁶⁰ Most importantly, he was a person who had close relationships with Khvylovyi and was associated with the latter's seditious views on the development of Ukrainian culture. He was arrested in Apartment #30, on the night of May 12, 1933, the day before Khvylovyi committed suicide.¹⁶¹



Mykhailo Ialovyi.
Courtesy of the
Korolenko State
Scientific Library,
Kharkiv, Ukraine.

The accusations under which Ialovyi was arrested had been developing for several years. In 1931, the national sentiment among Ukrainians and national minorities—as well as frequent peasant uprisings in response to Soviet collectivization policies—encouraged the OGPU in Moscow to create the SPV (Secret Political Department/Sekretno-politychnyi viddil). In Ukraine, the department was formed on April 5, 1931. From 1931 to 1934, the SPV fabricated thousands of criminal cases against the Ukrainian intelligentsia and peasants who, in the state's view, obstructed the modernization of Soviet society and strove to create an independent bourgeois Ukrainian state. Through individual and group criminal cases, the secret police increasingly added to a multivolume narrative of conspiracy, according to which people belonged to one or another nationalist organization that was preparing to overthrow the Soviet regime in Ukraine. Ukrainians—along with Poles, Germans, Jews, Armenians, Romanians, and other nationalities—were accused of conspiring against the Soviet state and undermining socialist construction from within.¹⁶²

The SPV, under the leadership of Henrikh Liushkov, Iukhym Kryvets', Mykhailo Oleksandrovs'kyi, and Borys Kozel's'kyi, “uncovered” hundreds of alleged counter-revolutionary organizations in Ukraine. One of its major operations was the arrest of hundreds of Ukrainian intellectuals, immigrants from Galicia, and local Ukrainian intelligentsia who worked in various cultural institutions.¹⁶³ In January 1933, Pavel Postyshev, sent by Stalin to Ukraine along with thousands of Party functionaries to combat Ukrainian nationalism and resistance to grain procurements, claimed that cultural institutions were counterrevolutionary nests of Petliurites, Makhnovites,

and foreign spies. He thanked the secret police for eliminating dangerous tendencies in Ukraine and attributed the failure to fulfill bread procurements in 1932 to the destructive activities of nationalists who occupied leading positions in the People's Commissariats.¹⁶⁴

Ialovyi's active membership in the Borot'bist Party before 1920, his close relationships with former Borot'bists (Vasyl' Ellan-Blakytnyi, Oleksandr Shums'kyi and Mykhailo Poloz), and his interactions with Khvylovyyi and the Ukrainian futurists (Mykhailo Semenko, Oleksa Slisarenko, Volodymyr Iarovenko and Vasyl' Aleshko) were sufficient grounds for the GPU to arrest him.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, the secret police considered the project of the systemization of Ukrainian spelling—a project commissioned by the state and led by the People's Commissar of Education, Oleksandr Shums'kyi—a nationalist conspiracy. Ialovyi's active participation in it and his collaboration with other members of the commission, among whom were the *slov'iany* Maik Iohansen, Mykola Khvylovyyi, and many prominent Ukrainian scholars who were not favored by the center, also contributed to his image as a nationalist. The All-Ukrainian Academy of Science received secret instructions from Moscow that the scholars should “do everything they could to make the Ukrainian language as similar to Russian as possible.”¹⁶⁶ Yet shortly after, most of the members of the commission were harassed, including Ialovyi.¹⁶⁷

Surveillance materials on Ialovyi had been collected for several years prior to his arrest.¹⁶⁸ Several testimonies by those previously arrested claimed that Ialovyi was an UVO member who took an active part in preparing a military uprising against Soviet power in Ukraine. One such denunciation was written by Ievhen Cherniak, the director of the Kharkiv Institute of the History of Ukrainian Culture. Cherniak, arrested as an UVO member, supposedly said that he regularly attended UVO meetings at the homes of members, including Ialovyi's apartment in Budynok Slovo. Ukrainian intellectuals were alleged to have attended these meetings and discussed the urgency of a military uprising in Ukraine before the GPU could conduct mass arrests of the UVO members.¹⁶⁹

On June 8, 1933, Ialovyi provided a detailed report about the goals of the UVO, its composition, and its international support and connections. However, his depositions during the interrogations can hardly be taken at face value because the conditions of his interrogation remain unknown. The interrogator in Ialovyi's case was GPU/NKVD operative plenipotentiary Serhii Pustovoitov, whose name appears in many interrogations of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, and who was famous for his vicious and sadistic nature. When he was arrested in 1937 for counterrevolutionary activity in the secret organs, his July 27 deposition revealed the mechanisms used

in criminal cases against the Ukrainian intelligentsia. According to Pustovoitov, the GPU received great assistance in fabricating criminal cases from those among the Ukrainian intelligentsia who were recruited by the GPU through fear, blackmail, and intimidation. They included Iurynets', Bilen'kyi-Berezyns'kyi, Shtein, Karbonenko, Borodchak, and Onishchuk.¹⁷⁰ The names of those who “needed” to be denounced were provided by the GPU. Pustovoitov stated: “No one read their reports carefully—we knew they were false. It was important to receive the material so that we could justify arrests and show that we combat terrorism.”¹⁷¹ Moreover, when it became apparent that GPU agents were in danger of exposure, the secret police helped them hide in the RSFSR and financially supported them.¹⁷²

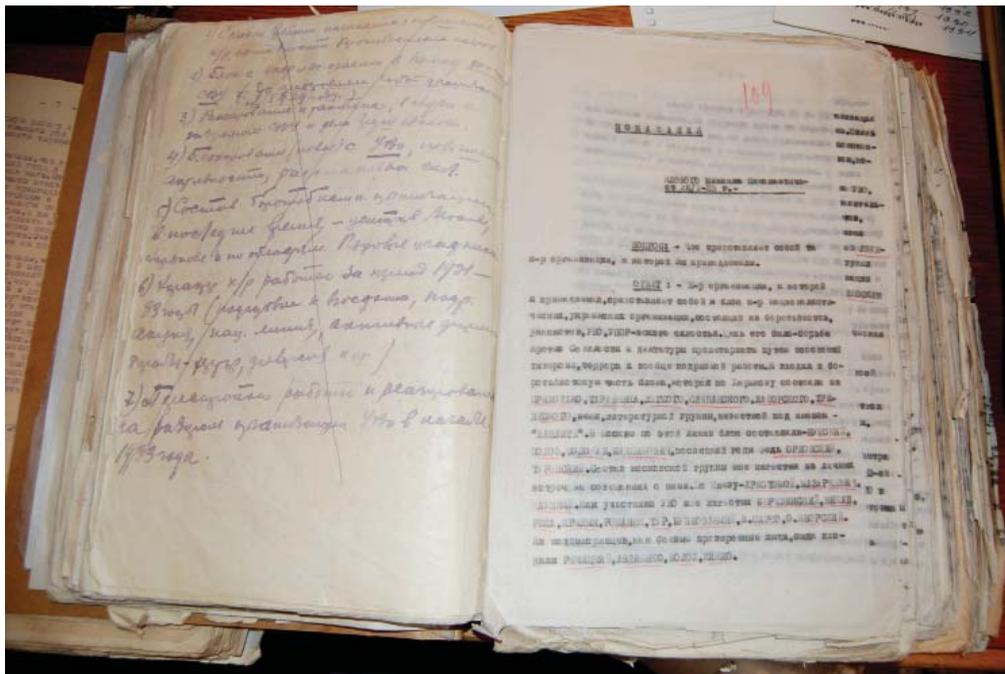
In Ialovyĭ's case, his self-incrimination had little to do with the historical truth. Rehabilitation materials revealed that the UVO never existed in Soviet Ukraine, and all “members” of this imaginary organization were rehabilitated in the 1950s, 1980s, and 1990s. Ialovyĭ's file exemplifies what author Cristina Vatulescu has called a “priceless representation of the values, apprehensions, and fantasies entertained by the secret police.”¹⁷³ Ialovyĭ's file may conceal the particulars of his behavior during the preliminary investigation, but it discloses valuable details about how the GPU operated, how the secret police understood evidence, guilt, the ethics of investigation, and the significance of collected testimonies. In other words, police records convey the interrogators' perceptions about the appropriateness of the materials collected during preliminary investigations. They also reveal shockingly low standards of professionalism and the manner in which the interrogators interpreted those standards. Several supervisors accepted Ialovyĭ's interrogation minutes as sufficient incriminating evidence, which demonstrates the law's crude debasement at the time.

Many Soviet individual files are attempts to write a suspect's biography.¹⁷⁴ The biographies in the criminal files lack almost any description of childhood years; a prisoner's early years were reduced to the “social origin” of his or her family. Yet the conscious life of the individual had to be reflected in detail and shaped in a certain way to emphasize his or her “belonging,” “membership,” “participation,” “ideological inclinations,” “political views,” and other indicators to help the secret police build a case and subsequently bring the suspect to a confession. Ialovyĭ's case is no exception; in the 108 pages of his autobiography, which at the same time serves as his confession, there is very little about Ialovyĭ's early years but an extensive narrative about his criminal activities and nationalist views as a conscious adult.

The document has the features of a dialogue, not a monologue. Ialovyĭ's answers appear fully scripted and carefully structured; his narrative effusively reflects the needs of the secret police. Perhaps Ialovyĭ was aware of what was expected of

him in advance, and this knowledge helped him produce a book-length confession within three days.¹⁷⁵ The writer very accurately conveyed a sense of his own doom, as if he were eager to expiate his guilt. His narrative includes every imaginable self-incriminating detail. Political expectations shaped the obsessive description of how Ialovyi's identity was "formed" and "transformed."¹⁷⁶

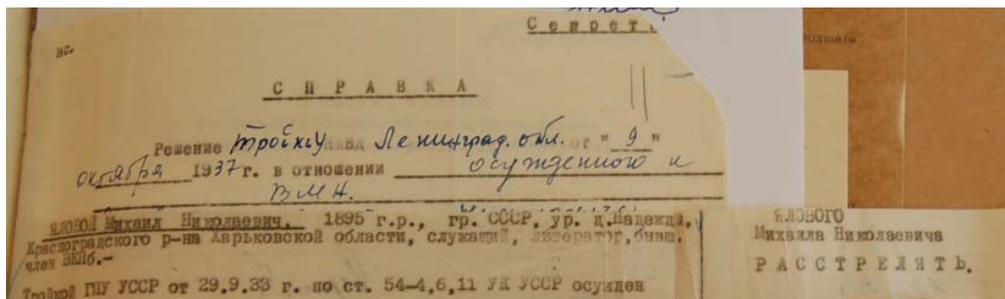
As later testimonies of those who survived the Kharkiv GPU prison and labor camps demonstrate, interrogators promised a "soft" punishment or even freedom in exchange for a detailed narrative about counterrevolutionary activity, and this promise shaped the depositions of many victims.¹⁷⁷ Ialovyi's interrogator clearly demanded psychological explanations of what brought the suspect to this point. The interrogation seems to have been constructed along Freudian lines and schemes; there was a "pathological" and "morbid" (nationalist) condition that had to be "treated," but the "doctor" needed full self-disclosure and self-analysis in a written form to expose weaknesses, vices, fallacies, and pernicious influences that had provoked the suspect.



Mykhailo Ialovyi's deposition. Courtesy of the DAKhO. R6452-4-1-1844-108zv-109.

Prisoners were given ample time to write as much as possible in their autobiographical confessions. No one limited them in terms of the length of their compositions or the time it took to create them. Ialovyi's criminal file contains 414 pages of tiny handwriting, written on both sides of many pages (roughly 600–700 pages in all).¹⁷⁸ During the Great Terror (1937–1938), after years of file fabrication and experience, the GPU/NKVD craftsmen downsized their files, reducing the time and effort invested in these creations. Only group files consisted of several volumes of documents. The GPU's work became sloppy, a fact that is reflected in the quality of evidence collected for criminal cases (or rather its virtual absence) and in the size of criminal files.¹⁷⁹ Ialovyi's confession, however, constitutes 108 pages of the criminal file. This is one of the lengthiest and most detailed among criminal files of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. For Ialovyi, writing such a lengthy confession must have seemed like protracted torture and death, as it left no avenue for him to escape the death penalty. This deposition became the last text that he created as a writer.

As the file progresses, the first-person narrative alternates with third-person



Mykhailo Ialovyi's second verdict. Courtesy of the DAKhO. R6452-4-2-1844-11.

depositions, which produces an effect of personal estrangement. For the reader, Ialovyi represents a person who has become judgmental and critical toward himself and his alleged criminal actions.¹⁸⁰ However, another scenario is possible: the interrogator kept forgetting that Ialovyi was supposed to be the sole author of his own confession. Such third-party digressions can be observed throughout many criminal files and reveal a common thread: the more believable the authorship of the suspect's confession might be at the outset, the more striking becomes the stylistic dissonance between the first-person original narrative and the later ubiquitous third-person references. Such a stylistic transition heightens the reader's concerns about authorship, and so other changes in a narrator's style become more perceptible and more noticeable.

Moreover, Ialovyi's confession and interrogation minutes were written by hand, a practice largely discontinued by the GPU/NKVD after 1934. Ialovyi did not sign each page of the written documents, as he should have, and even an untrained eye can easily detect inconsistencies in the handwritten testimonies on different days. These inconsistencies might have occurred because as time progressed, Ialovyi's handwriting changed as his physical condition deteriorated under torture, or because some sections were written by someone else. Alternatively, in much of the file, it seems possible that the apparent difference in handwriting between questions and answers is meant to persuade readers that the questions were written by the interrogator and the answers by Ialovyi.¹⁸¹ However, the last section of minutes reveals a clear similarity between what had previously seemed to be two separate sets of handwriting. Might it be possible that by page 133 of the criminal case, the GPU agent was tired of being a careful imitator because the investigation was to be completed and the file had to be transferred to the prosecutor?

Additionally, linguistic differences (Ukrainianisms employed by the author in Russian texts, vocabulary, manner of expression) between the earlier testimonies and the later ones are rather drastic, which inviting further questions about the authenticity of Ialovyi's later pages.¹⁸² From page 83 on, the original voice of the writer seems to fade away, replaced by bureaucratic standard slang, a trademark of GPU interrogators. In other words, the language of the first 82 pages of Ialovyi's criminal file is very different from the language of the remaining pages of his protocols, and readers need not be linguists to notice this difference.

Ialovyi's case was one of the first against Ukrainian intellectuals in which the GPU/NKVD used a "principle of escalation." A plethora of names, individual connections, and group links emerges from the interrogation minutes. With each new set of minutes, the alleged counterrevolutionary organization expands and includes new representatives of various cultural institutions in Ukraine. By the last interrogation, almost all significant cultural figures and representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia have been mentioned as participants in anti-Soviet activities. The escalation principle was broadly employed in all subsequent criminal cases, and by the late 1930s, everyone involved in Ukrainian cultural institutions could expect to find themselves mentioned in condemning testimonies. They were swept away and replaced by new, more obedient, cadres.¹⁸³

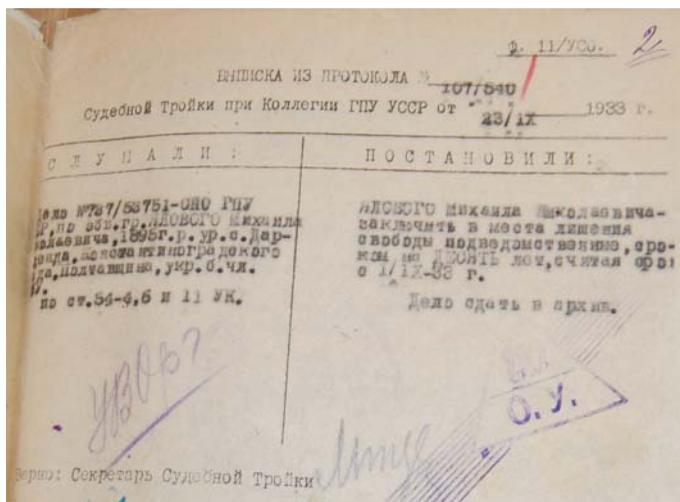
In prison, Ialovyi asked Pustovoitov to spare his life because of his sincerity and openness during interrogation. On September 23, 1933, Ialovyi was sentenced to ten years in labor camps by the GPU troika. According to the decision of the NKVD troika in Leningrad oblast, he was shot as a Ukrainian nationalist and a member of an

anti-Soviet organization on November 3, 1937, in Sandarmokh (Karelia).¹⁸⁴ Four years later, on September 7, 1937, Pustovoitov was likewise sentenced to death by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR.¹⁸⁵ Ironically, Pustovoitov was rehabilitated as a victim of Stalin's repressions earlier than Ialovyī—on June 3, 1997. Ialovyī attained this distinction only on February 25,

2003.¹⁸⁶ Stalin's reign desynchronized their individual histories, revealing one of many insidious facets of cultural disruption in Ukraine caused by the terror of the 1930s: torturers and tormentors were released from their ignominious fates prior to those they had condemned.

In early November 1936, Vazonov, the assistant to the district prosecutor, assigned to investigate special cases, signed the order to arrest a group of *slov'iany*: Ivan Kovtun, Oleksii Savyts'kyi, Ivan Kaliannykov, and Samiilo Shchupak. All but Shchupak were arrested in Budynok Slovo.¹⁸⁷ Shchupak, who in 1934 moved to Kyiv, resided in Rolit (a similar building for the Ukrainian intelligentsia) where he was arrested on November 10, 1936. All of these individuals were accused of membership in a Ukrainian nationalist fascist organization and of terrorist activity against Party members.

Vukhnaĭ was a talented novelist and Savyts'kyi was a gifted playwright. In addition, both authors wrote humorous short stories and *feuilletons*, a genre that became popular in the 1920s–1930s but always remained suspect in the eyes of the Party establishment. The Party viewed humor as counterproductive, since it deflated the obligatory heroism, seriousness, and grandiloquence required of cultural producers. Because of the severe criticism to which these two writers were subjected in 1933, and because of the famine of 1932–1933 and the arrests of the intelligentsia that silenced



Mykhailo Ialovyī's verdict. Courtesy of the DAKhO, R6452-4-2-1844-2.

many *slov'iany*, both men stopped writing and published almost nothing during this period.¹⁸⁸

With the exception of Shchupak, this group of *slov'iany* were friends who lived in one place, spent time together, and worked for the same journals at different times of their literary career. For the NKVD, any grouping, personal or professional, posed the risk of a conspiracy. Close human links and connections became the pretext for sweeping away those who did not seem to be a part of Soviet cultural construction. Despite the fact that this group included individuals of Russian (Kaliannyk) and Jewish (Shchupak) origins, to the secret police they all shared a Ukrainian identity because they shared a space, a spoken language (Ukrainian), and an interest in Ukrainian cultural traditions.

Vukhnal' made as many friends as he did enemies because of his epigrams and short sto-

А К Т . .

17

Г. Харьков, 1937 года, февраля 7 дня, мы нижеподписавшиеся Пом. Нач. 3-го Отделения 4 Отдела ХОУ НКВД Мл. Лейтенант Государственной Безопасности - ЗАМКОВ, Оперуполномоченный 3 Отделения 4 Отдела ХОУ НКВД - Лейтенант Государственной Безопасности АНТОНОВ и Пом. Оперуполномоченного 3-го 4 Отдела ХОУ НКВД - БАРАХМАН, согласно списков ОбЛИТ'а произвели уничтожение контр-революционной литературы путем сожжения, которая наята при обысках и арестах по следующим делам:

По делу НОВТУНА-ВУХНАЛЯ.

1. СОСЫРА - "Сердце"	-	1 книга
2. В. ВАГАЯН - "О национальной культуре"	-	1 "
3. М. ГРЧАН - "Біла Мапа"	-	1 "
4. ГЕО ЭПИК - "Том "агирь"	-	1 "
- " - "Без грунту"	-	1 "
- " - "Спільна Праця"	-	1 "
- " - "Звустріч"	-	1 "
5. О. СЛІСАРЕНКО - "Непереможні Сили"	-	1 "
6. А. РІЧИЦЬКИЙ - "Ленін і Плеханов в теорії мистецтва і літератури"	-	1 "
- " - "Тарас Шевченко в світлі ЕПІКА"	-	1 кн.
7. Г. ЗИНОВЬЕВ - "История РКП"	-	1 кн.
8. ПРЕОБРАЖЕНСКИЙ - "Экономический Кризис"	-	1 кн.
9. ДОСВІТНИЙ - "Новели"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Нас було троє"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Х Т О"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Кварцяк"	-	4 кн.
10. О. ВИШНЯ - "Чупас Нудь"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Чухраці"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Як із Харкова зробити Берлін"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Вибрані твори"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Усмійки"	-	1 кн.
11. М. СКРИПНИК - "Статті і промови"	-	1 кн.
- " - "На Герць"	-	2 кн.
12. П. ЗАГОРУЙКО - "По той бік греблі"	-	1 кн.
13. МИСИК В. - "Будинки"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Чотири витвори"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Трави"	-	1 кн.
14. ВЛИЗЬКО - "Дозвій"	-	1 кн.
15. ВРАЖЛИВИЙ - "Батько"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Справа Серця"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Молодість"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Перемога"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Земля"	-	1 кн.
16. Г. КОСИКА - "Серце"	-	1 кн.
17. Г. ШЕГРУТІЙ - "Зима 1930 року"	-	1 кн.
18. Л. ГОРДІЄНКО - "Савойованій надір"	-	1 кн.
- " - "Героїка"	-	1 кн.

List of books confiscated and destroyed by the NKVD (Vukhnal's criminal file)-I. Courtesy of the AU SBUKHO. File no. 017800.

ries, in which he mocked writers who successfully adjusted themselves to Party demands and were therefore promoted and praised. His unforgettable character Sashko Indyk, who bragged about his “red” inspiration, his peasant origin, and his talentless but optimistic poetry, was severely criticized by official writers.¹⁸⁹

Prior to Vukhnal’s arrest, he had been thrown out of the Party as a nationalist and counterrevolutionary. During a search of his apartment, the NKVD operatives found in his library “counterrevolutionary” publications by those *slov’iany* who had already been arrested by the secret police, which served to confirm Vukhnal’s reputation. Paradoxically, instead of keeping these publications as evidence of Vukhnal’s political unreliability, the Kharkiv NKVD decided to burn his library.¹⁹⁰ This seemingly insignificant detail demonstrates that

the decision about Vukhnal’s verdict had been made prior to the completion of the preliminary investigation or the court verdict, which made evidence unnecessary.

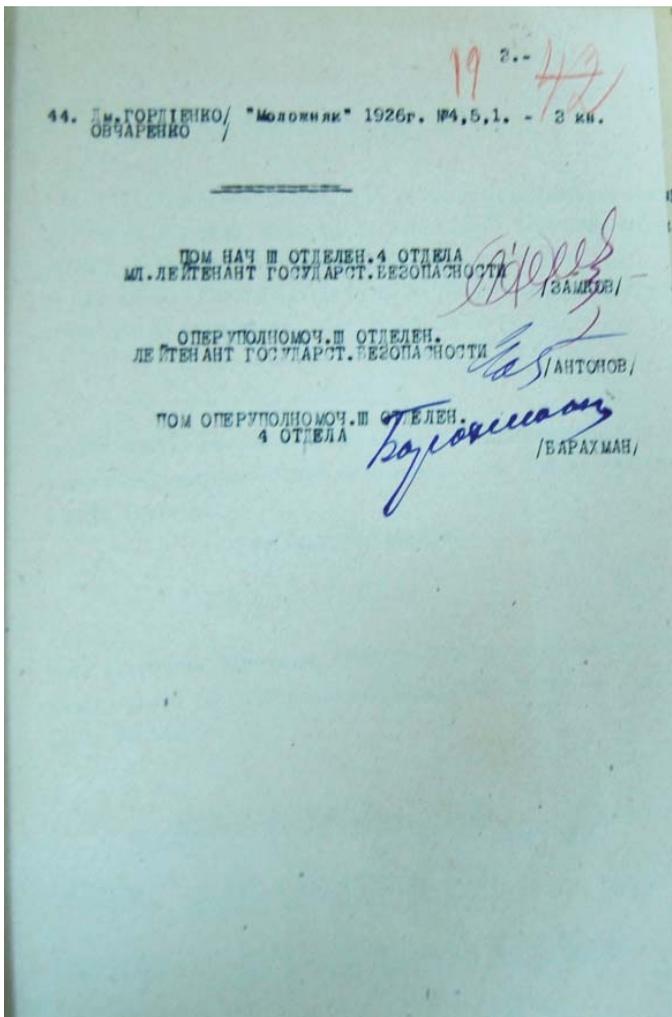
2.- 18

19.	Д. ГОРДИЛЕНКО	- "Срібний Край"	- 1 кн.
		- "Поломані люди"	- 1 кн.
		"Тинда"	- 1 кн.
29.	М. КУЛИШ	- "97"	- 1 кн.
		- "Мимо-Мазайло"	- 1 кн.
		- "Хулія Хуліна"	- 1 кн.
20.	С. КРУШЕЛЬНИЦЬКИЙ	- "Монголія"	- 1 кн.
21.	Г. ОБЧАРОВ	- "Нарис сучасної укр. літ-тури"	- 1 кн.
22.	В. ПОЛИЩУК	- "Рейд в Скандинавію"	- 1 кн.
23.	ГІРЧАК Б.	- "На два фронти боротьби проти націоналізму"	- 1 кн.
24.	ІВАНДРІЄНКО і ЧИВЧАНСЬКИЙ і Ю. ГЕЛЗЬ	- "Марш"	- 1 кн.
		- "Троглодити"	- 1 кн.
		- "Нещасні"	- 1 кн.
25.	АНТОНЕНКО-ЛАВИТОВИЧ	"справний чоловік"	- 1 кн.
26.	П. ГІРНЯК	- "Віщі Підпілля"	- 1 кн.
27.	С. РУДАНСЬКИЙ	- "Співомовки"	- 1 кн.
28.	КОРЯК В.	"Підручник історії літератури"	- 1 кн.
		- "В бою /ст. і вист. 1925-1930 р.р./ "ЛИМ" 1938 года.	- 1 кн.
29.	В. ВРАЖЛИВИЙ	- "В Яру"	- 1 кн.
30.	ОТТО-БАУЕР и С. СЕЛЖОРСЬКИЙ	"Національн. Вопрос" і "Соц-демократи"	- 1 кн.
31.	Л. ЧЕРНОВ	/Маламійченко/ "Пригоди проф. ВАКСА на острові ЦИПАНТО"	- 1 кн.
32.	Л. ЧЕРНОВ	/Маламійченко/ "Сонце під веслами"	- 1 кн.
33.	Контр-револ. і націонал. партія УКП	- ШУЛЬГІНА	- 1 кн.
34.	Просвіта	- "Вінок"	- 1 кн.
35.	Г. ГОЛОШЕВИЧ	- "Правописний словник"	- 1 кн.
36.	Альбом	"Письменники радянськ. Укр. додаток до журналу "Життя й революція" "Дву" 1928р.	- 1 кн.
37.	Євген ЧЕРНЯК	- "Листи з чужих країв"	- 1 кн.
38.	О. ВЛИЗЬЮ	- "Збірка творів том II"	- 1 кн.
39.	П. ЛІСОВИЙ	і МАЙФЕТ - "Молодяк"	- 2 кн.
40.		"Пролетфронт" /журнал/ №1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7-8,	- 7 кн.
41.		ВАПДІТЕ № 1, 1, 4, 5,	- 4 кн.
42.	О. ВЛИЗЬЮ	/Нова Генерация №12, 6, 10, 1	- 4 кн.
	М. СКРИПНИК		
43.	С. ПИЛИПЕНЮ	/ "ПЛУЖАНШ" №5, 5, 8, 8-9, 11-12, 4-5	
	ГІР МАЙФЕТ.	/ М. ГІРЧАК №9-10, 1, 10, 3, 11, 1, 2, 6, 2, 3, 4, 12, 4 -1928 г.	- 19 кн.

List of books confiscated and destroyed by the NKVD (Vukhnal’s criminal file)-II. Courtesy of the AU SBUKHO. File no. 017800.

Vukhnal's November 4, 1936, interrogation minutes reveal the concerns of an open and sincere person who lamented that the Party-appointed chief editors of leading Ukrainian journals understood nothing about literature. Moreover, he expressed concerns about the elimination of the best Ukrainian writers by the NKVD. Ten days later, on November 14, 1936, Vukhnal's tone changed dramatically: he confessed that under the influence of the *slav'iany* Kulish, Epik, and Valerian Polishchuk he had become a member of a nationalist anti-Soviet group. All of the individuals he named had previously been arrested. Vukhnal' apparently did not want to blemish the reputation of those who were still free. These tactics made sense. The arrested often provided the NKVD with the names

of individuals already dead, imprisoned, or exiled. However, during the next interrogation, Vukhnal' denounced writers who were not in the custody of the NKVD, his neighbors Mykhailo Semenko, Antin Dykyi, and Ivan Plakhtin.¹⁹¹



List of books confiscated and destroyed by the NKVD (Vukhnal's file)-III. Courtesy of the AU SBUKHo. File no. 017800.

On February 3, 1937, under unknown circumstances, Vukhnal' again changed his story and testified that as a member of the literary associations Pluh, Molodniak, and Prolitfront, he was influenced by anti-Soviet propaganda conducted on the pages of the journals with the same names. He assertively stated, however, that he had dropped his counterrevolutionary stance after 1935. After this sudden turn of the preliminary investigation, the NKVD operative Lysyts'kyi left Vukhnal' alone for approximately three and a half months. There is no way to know what happened to Vukhnal' during this time in prison, but in the middle of April he was convoyed to Kyiv to the Luk'ianiv'ska prison.¹⁹²

The NKVD operative Akimov replaced Lysyts'kyi in the cases of both Vukhnal' and Kaliannyk. Unsigned pages of interrogation minutes became a frequent phenomenon under Akimov. These pages could have been easily forged by interrogators. Sometimes the signature of the arrested appeared on the last page of the minutes. On May 13, 1937, Akimov met Vukhnal' in the interrogation room with the statement: "You are continuing to resist. [We] strongly suggest that you should stop your disavowal." As Akimov explained, Vukhnal's resistance made little sense because his guilt was confirmed by the depositions of Savyts'kyi and Chechvians'kyi. These individuals also claimed that Vukhnal' was linked to a member of the Ukrainian nationalist underground named Mykola Bazhan, who was the brother of Vukhnal's mistress. Vukhnal' denied all of the charges.¹⁹³

The interrogators had no interest in cleansing the file to eliminate evidence of their negligence, such as unsigned pages of protocols and illogical gaps during interrogations. They also failed to erase their concerted efforts to ensure Vukhnal's guilt. For instance, Chechvians'kyi's depositions about regular meetings in Vukhnal's apartment and discussions about terrorist activities against Party leaders proved to be false. Vukhnal' testified that during the time period identified by Chechvians'kyi, he was on a business trip to Leningrad and Odesa, but this information was ignored by Akimov as insignificant. Furthermore, Akimov filed and retained Vukhnal's written protest against his interrogator's manipulative tactics; this serves as a testament to Akimov's belief in his impunity. In this protest, Vukhnal' stated that Akimov denied permission to include relevant information in the file, including his questions to Chechvians'kyi, and the latter's responses, which contradicted his earlier depositions against Vukhnal'. Vukhnal' demanded that these sessions be held in the presence of the prosecutor, but this demand was ignored. Instead of addressing these complaints, Akimov initiated a discussion about the guns that were in Vukhnal's possession. Akimov claimed that Vukhnal' had a revolver in his apartment that was likely to be used as a weapon during planned assassinations. Vukhnal' rejected the supposition

stating that he had received permission from the GPU in 1929 to have a gun and, furthermore, in August 1933 his apartment had been robbed and the gun stolen, which he had reported in writing to the NKVD.¹⁹⁴

These details and the interrogator's tactics reveal the type of organizational and procedural patterns, culture, and aesthetics that were established in the interrogation rooms. Extensive descriptive literature on interrogation practices, as well as analysis of the criminal records of the *slov'iany*, confirm the existence of a preconceived agenda followed slavishly by the NKVD, despite the persistent and adamant denial of all charges. Vukhnal' experienced exactly this situation with Akimov.

The materials of the 1950s rehabilitation commission and the correspondence between the KGB and relatives of the *slov'iany* shed light on the NKVD methods of obtaining confessions in the 1930s. Vukhnal's brother Leonid testified that he escaped from a little window in the bathroom (the apartment was located on the first floor) when the NKVD came to arrest Vukhnal'. Leonid saw his brother in prison the day before Vukhnal' was shot. According to Leonid, it was difficult to recognize his brother, who was mutilated and beaten. Vukhnal' told him: "Lenechka, brother, I am not guilty." The last statement in Leonid's July 23, 1989 letter to the KGB authorities reads: "Your archive is a total fabrication."¹⁹⁵

Oleksii Savyts'kyi, Vukhnal's fellow humorist, fell subject to similarly brutal practices in prison at the hands of NKVD operatives Iakushev and Lysyts'kyi. On the second day after his arrest, Savyts'kyi confessed that he belonged to a Ukrainian nationalist fascist organization that worked in the deep underground.¹⁹⁶ Besides Chechvians'kyi and Vukhnal', Savyts'kyi named Mykhailo Semenko, Terentii Masenko, Ivan Kaliannyk, Amvrosii Buchma, Maksym Ryl's'kyi, Antin Dykyi, and Ivan Plakhtin as members of the anti-Soviet organization.¹⁹⁷ Savyts'kyi supposedly confirmed that he was ideologically recruited in 1927 when he joined the editorial board of the journal *Chervonyi Perets'* (Red Pepper). According to Savyts'kyi's protocol of November 28, 1936, he stated, "They cultivated an enemy of Soviet power in me."¹⁹⁸ He allegedly characterized Ivan Kaliannyk as an "active fascist," noting that there were cases when Kaliannyk assaulted other writers in Budynok Slovo, and hence was capable of terrorist acts against Party leaders.¹⁹⁹ The authorship of these accounts is of course doubtful. The level of reasoning assigned to Savyts'kyi, an individual with a sharp mind, great sense of humor, and poise, appears rather childish, crude, and—even under the extreme stressful circumstances of interrogation—highly incongruous.

The accounts of conspiracy constantly changed depending on the needs of the NKVD. In October 1937, Mykhailo Semenko, who had been named by Savyts'kyi in

1936 as one of the members of a nationalist fascist organization, was listed instead as the person who in 1933 had recruited Vukhnał', Chechvians'kyi, and Savyts'kyi and created one of many terrorist groups that aimed to assassinate Kosior.²⁰⁰ Savyts'kyi's story about his recruitment by Chechvians'kyi and Vyshnia had been abandoned by the secret police.²⁰¹

Lysyts'kyi was also assigned to investigate Ivan Kaliannyk, a subtle poet and a former member of the literary association Prolitfront.²⁰² In late 1934, Kostiuk remembered Kaliannyk, who was usually emotional and flamboyant, as sad and depressed because of routine arrests in Budynok Slovo.²⁰³ Kaliannyk earned a reputation as a thug because he assaulted a bureaucrat from the State Literary Publishing House who insulted his wife. A chorus of voices accused Kaliannyk of terrorism and compared him to Nikolaev, the assassin of Kirov. Ivan Kyrylenko, especially, actively harassed and condemned Kaliannyk as a "relative" of Nikolaev, and on November 15, 1935 Kaliannyk was expelled from the Union of Writers.²⁰⁴

Kaliannyk was an ethnic Russian, as was his wife Oleksandra Sherbakova. He had changed his name to drop the Russian ending -ov, following Pavlo Tychyna's advice to write in Ukrainian.²⁰⁵ But he admired Russian poetry, and could recite works by Pushkin from memory (as well works by Shevchenko, Heine, Byron, Schiller and Shakespeare).²⁰⁶ Kaliannyk's transformation into a Ukrainian poet and Ukrainian speaker was sufficient grounds for the secret police to accuse him of membership in a Ukrainian terrorist organization. In light of his arrest during the night of November 3–4, 1936, this detail is darkly ironic. Kaliannyk's favorite revolutionary hero was Felix Dzerzhyns'kyi, the founder of the Cheka.²⁰⁷ Among books deemed counterrevolutionary—including titles by Epik, Vukhnał', Masenko, and Hrushevs'kyi—NKVD operatives found a portrait of Alexander I, a fact considered outrageous and one that was used as evidence of Kaliannyk's political unreliability.²⁰⁸

In the Kharkiv prison, Kaliannyk rejected the accusations and managed to tolerate the torture for approximately a month. On November 28, 1936, he confessed that Kulish and Epik enticed him into anti-Soviet activities and that the writers Savyts'kyi, Masenko, Serhii Borzenko, Chechvians'kyi, Vukhnał', Ivan Shutov, and Ivan Khutors'kyi were his accomplices and members of the Ukrainian nationalist underground.²⁰⁹ Interestingly, some of those whom Kaliannyk identified as members of the organization and counterrevolutionaries—Mykola Nahnibeda, Ivan Shutov, Serhii Borzenko, Teren' Masenko and Borys Kotliarov—had never been targeted by the NKVD.²¹⁰ Like Vukhnał', Savyts'kyi, and Chechvians'kyi, Kaliannyk was also conveyed to Kyiv in the middle of April, where he confirmed his deposition to his new interrogator, Akimov. Akimov encouraged Kaliannyk to include in the list of

enemies Antin Dykyi and Mykhailo Semenko, who were arrested shortly after Kaliannyk's confession.²¹¹

The code names for different Ukrainian nationalist groups were used interchangeably, and the treatment of members of all these imaginary organizations was virtually the same. The July 1937 statement (signed by the assistant to the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs in Ukraine, Vasyly' Ivanov, and the assistant to the Prosecutor in the USSR, Andrei Vyshinskii) stated that the NKVD had uncovered a Ukrainian counterrevolutionary Trotskyist terrorist organization. This organization had never appeared before during the preliminary investigation of this particular case. The conclusion alleged that members of the conspiracy not only had connections with the Trotskyite-Zinov'evite center in Moscow but also implemented Kirov's murder on December 1, 1934, and, during subsequent years, prepared terrorist acts against the leaders of the VKP(b).²¹²

On July 14, 1937, Vukhnal's, Savyts'kyi's, Kaliannyk, Chechvians'kyi and other "members" of the "terrorist conspiracy" were sentenced to death (with confiscation of their possessions) by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR. On that same day, twenty people were sentenced to the highest degree of punishment in accordance with Stalin's June 26, 1937, order, also signed by Kaganovich and Voroshilov, which was issued prior to the completion of the preliminary investigation and court hearings. Those executed included the Boichukists. Vukhnal' was the only one who denied the accusations during the closed court hearing. Kaliannyk confirmed his guilt (as did others) and asked the court to spare his life because, he stated, he had "behaved well during the preliminary investigation." The verdicts were implemented the next day. The conspirators were shot on July 15, 1937, in Kyiv. The place of their burial remains unknown.²¹³

As a routine practice, the families of the accused were evicted from Budynok Slovo, and the NKVD expropriated their possessions. Vira Mykhailivna, Savyts'kyi's wife, was also repressed and exiled to the Gulag.²¹⁴ Oleksandra Vasyli'vna, Kaliannyk's wife, was arrested in October 1937 and sentenced to eight years in labor camps. In the 1950s, both were rehabilitated.²¹⁵ Kaliannyk's daughter Zhanna was allowed to see her father's criminal file, (which had been fabricated by the secret police) only after a prolonged battle with the authorities in 1990.²¹⁶

Samiilo Shchupak's fate was similar, although he established himself as an official literary critic and journalist who vigorously supported the Party line. A former *slov'ianyn*, he was arrested in Kyiv on November 10, 1936. A longtime editor of the Kyiv newspaper *Proletars'ka pravda* (Proletarian Truth) and a past leader of the Kyiv chapter of the literary association Pluh,²¹⁷ Shchupak actively participated in the Lit-

erary Discussion of the 1920s and criticized Khvylovyi and “fellow traveler” writers for their ideological deviations.²¹⁸ The Party and its prominent spokesmen—Andrii Khvyliia, Vlas Chubar, Ievhen Hirchak, and even Joseph Stalin—sheltered him. His arrest embodied a new NKVD practice that would blossom during the Great Terror: the elimination of servants who had completed their tasks and were no longer needed.

Shchupak had lived in Kharkiv since 1930 but moved to Apartment 5 in Budy-nok Slovo in 1933 after the death of the writer Leonid Chernov-Maloshyichenko.²¹⁹ Khvylovyi lived two floors above, in Apartment 9. The brief time they shared as neighbors did not facilitate their rapprochement; on the contrary, it exacerbated their mutual dislike. Likewise, members of the Futurists group were especially frustrated with Shchupak’s attacks. In 1928, Oleksa Vlyz’ko characterized Shchupak as a person who “definitely disgusts us all.”²²⁰ Shchupak edited the journals *Kritika* and *Literaturna Hazeta* and joined the literary association VUSPP, which aggressively imposed the views of its Party overseers in art. This further aggravated Khvylovyi, but he was no longer in a position to challenge them.²²¹ The relationship between Shchupak and Khvylovyi remained quite inimical. In 1933, the latter committed suicide. A year later, Shchupak moved to Kyiv to live in Rolit, as did other members of the cultural and Party elite.²²²

On February 10, 1935, Shchupak published an article in the newspaper *Komunist* titled “Vorozhe spotvorennia istorii literatury” (A Hostile Distortion of the History of Literature), which was fully in tune with Postyshev’s guidance regarding Ukrainian culture and literature. With an accountant’s precision, Shchupak challenged all “combat forays” undertaken by nationalist writers in Ukraine. He mentioned the works written by the *slov’iany* Pavlo Khrystiuk, Vasyli’ Desniak, Andrii Rychyts’kyi, and many others, and characterized the authors as “double-dealers.” The *slov’iany* Ivan Lakyza and Volodymyr Koriak were identified as class enemies and bourgeois counterrevolutionaries. Shchupak’s work in the 1920–1930s personified a literary criticism marked by “primitive stereotypes” and the desire to establish a “dead police-like order in literature.”²²³ His thinking was highly politicized and conformed to the most current Party resolution, while his criticism, in the words of Iurii Sheveliov, applied the “logic of an ax” and invented “the genre of political denunciation.”²²⁴

The state strove to control not only people’s public and private spheres but also their personalities. Shchupak became a product of the Soviet experiment in social engineering, although his political flexibility and flagrant defense of Soviet principles did not save his life. A faithful Communist who followed Party directives unquestionably and persistently, he became another November 1936 victim of the NKVD. The preliminary investigation was rather brief. After three interrogations,

Shchupak was accused of membership in the counterrevolutionary Trotskyist organization that had implemented Kirov's murder and recruited young literary cadres into this organization. The Ukrainian writer Oleksandr Kopylenko was allegedly one of those recruited. Shchupak's past membership in the Bund, of course, did not count in his favor, but the only evidence of his guilt were books confiscated from his library authored by L. Kamenev, H. Zinov'ev, M. Tomskii, and M. Skrypnyk. They were identified as "ideologically harmful and counterrevolutionary literature." The March 10, 1937, ten-minute closed meeting of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court in Moscow recounted a litany of falsehoods. The confession of the accused was considered sufficient proof of guilt, as Vyshinskii's 1936 *Kurs ugolovnogo processa* (Handbook on Criminal Procedure) had suggested. In accordance with this manual, the main participants of the meeting, Vasiliï Ul'rikh and Andrei Vyshinskii, sentenced Shchupak to death. He was executed the same day.²²⁵

Technically, Shchupak was accused of being a Ukrainian nationalist because he was a member of the same anti-Soviet organization as the *slov'iany* Piddubnyi, Svashenko, the Boichukists, Vukhnaï, Savyts'kyi, and others. Although of Jewish background, Shchupak was fully immersed in Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian literary discourse. Another aspect of his self-identification was as Marxist or Communist, which conditioned his dispositions and beliefs. However, he wrote in Ukrainian, spoke Ukrainian, and was associated with a place that housed a "nest of nationalists," Budynok Slovo. These factors were decisive for the NKVD officials who decided his fate.²²⁶

In late 1929, when the writers moved to Budynok Slovo, they were involved in creating a unique space and distinctive social practices and attitudes. The uniqueness of their social and material conditions encouraged the state to perceive Budynok Slovo as a place of co-producers of a new socialist society. For the Soviet government, the place represented an extension of the free Ukrainian national spirit that blossomed among Ukrainian writers in the 1920s and manifested itself in their creative work. During the 1920s, the Literary Discussion had (as far as the authorities were concerned) identified the politically unreliable writers, most of whom were to be found in one place, Budynok Slovo.

After the extermination and displacement of residents, the original meaning of the building as a home of writers was erased. New residents created a new culture that resembled a military base rather than a space of art and intellectual life.²²⁷ Paraphrasing Lefebvre's terms, the culture of Budynok Slovo was murdered by the anti-culture of the GPU and the new residents, many of who now worked for the Soviet secret agency.²²⁸

The Great Terror of 1937–1938 reflected the continuity of the violent traditions and aesthetics of the secret police. It swept away the remaining *slov'iany*. Those writers who adhered to the Party line were allowed to move to Kyiv after 1934, when it became the new capital of the Ukrainian SSR. Those who remained in Budynok Slovo were members of the newly created Union of Writers. Their literary talents could not match those of the individuals who created the Red Renaissance, a generation that Jerzy Giedroyc called the Executed Renaissance.²²⁹ The NKVD report of January 16, 1938, reveals that from June 2, 1937, to January 15, 1938, out of 183,343 people arrested in Ukraine, 15,669 were “Ukrainian nationalists” who allegedly belonged to various counterrevolutionary organizations and groups. According to the report, 939 such organizations and groups had been liquidated during this period alone. Out of the 136,892 repressed, more than half, or 72,683 people, were sentenced to death. Among those who were repressed, 30,111 people came from Poland, particularly from Galicia.²³⁰ The February 17, 1938 resolution of the Central Committee of the VKP(b) decreed an increase in the quota of arrests of the “anti-Soviet element” in Ukraine to 30,000 people.²³¹

The House of Writers gathered under its roof talented individuals who dreamed of creating a new Ukrainian culture. People of various ethnic backgrounds identified themselves with this drive for renewal, which ran counter to the state’s plans for a new Soviet culture. The place conceived by the writers seemed the “right place” for them, a place that would embody their collective identity and free spirit, but it was “the wrong place” in the eyes of the state, which characterized it as a place of transgression and “nationalist deviations.” Terror transformed the original meaning of the building for the *slov'iany*. Some internalized the myth of conspiracy hatched in Budynok Slovo and helped the secret police. A few estranged themselves from it and adamantly denied the charges.

Experts in distortion and what George Orwell called double-speak, the GPU/NKVD operatives used the charge of nationalism and the slogan of strengthening social cohesion to first segregate and then isolate the *slov'iany*. They distorted the ideas and principles espoused by writers and artists, loudly proclaiming their reactionary nature while concealing the essence of their own activities. Through deception and intimidation, the secret police eroded the civil cohesiveness of *slov'iany* and reformed the human psyche of those who were chosen to survive into a psyche with an anemic national consciousness and personality. The bold creativity and individualism that was characteristic of the 1920s was dismissed as a bourgeois phenomenon; the obligation to think on an “All-Union” level replaced thinking on the “All-Ukrainian” one.

A well-policed state such as the Soviet Union perceived cultural bonds among the intelligentsia in Ukraine as a politically sensitive issue and a factor that could be lethal to the Soviet project. The state made no distinction between demands for cultural and political freedoms and rejected the existential aspirations and ambitions of Ukrainians. These aspirations and ambitions had to be destroyed along with their proponents. Ultimately, the center had no expectation that an all-union state patriotism would develop in a nation that had been conquered by force in 1919. Therefore, the language that served to reinforce national and cultural bonds was to be reduced to a minimal level. Both its quality and reach were to be limited. This political agenda was effectively implemented by repressing supporters of Ukrainization.

By 1933–1934, through carefully planned operations, the secret police, guided by the center, destroyed the foundation of Ukrainian society—the intelligentsia and the peasantry. Marochko and Hillig have suggested that the prerevolutionary “intellectual potential” of the nation that survived a revolution and wars was irreversibly lost in this period. Sociologists, anthropologists, and historians usually characterize human losses on this scale as an event that eventually leads to a society’s “cultural and spiritual collapse.”²³²

The absurdity of accusations, the absence of concrete evidence, and the scale of the mass repression in Ukraine in the 1930s and in Budynok Slovo in particular, reveal the misconduct that was implemented by the secret police but inspired and guided by the center, whose purposes it suited. Brandishing weapons in interrogation rooms and beating the arrested until they were unconscious, the interrogators destroyed any illusions the *slov’iany* may have had about their privileged status. Prison changed people in many unpredictable ways. People who were betrayed by their friends and loved ones (or were persuaded that they had been) carried a burden that was beyond physical suffering; they carried a ruined faith in morality, love, and friendship, which often crippled them for life. Many of those who survived repression never fully recovered in a psychological sense.²³³

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The “conceptual triad” set forth in this article (spatial practice, representations of space, and representational spaces) is borrowed from Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1991).

Notes

1. HDA SBU, f.6, spr.46293fp, t.2, ark.4. The term Boichukists refers to artists, students of the Boichuk School (in this case, the Ukrainian artists Vasyl' Sedliar and Ivan Padalka).

2. HDA SBU, f.6, spr.46293fp, t.2, ark.59. The Soviet secret police was named the OGPU or GPU (acronyms for Obëdinennoe gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie or gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie/Joint State Political Administration or State Political Administration) in the years 1923–34. In 1934 this agency was renamed the NKVD (an acronym for Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del SSSR/People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs in the USSR). The more recognizable Russian acronyms are used here instead of the Ukrainian acronyms DPU and NKVS. The Ukrainian GPU was never independent. Founded on December 3, 1918, it was dissolved on July 23, 1919, and complete control was transferred to Moscow. See Iurii Shapoval, Volodymyr Prystaiko and Vadym Zolotar'ov, *ChK-GPU-NKVD v Ukraini: Osoby, Fakty, Dokumenty* (Kyiv: Abris, 1997), 9–10.

3. HDA SBU, f.6, spr.46293fp, t.2, ark.4–5. Lipkovs'kyi perished in the Gulag, and on December 10, 1937, his wife, Piasets'ka, was exiled to labor camps for eight years.

4. On state violence in Ukraine see, for example, Lynne Viola, *The Unknown Gulag: The Lost World of Stalin's Special Settlements* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 71. See Viola's statistics on those exiled to the Northern camps from Ukraine, Russia and Belorussia in 1930–31; on the ethnic composition of prisoners in the Gulag system, see Anne Applebaum, *GULAG: A History* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 495; on the 1937–38 NKVD arrest quotas of the Ukrainians, see Oleg V. Khlevniuk, *GULAG: From Collectivization to the Great Terror*, trans. V. Stalko (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 162, and Paul R. Gregory, *Terror by Quota: State Security from Lenin to Stalin (An Archival Study)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 72, 192, 233, 236, 265–66; on ethnic dimensions of Stalin's terror in Ukraine in 1937–38, see Hiroaki Kuromiya, *The Voices of the Dead: Stalin's Great Terror in the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 218–19.

5. Mark Bassin, Christopher Ely, and Melissa K. Stockdale, eds., *Space, Place, and Power in Modern Russia: Essays in the New Spatial History* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010); Nick Baron, *Soviet Karelia: Politics, Planning and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1920–39* (New York: Routledge, 2007), and “New Spatial Histories of Twentieth-Century Russia and the Soviet Union: Surveying the Landscape,” *Jahrbucher fur Geschichte Osteuropas* 55, no. 3 (2007): 374–401; Kate Brown, *A Biography of No Place: From Ethnic Borderland to Soviet Heartland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994); Tanya Richardson, *Kaleidoscopic Odessa: History and Place in Contemporary Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Miron Petrovskii, *Gorodu i miru: Kievskie ocherki*, 2nd ed. (Kiev: Izdatel'stvo Dukh i litera, 2008); Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, *The Anti-Imperial Choice: The Making of the Ukrainian Jew* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Dmytro Vedenev and Serhii Shevchenko, *Ukrains'ki Solovky* (Kyiv: “EksOb,” 2001).

6. Raymie E. McKerrow, "Space and Time in the Postmodern Polity," *Western Journal of Communication* 63, no. 3 (1999): 273. On the "right place" and "right time," see P. M. Rosenau, *Postmodernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Transitions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 67–69.
7. On relations between human emotions, the geographical landscape (a place), and identity, see Yi Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes and Values* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974).
8. The residents called themselves slov'iany, a term that illuminated an interplay between these two words, Slovo (word), the name of a writers' cooperative, and slov'iany (Slavic people).
9. For details on how Stalin envisioned the development of Ukraine, Georgia and other "states" and nationalities, see Iosif Stalin, *Natsional'nye momenty v partiinom i gosudarstvennom stroitel'stve: Doklad na XII s'ezde RKP(b) 23 aprelia 1923* (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1938); on Stalin's views about national sentiments of Galicians, see Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 281; on Stalin's views about the significance of Ukraine, see his 11 August 1932 letter to Kaganovich in R. W. Davies et al., eds., *The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence: 1931–36*, trans. Steven Shabad (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 180.
10. On discursive practices mediating between physical places and spatial ideas, see Nick Baron's book review, "New Spatial Histories of 20th-Century Russia and the Soviet Union: Exploring the Terrain," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 9, no. 2 (2008), 436–37.
11. Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*; Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism," *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (1994): 414–52.
12. Olga Bertelsen and Myroslav Shkandrij, "The Secret Police and the Campaign against Galicians in Soviet Ukraine, 1929–34," *Nationalities Papers*, forthcoming; Myroslav Shkandrij, "Ukrainianization, Terror and Famine: Coverage in Lviv's *Dilo* and the Nationalist Press of the 1930s," *Nationalities Papers* 40, no. 3 (2012); Elena Borisonok, *Fenomen Sovetskoi ukrainizatsii* (Moskva: Evropa, 2006); Vasyľ Marochko and Götz Hillig, *Represovani pedahohy Ukrainy: zhertvy politychnoho teroru (1929–1941)* (Kyiv: Vyd. Naukovyi svit, 2003); Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); George O. Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy, Urban Growth, and Identity Change in the Ukrainian SSR. 1923–1934* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); James Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918–1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983).
13. Marochko and Hillig, *Represovani pedahohy Ukrainy*, 26.

14. Secondary sources on anthropology, philosophy, and the psychology of human behavior have greatly benefited this study.

15. Richardson, *Kaleidoscopic Odessa*, 23; Ruby Watson, “Memory, History and Opposition under State Socialism: An Introduction,” in *Memory, History and Opposition under State Socialism*, ed. Ruby Watson (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1994); Bruce Grant, “New Moscow Monuments, or States of Innocence,” *American Ethnologist* 28, no. 2 (2001): 332–62; David J. Bodenhamer, “The Potential of Spatial Humanities,” in *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship*, ed. David J. Bodenhamer et al. (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 26.

16. Similar attempts were undertaken in works such as: Richardson, *Kaleidoscopic Odessa*; Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); and Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation*, Information Series (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006). These narratives shed some new light on people’s subjectivities and constraints.

17. DAKhO, f.P20, op.3, spr.219, ark.1. See, for instance, the October 5, 1934 stenographic report of the regional Party purge commission that investigated “transgressions” of the *slov’ianyn* and writer Hryhorii Pidubnyi.

18. Oleg V. Khlevniuk, *Master of the House: Stalin and His Inner Circle*, Yale-Hoover Series on Stalin, Stalinism, and the Cold War, trans. Nora Seligman Favorov (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 88.

19. See a similar explanation in Khlevniuk, *Master of the House*, 168–69.

20. Khlevniuk, *Master of the House*, 168.

21. The Ukrainization campaign was a part of broader Soviet indigenization policies in all Soviet republics designed to promote the Ukrainian national culture and language, which had been suppressed under tsarism. Such “affirmative action” aimed to strengthen Soviet power in Ukraine, although it was quickly reversed to counter-Ukrainization to pursue the very same goal.

22. For more on the Literary Discussion, see Myroslav Shkandrij, *Modernists, Marxists, and the Nation: The Ukrainian Literary Discussion of the 1920s* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, University of Alberta, 1992).

23. Wilson, *Ukrainians*, 140.

24. Iurii Sheveliov, “Lit Ikara (Pamflety Mykoly Khvyľovoho),” in *Literaturoznavstvo: Vybrani pratsi*, ed. Ivan Dziuba (Kyiv: KMA, 2008), 2:290–92.

25. George S. N. Luckyj, *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine, 1917–1934* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 66, and Wilson, *Ukrainians*, 162. Oleksandr Shums'kyi was the people's commissar of education in 1924–27 in Ukraine. In 1927, he was severely criticized by the Party and the Komintern about his position on the national question in Ukraine and was transferred to Leningrad. On May 13, 1933, he was accused of being a member of the illegal UVO (the Ukrainian military organization) and was sentenced to ten years in prison at Solovky. In September 1946, he was released, and on his way to Kyiv was murdered by NKVD associates. Mykola Skrypnyk (1872–1933) was a leader of Ukrainian Communists and a senior government official in Soviet Ukraine. Working for the Soviet government as the people's commissar of internal affairs (1921–22), of justice (1922–27), and at the end of his life, of education (1927–33), Skrypnyk vigorously advocated the Soviet policy of Ukrainization. He was accused of Ukrainian nationalism and, according to the official version, on July 7, 1933, he committed suicide. On Shums'kyi, Skrypnyk, and Ukrainian Communism, see Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas*, 86–119, 192–231.

26. For an English translation of Stalin's letter of April 26, 1926 to Lazar Kaganovich and the members of the Politburo of the KP(b)U Central Committee, see Luckyj, *Literary Politics*, 66–68.

27. See the full text of the document in Yuri Shapoval, "On Ukrainian Separatism": A GPU Circular of 1926," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 18, no. 3–4 (1994): 291–302.

28. Terry Martin, "Author's Response to 'Professor Raymond Pearson's review of *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939*,'" *Reviews in History*, review no. 278, <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/278>.

29. Shapoval, "On Ukrainian Separatism," 284–85.

30. Myroslav Shkandrij and Olga Bertelsen, "Fabricated Nationalist Plots, 1929–34: Evidence in the Secret Police Archives," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, under review.

31. See, for instance, the statistics on the NKVD's operational work from June 2, 1937, to January 15, 1938, in HDA SBU, f.16, op.31, spr.105, ark. 11–22. The acronyms used in the text represent, respectively: SVU—Spilka Vyzvolennia Ukrainy/League for Liberation of Ukraine, 1929–30; UNTs—Ukrains'kyi Natsional'nyi Tsentri/Ukrainian National Centre, 1930–32; the UVO—Ukrains'ka Viis'kova Orhanizatsiia/Ukrainian Military Organization, 1932–34; the OUN—Ob'iednannia Ukrains'kykh Natsionalistiv/Association of Ukrainian Nationalists, 1934–35; the UNFO—Ukrains'ka Natsional'na Fashysts'ka Orhanizatsiia/Ukrainian Nationalist Fascist Organization, 1936–37; the AOUE—Antyradians'ka Orhanizatsiia Ukrains'kykh SRov/Anti-Soviet Organization of the Ukrainian SRs, 1937–38.

32. Shapoval, "On Ukrainian Separatism," 285.

33. The most explicit was the 1927 resolution of the Central Committee of the VKP(b) on Soviet literature that proclaimed full Party control over creative writing, literary organizations and

the writers themselves. See the resolution in A. M. Lejtes, and M. F. Jasek, *Desiat' Rokiv Ukrajin's'koji Literaturny (1917–1927): Orhanizacijni ta ideolohichni dijachy ukrajins'koji radjans'koji literaturny. Lit-eraturna dyskusija 1925–28. Charkiv. 1928* (Munche: Verlag Otto Sagner, 1986), 2:290, 306–10.

34. Halyna Hryn, “Executed Renaissance Paradigm Revisited,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 27, no. 1–4 (2004–5): 71.

35. HDA SBU, spr.C–183, ark.107. See also Iurii Shapoval, *Poliuvannia na Val'dshnepa: Rozskekreneni Mykola Khvylovyi* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2009), 180–81.

36. Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin, “Introduction,” in *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny and Terry Martin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 12. See also Stalin, *Natsional'nyie momenty*; and “Tov. Kaganovichu i drugim chlenam PB TsK KP(b)U,” in *Sochineniia* (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literaturny, 1946) 8:149–54.

37. In 1932, a Party resolution advised all literary organizations to join the same union, the Union of Soviet Writers. The VUSPP in Ukraine was favored and promoted by Moscow, and maintained its dominating position among different literary groups up until 1932. For some writers, membership in VUSPP constituted an open and conscious explicit aesthetic choice.

38. See approximately 250 volumes of the SVU group criminal file in HDA SBU, f.6, spr.67098fp.

39. See Uliana Pasicznyk, ed., *The Ever-Present Past: The Memoirs of Tatiana Kardinalowska*, transcr. Assya Humesky, trans. Vera Kaczmarska (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2004); Volodymyr Kulish, *A Word about the Writers' Home 'Slovo: Memoirs* (Toronto, Canada: “Homin Ukrainy,” 1966); Natalka Dukyna, *Na dobryi spomyn: Povist' pro bat'ka* (Kharkiv: Vudannia zhurnalu “Berezil,” 2002); Arkadii Liubchenko, *Vertep (Povist'). Opovidannia. Shchoden-nyk* (Kharkiv: “Osnova,” 2005); Iurii Smolych, *Rozpovid' pro nespokii: deshcho z knyhy pro dvadtsiati i trydtsiati roky v ukrains'komu literaturnomu pobuti* (Kyiv: Radians'kyi Pys'mennyk, 1968); Vasył Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho (spohady, rozdumy)*, (Edmonton: Kanads'kyi instytut ukrains'kykh studii, Al'berts'kyi universytet, 1987); Hryhorii Kostiuk, *Zustrichi i proshchannia: Spohady u dvokh knyhakh* (Kyiv: Smoloskyp, 2008).

40. Stepan Kryzhaniv's'kyi, *My piznavaly nepovtornyi chas: Portrety, ece, spohady* (Kyiv: Radians'kyi pys'mennyk, 1986), 149.

41. TsDAMLiMU, f.72. op.1, spr.12, ark.24 (the slov'ianyn Valerian Polishchuk's letter of complaint to the head of the Kul'tprop TsK KP(b)U M. Killeroh). For a comparative analysis, see statistics of published translated works in the 1920s and the writers' publications in the early 1930s in M. Hodkevych, “Ukrains'ke pys'menstvo za 10 lit,” *Pluzhanyn* no. 11–12 (1927), and Sokil, 112–14.

42. The term *byt* means “daily life,” “domesticity,” “lifestyle,” or “way of life.” On the notion of *byt*, see Boym, 29–40; Irina Gutkin, *The Cultural Origins of the Socialist Realist Aesthetic, 1890–1934* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999), 81–84; Victor Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism* (New York: Berg, Oxford International Publishers Ltd., 2000), 23–39, and Iurii Trifonov, *Kak slovo nashe otzovivetsia . . .*, ed. A. P. Shytov (Moskva: “Sovetskaia Rossiia,” 1985), 102–05.

43. Timothy Sosnovy, *The Housing Problem in the Soviet Union* (Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1954), 22.

44. DAKhO, f.P1401, op.1, spr.33, ark.67.

45. *Chervonyi Shliakh*, no. 2 (1927): 247 and *Pluzhanyn*, no. 2 (1927): 31.

46. Such benefits included exemption from assessment and taxation for ten years from the date of a building’s completion. On benefits to housing cooperatives, see Sosnovy, 48.

47. Founder and head of the literary association Pluh, Serhii Pylypenko, was also the director of the Taras Shevchenko Scientific Research Institute, and organizer and chief editor of the State Publishing House of Ukraine (DVU).

48. Stuart Finkel, *On the Ideological Front: The Russian Intelligentsia and the Making of the Soviet Public Sphere* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 89.

49. DAKhO, f.P1401, op.1, spr.3, ark.1–2.

50. *Literaturnomu fondu SSSR 125 let*, Litfond (Moskva: Vneshtorgisdat, 1984), 17. The Litfond (the Literary Fund, created in 1859 by Russian writers and inherited by the Bolshevik) was an organization within the Union of Writers that was “in charge” of the writers’ welfare. After World War II, the Litfond built several resorts known as Houses of Creativity (*Doma tvorchestva*) in the Crimea, the Baltic republics, Armenia, Azerbaidjan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and other Soviet republics, including the famous Peredelkino *Dom tvorchestva* near Moscow. These resorts belonged to the Union of Writers (and ultimately to the state) and functioned as retreats for writers where they rested and worked on their new projects. They were heavily subsidized by the state, and the privilege of being a regular guest there was allocated to literary dignitaries and their close relatives. On state perks to Soviet writers, see John and Carol Garrard, *Inside the Soviet Writers’ Union* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), and the novel by Vladimir Voinovich, *The Fur Hat*, trans. Susan Brownsberger (New York: A Harvest/HNJ Book, 1989).

51. Ihor Bondar-Tereshchenko, *U zadzerkalli 1910–30-kh rokiv* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2009), 386. In 1919, Kharkiv became the de facto capital of Ukraine and remained the capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic until 1934. In January 1935, the capital of the UkrSSR was moved to Kyiv.

52. For various views about the 1920s and writers' attitudes toward the state's policies during this period, see George O. Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy, Urban Growth, and Identity Change in the Ukrainian SSR. 1923-1934* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Shkandrij, *Modernists, Marxists, and the Nation*; Iurii Shevel'ov, *Narys suchasnoi Ukra'ins'koi literaturnoi movy ta inshi linhvistychni studii (1947-1953 rr.)* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2012), 514-22; Solomiia Pavlychko, *Teoriia literatury* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo Solomii Pavlychko "Osnovy," 2009), 179; Vira Aheeva, *Mystetstvo rivnovahy: Maksym Ryl'skyi na tli epokhy* (Kyiv: Knyha, 2012), 261-85; Shapoval, *Poliuvannia na Val'dshnepa*.

53. DAKhO, f.P1401, op.1, spr.33, ark.93. See also Sosnovy, *Housing Problem*, 47.

54. Living conditions in Kharkiv were similar to those of Magnitogorsk described by Stephen Kotkin in "Shelter and Subjectivity in the Stalin period: a case study of Magnitogorsk," in *Russian Housing in the Modern Age: Design and Social History*, ed. William Craft Brumfield and Blair A. Ruble (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 171-210.

55. Buchli, *Archaeology of Socialism*, 29.

56. Buchli, *Archaeology of Socialism*, 30, 79.

57. DAKhO, f.P5, op.1, spr.36, ark.90.

58. M. G. Meerovich, *Kvadratnyie metry, opredeliiaushchie soznanie: Gosudarstvennaia zhyl-ishchnaia politika v SSSR. 1921-1941 gg.*, ed. Andreas Umland (Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2005); M. G. Meerovich, *Kak vlast' narod k trudu priuchala: Zhylishe v SSSR—sredstvo upravleniia liud'mi. 1917-1941 gg.*, ed. Andreas Umland (Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2005); and Myroslav Borysenko, *Zhytlo i pobut mis'koho naselennia Ukrainy u 20-30 rokakh XX stolittia* (Kyiv: Vydavnychi dim "Stylos," 2009).

59. DAKhO, f.P1401, op.1, spr.3, ark.18-19, 26, 34.

60. Iurii Smolych, *Ia vybraiu literaturu: Knyha pro sebe* (Kyiv: Radians'kyi pys'mennyk, 1970), 286, 296-97.

61. Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 84.

62. Iurii Smolych, *Rozpovid' pro nespokii tryvaie: deshcho z dvadtsiatykh, trydtsiatykh rokov i do tery v ukrains'komu literaturnomu pobuti* (Kyiv: Radians'kyi Pys'mennyk, 1969), 2:274-75.

63. Teren' Masenko, *Roman pam'iaty* (Kyiv: Radians'kyi Pys'mennyk, 1970), 72-74.

64. DAKhO, f.R1777, op.2, spr.192, ark.1a, 3. The possibility of a "special" architectural design employed for the building's surveillance cannot be fully dismissed. Moreover, the original idea of the creation of living quarters for the Ukrainian intelligentsia might have been born in the Soviet

secret organs and transmitted to the top leaders of literary circles in Kharkiv in 1926, the year of the project's conception. Keeping intellectuals in one place would have facilitated their surveillance, and precisely these intentions might have been at the root of the plan to transform Budynok Slovo into one of the most closely-watched sites in Kharkiv in the early 1930s. On the importance of space, place, and family ties for the GPU's operational practices, see Tamara Vrons'ka, *Upokorennia strakhom: Simeine zaruchnytstvo u karal'nii praktytsi Radians'koi vlady (1917-1953 rr.)* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2013).

65. See P. M. Kozhanyi's report at the 1st All-Union Congress on Housing Cooperation in DAKhO, f.P1401, op.1, spr.3, ark.5.

66. DAKhO, f.R1777, op.2, spr.192, ark.25, and also TsDNTAU, f.1–24, spr.7, ark.16.

67. Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 85.

68. DAKhO, f.R1777, op.2, spr.192, ark.27 zv. There were five sets of façade doors for each entrance. The high-quality doors cost 300 extra *karbovantsi* that the cooperative Slovo had to pay on top of the estimated budget price. See also TsDNTAU, f.1–24, spr.7, ark.19, and the memoirs by Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 85.

69. Kulish, *Word about the Writers' Home*, 10.

70. Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 85.

71. See the blueprints of the building in TsDNTAU, f.1–24, spr.7; Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*. 85.

72. Kostiuk, *Zustrichi i proshchannia*, 1:310.

73. Kulish, *Word about the Writers' Home*, 11–12. See also DAKhO, f.R1777, op.2, spr.192, ark.30zv.

74. Dukyna, *Na dobryi spomyn*, 83, 358–59.

75. Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 172.

76. Dukyna, *Na dobryi spomyn*, 68, 74; Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*. 84; Pasicznyk, *Ever-Present Past*, 105, 111–12, 114.

77. See Meerovich's works mentioned above; Katerina Gerasimova, "The Soviet Communal Apartment," in *Beyond The Limits: The Concept of Space In Russian History And Culture*, ed. Jeremy Smith (Helsinki: Finish Historical Society, SHS, 1999), 107–30.

78. Edward W. Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), xviii. In Russian, this condition can be described by the term *zamaterenie*.

79. Some slov'iany had more than thirteen square meters of living space per person in Budy-nok Slovo, more than they were entitled to by law.

80. Although the writers' salaries were moderate, the honorariums for their publications were substantial. For instance, for his novel *V Stepakh*, Sava Bozhko received six-thousand *karbovantsi* which was a very large sum then. See Masenko, 183.

81. Kulish, *Word about the Writers' Home*, 19, and Smolych, *Rozpovid' pro nespokii*, 2:86. On self-identity and home, space and social order, see Murray Edelman, *From Art to Politics: How Artistic Creations Shape Political Conceptions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 79.

82. Masenko, 93, 168.

83. See Arkadii Liubchenko, *Ioho taiemnytsia (His Secret)* in Mykola Khvylovyi, *Arabesky Mykoly Khvylovoho: opovidannia ta novely*, ed. Vira Aheeva (Kyiv: Hrani, 2010), 147.

84. Buchli, *Archaeology of Socialism*, 59.

85. On Iurezans'kyi, see Kulish, *Word about the Writers' Home*, 30; on Troianker, Kvitko, and Feldman, see Myroslav Shkandrij, *Jews in Ukrainian Literature: Representation and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 100–1, 104, 123–24, 133; Petrovsky-Shtern, *Anti-Imperial Choice*, 86, 111–64, 121–22, 155, 179, 216; Gennady Estraiikh, “The Kharkiv Yiddish Literary World, 1920s–Mid–1930s,” *East European Jewish Affairs* 32, no. 2 (2002): 70–88.

86. Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy*, 123.

87. Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 100–3, 106, 116.

88. Iurii Shapoval, “Zhyttia ta smert' Mykoly Khvylovoho u svitli rozsekrechenykh dokumentiv GPU,” *Z Arkhiviv VUCHK, GPU, NKVD, KGB 1/2 (30/31)*, Kyiv (2008): 328–29.

89. Stephen White, “Stalinism and the Graphic Arts,” in John Channon, eds., *Politics, Society and Stalinism in the USSR* (London: Macmillan Press LTD, 1998), 139. On the destruction of free literary and artistic organizations in Ukraine, see Luckyj, *Literary Politics*.

90. See, for instance, Khvylovyi's operational file (*papka-formuliar*) in HDA SBU, spr.C–183, which contains reports of *sekсотy* and GPU agents about the daily activity of Mykola Khvylovyi from 1930 to May 1933 (when Khvylovyi committed suicide). See also Shapoval, *Poliuvannia na Val'dshnepa*, a work based on file C183 from HDA SBU.

91. Vedeneev and Shevchenko, *Ukrains'ki Solovky*, 64.
92. Kostiuk, *Zustrichi i proshchannia*, 1:250, 277, 284, 369. Kyrylenko characterized his closest friend Mykytenko as a person who would “sell his own father for a Party career.” Among slov'iany, Mykytenko, infamous for his doubtful literary gifts, was called “official *dramorob*,” a derogatory term for a talentless playwright. See Kulish, *Word about the Writers' Home*, 40–41.
93. Marshall Sahlins, *Culture in Practice: Selected Essays* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 108.
94. Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 110; Ivan Senchenko, “Notatky pro literaturne zhyttia,” in his *Opovidannia. Povisti. Spohady* (Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 1990), 549.
95. Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 103.
96. Iosyp Hirniak, *Spomyny*, ed. Bohdan Boichuk (New York: Vydavnytstvo “Suchasnist,” 1982), 373.
97. Pylyp Selihei and Stanislav Tsalyk, “Bez kanoniv, abo pro shcho zmovchaly biohraphy Mykoly Bazhana,” *Dzerkalo tyzhnia* 39 (514), November 2–8, 2004.
98. On depression and fear among the slov'iany, see Dukyna, *Na dobryi spomyn*, 86; Antonina Kulish, “*Spohady pro Mykolu Kulisha*” in Mykola Kulish, *Tvory*, ed. Hryhorii Kostiuk (New York: Ukrains'ka Vil'na Akademiia Nauk u SShA, 1955), 420.
99. Sokil, *Zdaleka do blyz'koho*, 111.
100. Walter Benjamin, “The Storyteller: Reflections on the Works of Nikolai Leskov,” in Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 101.
101. Kostiuk, *Zustrichi i proshchannia*, 1:336–37, 458, 460.
102. According to many memoirs, the same trend was observed in *Budynok Slovo* in the early 1930s. See memoirs by Sokil (*Zdaleka do blyz'koho*); T. Kardinalowska (*Ever-Present Past*, ed. Pasicznyk); V. Kulish (*Word about the Writers' Home*); and A. Liubchenko (diary).
103. Montaigne, “Of Solitude,” in *The Essays of Montaigne*, trans. E. J. Trechmann (New York: The Modern Library, Random House, Inc., 1946), 203–4.
104. Henri Lefebvre, *State, Space, World: Selected Essays*, ed. Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden, trans. Gerald Moore, Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 159.

105. The intelligentsia, recruited by the GPU (*seksoty*), serves as an example of “amalgamated” aesthetics and practices that were generated and reinforced by the State in the 1930s.

106. On production of a space and a national territory, see Lefebvre, 224. For more on subjectivities of those who worked for the secret police, see Alexander Weissberg, *The Accused* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951), 410–11. (See also as *Conspiracy of Silence*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1952).

107. *Kurkul'* (*kulak* in Ukrainian) refers to a wealthy peasant who usually resisted collectivization.

108. Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 440.

109. Shkandrij and Bertelsen, “Fabricated Nationalist Plots.”

110. Cristina Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics: Literature, Film, and the Secret Police in Soviet Times* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2010), 177–80.

111. Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics*. On the barbarity of NKVD interrogators see also DAKhO, f.R6452, op.1, spr.7641; Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: A Reassessment* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 75, 87, 89, 121–27; Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), 248; Ivan Maistrenko, *Istoriia moho pokolinnia: Spohady uchasnyka revoliutsiinykh podii v Ukraini* (Edmonton, Canada: Kanads'kyi Instytut Ukrain'skykh Studii, Al'berts'kyi Universytet, 1985), 269–89; Ivan Bahrianyi, *Sad Hetsymans'kyi* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo “Shkola,” 2008), 114, 120, 154, 160–63, 184, 190, 213–14, 402, 412, 501.

112. Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics*, 177–80.

113. DAKhO, f.R 6452, op.6, spr.1118, ark.13–13 zv.

114. Boris Levytsky, *The Uses of Terror: The Soviet Secret Police 1917–1970*, trans. H. A. Piehler (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc., 1972), 120. Andrei Vyshinskii was the Prosecutor General and is famous for his active participation in Stalin's show trials.

115. Maistrenko, *Istoriia moho pokolinnia*, 263–89.

116. AU SBUKhO, spr.010318, t.2, ark.7. The writer Petro Svashenko told his wife, when she visited him in the camps, “that the interrogators threatened to repress and shoot all his family, including their children.”

117. AU SBUKhO, spr.017800, t.1; Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics*, 178–79.

118. Tatiana Tchernavin, *Escape from the Soviets*, trans. N. Alexander (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1934), 139–40.
119. DAKhO, f.R 6452, op.1, spr.7641 (see Fiodorov-Berkov's deposition about beating prisoners). On March 8, 1940, Fiodorov-Berkov received ten years in a correctional labor camp (ITL). He was incriminated for using his position for personal purposes and fabrication of criminal cases against innocent Soviet citizens. See also Bahrianyi, *Sad Hetsymans'kyi*, 104, 120–21, 135.
120. DAKhO, f.R 6452, op.1, spr.7641, ark.120.
121. DAKhO, f.R 6452, op.1, spr.7641, ark.121.
122. DAKhO, f.R 6452, op.1, spr.7641, ark.127.
123. DAKhO, f.R 6452, op.1, spr.7641, ark.128. P. P. Kipenko, a cellmate, confirmed these allegations.
124. DAKhO, f.R 6452, op.1, spr.7641, ark.125–26, 132. On April 2–3, 1940, Frei was sentenced to six years in the ITL; others were sentenced to the VMN (to be shot).
125. AU SBUKhO, spr.016310, ark.98–103. See also Shkandrij and Bertelsen, “Fabricated Nationalist Plots.” Drushliak was arrested on June 7, 1939 as a counterrevolutionary and was sentenced to death. However, on April 11, 1940, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court in the USSR changed his verdict to ten years in labor camps without disenfranchising him and his family.
126. The knowledge about this is available to us through the testimonies of those who survived the purges and through interrogation protocols of GPU/NKVD interrogators who were arrested during the Great Terror as conspirators of an anti-Soviet plot in Ukrainian punitive organs.
127. On the VCHEKA's control of the Ukrainian secret organs, see A. A. Plekhanov and A. M. Plekhanov, eds., *Vserosiiskaia chrezvychainaia komissiiia SNK: (7(20) dekabria 1917–6 fevralia 1922)* (Moskva: Soiuz veteranov gosbezopasnosti, 2011); and Vadym Zolotar'ov, *Sekretno-politychnyi vid-dil DPU USRR[SPV]: Spravy ta liudy* (Kharkiv: Folio, 2007).
128. Volodymyr Okipniuk, “Rozvytok orhanizatsiinoi struktury orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky SRSR i Radians'koi Ukrainy u 1934–41 rr.,” *Z arkhiviv VUChK, GPU, NKVD, KGB*, no. 1/2 (30/31) (2008): 293.
129. Okipniuk, “Rozvytok orhanizatsiinoi struktury orhaniv,” 294, 295, 297. On the SPV, see also Zolotar'ov, SPV, 39–41.
130. Okipniuk, “Rozvytok orhanizatsiinoi struktury orhaniv,” 295, and Olga Bertelsen, “Repressions of Zionist Political Parties in Ukraine, 1920–30s,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, no 6 (2013): 1080–1111.

131. Shapoval, Prystaiko and Zolotar'ov, *ChK*, 63–78.

132. See Maistrenko's description of Kharkiv prisons in *Istoriia moho pokolinnia*, 263–89.

133. On Stalin's xenophobia and reasons for distrust of political émigrés, including Poles, who lived in the USSR, see William Chase's study and a collection of archival documents in "The Search for 'Hostile Elements' and 'Suspicious' Foreigners," in *Enemies Within the Gates? The Comintern and the Stalinist Repression, 1934–1939* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 102–45.

134. Nataliia Titova, "'Sanatsiia' prykordonnia USRR: poboriuvannia 'pol's'ko-ukrains'koho fashyzmu' na Podilli, 1930-ti roky," *Z arkhiviv VUChK, GPU, NKVD, KGB*, no. 1 (28) (2007): 228. Kosior's speech was delivered in the Russian language and also officially marked the change of the VKP(b) course of Ukrainization. Kosior called it "petliurite Ukrainization."

135. AU SBUKhO, spr.021551, t.1, ark.83–86. See also studies by Oleksandr Rubl'ov, *Zakhidnoukrains'ka intelihentsia u zahal'nonatsional'nykh politychnykh ta kul'turnykh protestakh (1914–1939)* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy, NANU, 2004); and Bertelsen and Shkandrij, "Secret Police and the Campaign."

136. Mykhailo Iashchun was an economist in Vukopromrada in the Ukrainian SSR. Previously connected to the GPU/NKVD, Iashchun was a Bolshevik-oriented state bureaucrat, and only when imprisoned did he reconsider his views. He was shot by DB captain Matveev on November 3, 1937, as were many other representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in Sandarmokh (Karelia). DB (Ukrainian) or GB (Russian) refers to "derzavna bezpeka" or "gosudarstvennaia bezopasnost'" which stands for "state security." See Oleksandr Rubl'ov, "Zakhidnoukrains'ka intelihentsiia u taborakh SSSR, 1930-ti roky: Liuds'ki biohrafii u konteksti 'perekovky,'" available at http://history.org.ua/JournALL/gpu/gpu_2004_22_1/9.pdf, 257.

137. Quoted in Rubl'ov, "Zakhidnoukrains'ka intelihentsiia u taborakh SSSR," 258. On NKVD materials about M. Iashchun in the Solovky, see Iurii Shapoval, ed., *Ostannia adresa: Do 60-richchia solovets'koi trahedii* (Kyiv: Sfera, 1998), 2:170–71.

138. See studies by Rubl'ov, Cherchenko, Shapoval; Bertelsen and Shkandrij.

139. Maistrenko, *Istoriia moho pokolinnia*, 283.

140. Petro Mirchuk, *Narys istorii OUN: 1920–1939 roky*, 3rd ed. (Kyiv: Tsentri doslidzhen' vyzvol'noho rukhu, 2007), 161, 163, 167–68; on the UNTs operation conducted by the secret police, see Serhii Bilokin', *Masovyi teror iak zasib derzhavnoho upravlinnia v SRSR (1917–1941): Dzhereloznavche doslidzhennia* (Kyiv: Fundatsiia "Volia," 1999), 240–41; V. Prystaiko and I. Shapoval, *Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi i GPU-NKVD: trahichne deciatylittia 1924–1934* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo "Ukraina," 1996); and I. Shapoval and I. Verba, *Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi* (Kyiv: Vydavnychi Dim

“Al'ternatyvy,” 2006).

141. Leites and Iashek, 1: 346.

142. Oleh Kotsariv, “Fatal’na pomylka Klyma Polishchuka,” *Litaksent*, available at <http://litak-cent.com/2009/09/17/fatalna-pomylka-klyma-polischuka/>.

143. See Myroslav Shkandrij’s analysis of Polishchuk’s works in *Jews in Ukrainian Literature*, 110–15.

144. *Chervonyi Shliakh*, no. 7–8, 9–10 (1927).

145. Jurij Lawrynenko, *Nashi vtraty: materialy do biohrafichnoho slovnyka represovanykh u 1930-ykh rokakh diiachiv v URSR* (Kyiv: Tvim-Inter, 2005), 83.

146. AU SBUKhO, spr.035261, ark.2.

147. See also Borys Kostyria, “Ternysti shliakhy Klyma Polishchuka,” *Literaturna Ukraina*, November 6, 2011. According to the Ukrainian scholar Petro Rotach, Iurezans’kyi’s and Orlivna’s affair began in 1927, ending the relationship between Halyna and Klym.

148. S. Iakovenko’s foreword in Klym Polishchuk, *Vybrani tvory*, ed. V. Shevchuk (Kyiv: Smoloskyp, 2009).

149. Oleh Kotsariv, “Fatal’na pomylka Klyma Polishchuka.”

150. P. T. Tron’ko et al., eds., *Reabilitovani istorieiu: Kharkivs’ka oblast* (Kharkiv: Oryhinal, 2008), 2:286.

151. Bilokin’, *Masovyi teror*, 136–37. During the period from October 27 to November 4, 1937, 1111 people were shot. Leningrad NKVD captain Matveev personally shot most of them. On November 3, 1937, M. Matveev shot people in the back of their heads. When he ran out of bullets, he crushed the heads of prisoners with a stick. He lived until 1974 and never regretted his past. He was proud of his honorable and honest service to the state.

152. Myroslav Prokop, *Ukraina i ukrains’ka polityka Moskvy: Period pidhotovy do Druhoi svitovoi viiny*, 2nd ed. (Munich: Suchasnist’, 1981), 82.

153. Bertelsen and Shkandrij, “Secret Police and the Campaign.”

154. Dukyna, *Na dobryi spomyn*, 533–34; DAKhO, f.P20, op.3, spr.219, ark.127.

155. For details about Dniprobud, see O. O. Ihnatusha, “Mistse Zaporiz’koho industrial’noho kompleksu v bil’shovyt’skii industrializatsii 20–30-ykh rokiv,” *Naukovi pratsi istorychnoho fakul’tetu*

- Zaporiz'koho natsional'noho universytetu, no. XXX (2011): 134.
156. TsDAHOU, f.1, op.20, spr.6218., ark.147.
157. V. P. Biriukov, *Zapiski ural'skogo kraevedy* (Cheliabinsk: YUKI, 1964), 57–61.
158. TsDAMLiMU, f.815, op.1, spr.5a, ark.3–4 (Khvylovyi's open repenting letter). See also HDA SBU, spr.C–183, ark.15,19; and Shapoval, *Poliuvannia na Val'dshnepa*, 20, 98.
159. Shkandrij, *Modernists*, 91, 116–17. *Vaplitanyn* is a member of VAPLITE, in which Khvylovyi was a leading figure.
160. DVU refers to the State Publishing House of Ukraine. On Ialoyvi, see Oleksandr and Leonid Ushkalovy, eds., *Arkhiv rozstrilianoho vidrozhennia: materialy arkhivno-slidchykh sprav pys'mennykiv 1920–30 rokiv* (Kyiv: Smoloskyp, 2010), 13–14.
161. DAKhO, f.R6452, op.4, spr.1843, t.1, ark.353.
162. See a collection of archival documents in L.S. Gatagova, ed., *Sovetskaia etnopolitika, 1930-1940-e gody: Sbornik dokumentov* (Moskva: Rossiskaia Akademiia Nauk, Institut Rossiiskoi istorii, 2012); studies by Zolotar'ov, SPV, 11; and Kuromiya, *The Voices of the Dead*.
163. Zolotar'ov, SPV, 14, 39, 42, 104, 186, 234; Shapoval, Prystaiko and Zolotar'ov, *ChK*, 53; Bertelsen and Shkandrij, “Secret Police and the Campaign.”
164. *Literaturna hazeta*, June 25, 1933, and June 18, 1933.
165. For more details on Ialoyvi's biography, see I. Shpol, *Vybrani tvory*, ed. O. Ushkalov (Kyiv: “Smoloskyp,” 2007), 6–27.
166. Pasicznyk, *Ever-Present Past*, 160.
167. For more details on this project, see L. Masenko, ed., *Ukrains'ka mova v XX storichchi: Istoriia linhvotsydu* (Kyiv: KMA, 2005).
168. DAKhO, f.R6452, op.4, spr.1843, t.1, ark.2.
169. DAKhO, f.R6452, op.4, spr.2048, ark.22.
170. HDA SBU, f.6, spr.69860fp, ark.96–98.
171. HDA SBU, f.6, spr.69860fp, ark.103.
172. HDA SBU, f.6, spr.69860fp, ark.98.

173. Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics*, 13.

174. On biographies and autobiographies in criminal files, see Vatulescu, *Police Aesthetics*, 13, 39–40, 170.

175. On the political character of autobiographical expression, see Terrell Carver and Matti Hyvärinen, eds., *Interpreting the Political: New Methodologies* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 21–24; on the implications of producing autobiography in the context of interrogation, see Nick Baron, “Remaking Soviet Society: The Filtration of Returnees from Nazi Germany, 1944–49,” in *Warlands: Population Resettlement and State Reconstruction in the Soviet-East European Borderlands, 1945–50*, edited by Peter Gatrell and Nick Baron (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 100–5.

176. Carver and Matti Hyvärinen, *Interpreting the Political*, 18.

177. Bahrianyi, *Sad Hetsymans’kyi*, 106, 112.

178. DAKhO, f.R6452, op.4, spr.1843, t.1.

179. See, for instance, the slov’ianyn Mykhailo Bykovets’s criminal file in AU SBUKHO, spr.035463. The NKVD began investigation on September 7, 1937 and completed it on October 20, 1937. Bykovets’ was accused of anti-Soviet activity and shot the day after the verdict was announced. Moreover, the original 1937 case consists of only 80 pages, and the remaining pages (the entire file length was 139 pages) are rehabilitation materials, attached to the original criminal file in 1992.

180. The number of testimonies revealing Ialovy’s anti-Soviet activity is overwhelming. All belong to famous political and literary figures arrested before Ialovy. Many of these figures came from Western Ukraine or from abroad (they worked in Soviet embassies and *polpredstva* before their arrests).

181. Compare pages in DAKhO, f.R6452, op.4, spr.1843, t.1, ark. 116, 118, 340, 342.

182. The term Ukrainianisms refers to an unconscious use of a Russian word that was slightly Ukrainized (modified) by a person whose native language was not Russian, but Ukrainian. Often this modified language (in its extreme form) is called *surzhyk*.

183. Interestingly, even those who were never repressed were mentioned in individual and group files during different periods in the thirties. Among them were also the slov’iany Tychyna, Smolych, Holovko, Petryts’kyi and Pervomais’kyi.

184. DAKhO, f.R6452, op.4, spr.1844, t.2, ark.1, 2, 10–13.

185. Bilokin, *Masovyi teror*, 20.

186. DAKhO, f.R6452, op.4, spr.1844, t.2, ark.12.

187. Ivan Kovtun's penname was Iurii Vukhnal', Oleksii Savyts'kyi's pennames were Iukhym Hedz' or Oles' Iasnyi, and Ivan Kaliannykov's penname was Ivan Kaliannyk.

188. Dmytro Chub, *Liudy velykoho sertsia (statti, rozvidky, spohady)*, (Mel'born, Avstralia: Vydavnytstvo "Lastivka," 1981), 240; and Volodymyr Polishchuk, 'Oleksii Savyts'kyi—Iukhym Hedz'—Oles' Iasnyi,' *Slovo i chas*, no. 12 (1999): 42.

189. Iurii Vukhnal', "Pohyb talant," *Molodyi Bil'shovyk*, no. 9 (1926): 8.

190. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, ark.17–19. The resolution was signed by the assistant to the head of the 3rd sector of the 4th department of the Kharkiv regional administration of the NKVD Zamkov, and the operatives of the 3rd sector of the 4th department, Antonov and Barakhman. Burning Vukhnal's library evokes associations with Ray Douglas Bradbury's novel *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), in which special firemen burn any house that contains books which are outlawed. Those who still read books are considered criminals. The extermination of the slov'iany's books continued after Stalin's death. Lohvyn, a friend of the slov'iany and writer Hryhorii Epik, who served as a prototype for one of Epik's characters in his novel *Persha vesna* (First Spring) remembered that in 1956 in Kharkiv the NKVD came to ordinary people's apartments, and confiscated and destroyed books. Once Lohvyn returned home from work (he had a large library with many books autographed by slov'iany) and found several NKVD agents who in silence removed his books from the shelves, quickly looked inside them and, without looking at Lohvyn, ripped the covers off and threw the books on the floor. After their work was done, they carried the pile downstairs and burned it. Lohvyn lost books with Khvylovyi's, Epik's, Vyshnia's and many other slov'iany's autographs. See Iurii Lohvyn, "Pam'iat', ukarbovana slovom," *Literaturna Ukraina*, October 4, 2012.

191. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.24–25, 35–36.

192. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.54–58, 227 zv.

193. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.72–74.

194. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.99, 226–27zv, 100.

195. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, t.2, nn.

196. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.115.

197. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.111–12. See also HDA SBU, f.6, spr.44961fp, ark.94–95.

198. AU SBUKHO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.134. See also Savyts'kyi's November 16, 1936 interroga-

tion protocol in HDA SBU, f.6, spr.44961fp, ark.92.

199. AU SBUKKhO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.138–39.

200. HDA SBU, f.6, spr.44961fp, ark.105.

201. Polishchuk, “Oleksii Savyts’kyi,” 42.

202. AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.12–61.

203. Kostiuk, *Zustrichi i proshchannia*, 1:280, 312, 388.

204. AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.8, 19, 75–76.

205. AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.125–29.

206. Mykola Nahnibyda, “Storinka poetychnoho litopysu,” in Ivan Kaliannyk, *Poezii* (Kyiv: Radians’kyi pys’mennyk, 1967), 9.

207. See Serhii Borzenko’s June 17, 1957 testimony to the rehabilitation commission in AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.125zv.

208. AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.4–7.

209. AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.35–39.

210. AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.12, 13, 21, 37, 39, 60.

211. AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.9, 73.

212. AU SBUKKhO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.232, 235.

213. AU SBUKKhO, spr.017800, t.1, ark.236–40; AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.100–2, 123. See Stalin’s lists on the official website of the “Memorial,” available at <http://stalin.memo.ru/names/index.htm>, or in AP RF, op.24, d.409, l.214.

214. See Polishchuk, “Oleksii Savyts’kyi,” 43.

215. AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, ark.152, 155.

216. See the October 10, 1990, report by Murzin, an associate of the Kharkiv KGB in AU SBUKKhO, spr.014519, n.p.

217. Kostiuk, *Zustrichi i proshchannia*, 1:127; Oleh S. Ilnytzkyj, *Ukrainian Futurism, 1914–*

1930 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 64.

218. Ivan Dziuba, *Z krynytsi lit* (Kyiv: KMA, 2006), 1:211. See also Shevel'ov, *Literaturoznavstvo*, 2:311, 324; and Shkandrij, *Modernists*, 86, 89.

219. Dukyna, *Na dobryi spomyn*, 526.

220. Quoted in Ilnytskyj, *Ukrainian Futurism*, 130.

221. Shkandrij, *Modernists*, 135.

222. Budynok Slovo served as a model for one similar project—the building “Rolit” in Kyiv (built in 1934) which had been implemented under the supervision of the state and which was financed by the state. Those “official” Ukrainian writers who had never been repressed resided in Rolit.

223. Samiilo Shchupak, “Vorozhe spotvorennia istorii literatury,” *Komunist*, February 10, 1935. See also Dziuba, *Z krynytsi lit*, 1:242, 403–4.

224. Shevel'ov, *Literaturoznavstvo*, 2:329, 355.

225. O. H. Musienko, ed., *Z poroha smerti . . . Pys'mennyky Ukrainy—zhertvy stalins'kykh represii* (Kyiv: Radians'kyi pys'mennyk, 1991), 476–77. For more details on Vyshinskii, see Adam Bosiacki, “Andrei Yanuarevich Vyshinsky: Paragon of the Totalitarian Conception of the Law and Political Organization,” in *Stalinist Terror in Eastern Europe: Elite Purges and Mass Repression*, eds. Kevin McDermott, and Matthew Stibbe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 177–87. Vasiliï Ul'rikh was a senior judge in the Soviet Union during Stalin's era. Ul'rikh served as the presiding judge at many of the major show trials in 1937–1938.

226. On multiple identities of Jewish writers who resided in Budynok Slovo, such as Kulyk and Troianker, see Petrovsky-Shtern, *Anti-Imperial Choice*.

227. The eviction of writers' families from Budynok Slovo was facilitated by a set of instructions “About evicting citizens from their residencies” within the January 13, 1924 decree, issued by VTsIK and SNK, and updated in June 1926. See Meerovich, *Kak vlast' narod k trudu priuchala*, 60–61, 104–7, and Meerovich, *Kvadratnyie metry*, 163–64, 168, 172, 174–75. On GPU decisions to appropriate apartment buildings, the displacement of their residents, and the GPU cooperation with the Kharkiv Housing Union (*Gorzhyloiuz*), see DAKhO, f.P1402, op.3, spr.6, ark.1, 11, 17, 19, 21, 22.

228. Lefebvre wrote: “nature is being murdered by ‘anti-nature’—by abstraction, by signs and images, by discourse, as also by labor and its products.” See Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1991), 71.

229. Jerzy Giedroyc was a Polish journalist, activist and the editor of the journal *Kultura* (Par-

is) who suggested this term as a title for the diaspora literary critic Jurij Lawrynenko's anthology of 1917–33 works by Ukrainian writers, (Paris: Instytut Literacki, 1959; repr., 5th ed., Kyiv: Smoloskyp Publishing House, 2007).

230. HDA SBU, f.16, op.31, spr.105, ark.11–22. Not all of those arrested were repressed (sentenced to various terms in labor camps or to death). Of 183,343 people arrested, 136,892 people were repressed. By January 16, 1938, the NKVD still continued to investigate 611 “Ukrainian nationalists,” as the report reads. See also Bertelsen and Shkandrij, “Secret Police and the Campaign.”

231. See the text of the document in Gatagova, *Sovetskaia etnopolitika*, 175.

232. Marochko and Hillig, *Represovani pedahohy Ukrainy*, 286.

233. See Misha Perlman's story (a well-known poet in the twenties and early thirties) in Janusz Bardach and Kathleen Gleeson, *Man Is Wolf to Man: Surviving the Gulag* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 342–44. Hryhorii Kostiuk also admitted that learning about the “confessions” of those writers he closely knew was a traumatic experience for him, although he did not believe these confessions were authentic. See Kostiuk, *Zustrichi i proshchannia*, 1:490.

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