


igor  
shankovsky

**SYMONENKO**

**a study in semantics •**

IGOR SHANKOVSKY was born on 15 May 1931 in Stryj, Western Ukraine. However, since very early childhood he lived in Lviv (also known as Lvov, Lwow, or Lemberg, depending on what occupant did the spelling), where he attended Public School and first two years of Gymnasium (High School).

The hostilities of World War II uprooted his family. Between 1944-1946 he lived in Vienna, Austria and during 1946-1950 in Munich, West Germany, where he graduated from Gymnasium in 1949 and shortly after emigrated with his parents through Italy to the United States. There he started to study at the University of Pennsylvania. From 1952-1956 he served as a volunteer in the U.S. Army (Korea and Japan) and during the service became an U.S. citizen.

After his discharge he returned with the help of G.I. Bill to the University of Pennsylvania and graduated in 1958, receiving a B.A. degree in Russian Area Studies. In 1965, after working for a while on a managerial level, he went to the University of Alberta, Edmonton (Canada), where he received a Teaching Assistantship and graduated with an M.A. in Eastern Slavonic Literatures in 1966. The following year he served as an Instructor at the University of Alberta teaching the Ukrainian and Russian languages and at the same time conducted a Ukrainian Radio Programme at the CFRN Radio Station in Edmonton. In 1967 he accepted a Lectureship in the Department of Russian at McMaster's University (Hamilton, Ontario) and started studies toward a Doctorate at the Ukrainian Free University (Munich, West Germany), where he earned his degree and was promoted to PhD in Slavonic Philology in 1969. 





VASYL SYMONENKO — photo dated 1961.

IGOR SHANKOVSKY

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A STUDY IN SEMANTICS



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IGOR SHANKOVSKY  
SYMONENKO  
A STUDY IN SEMANTICS

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*In vain she swore to them in tears, denying  
That evil deed she ever did or sought . . .  
The judges had their iron logic, claiming,  
That she would fit to no accepted framing  
For, after all, she was a brand new thought . . .*

V. Symonenko

***I dedicate this book to its title.***



## ***Epitome***

*The primary incentive in undertaking this literary study has been a sincere desire to grant well-deserved credit to a young Ukrainian poet, who never had a proper start. In selecting a method for analysis and development of the topic I have decided to include information on his background and his environment, without doing that it would be difficult to determine the place reserved for this writer within the complicated framework of Ukrainian literature.*

*Indeed, the excessive amount of contradictory material available on the topic, the necessity of translating and evaluating, has created many difficulties. More so, since the sources dealing with past and contemporary Ukrainian literature are of highly subjective nature, and the spine for it all is provided by the controversy motivated by the historical and sociological background of the Ukrainian people as such, then, under these involved conditions, a study concerning Ukrainian literature can not be done without attention to political context. For that very reason it becomes impossible to approach a literary study in any way involving the topic from the formalist point of view. That would most certainly mean automatic exclusion of all available sources. It would also mean a denial of the fundamental principles upon which, especially during the Soviet period, Ukrainian literature was and continues to be based. Even when taking the Soviet Union as a whole and approaching such a modernistic literary phenomenon as "Soviet futurism" of the early XXth century (from Russian poet Mayakovsky to Ukrainian poet Semenko, and those in between), one must immediately concede, that it is heavily spiced with political and specific sociological motives.*

*Therefore, to work with a topic of such a nature and at the same time strive for objectivity is not a simple matter; an analyst*

*is also entitled to his own viewpoint, his own convictions. It complicates the selection and classification of the writers within the limit of this study. When views are sharply divided in an appraisal of a given literary phenomenon and/or in determination of a place reserved for a certain writer in a given literary process, then, in attempting an interpretation, it is possible to be in agreement only with one of the two contradictory views.*

*This literary study, based upon and heavily documented by Soviet sources, is directed at a literary historian, at a researcher or analyst of Soviet literary developments, and at a sociologist. It is also the first major work on Vasyl Symonenko.*

I. S.

## VASYL SYMONENKO AND HIS BACKGROUND

To grasp the complications arising from studies in Ukrainian literature one should distinguish between the phenomena known as the Soviet Ukrainian literature (written and published in the Ukrainian S.S.R.), and Ukrainian emigré literature (written and published in exile). If some works were written in exile and later on published in the Ukrainian S.S.R., they, nevertheless, are not regarded by the Soviet Ukrainian sources to be integral to Soviet Ukrainian literature. For Example, the works of Volodymyr Vynnychenko (1880-1951), some of which (dramas and novels) were published in the Soviet Ukraine during the 1920s, are not being related to the Soviet Ukrainian literature there.

In addition during the period between the two world wars, there also existed a phenomenon often referred to by the Soviet scholars as the "Western Ukrainian literature"<sup>2</sup>, written and published on Ukrainian ethnographic territories incorporated at the time into Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. All these territories belong at the present time to the Ukrainian S.S.R., with the exception of some peripheral regions that still belong to Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.

The Soviet Ukrainian literary point of view had always regarded every Western Ukrainian writer as either "bourgeois-nationalist" or "proletarian-progressive". Separation of the writers into the above-named categories was obviously motivated by political rather than literary considerations. However, if and

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1) The works of Volodymyr Vynnychenko are not the only ones excluded from the Soviet Ukrainian literary processes. Similar exclusion prevails over works of all other emigré writers, who get to be published in the Ukrainian S.S.R. from time to time, to name for instance, Yurii Kosach, Vira Vovk, or M. Tarnavs'kyl (M. Tarnavs'kyl recently returned to the Soviet Ukraine from New York and now resides there).

2) B. S. Buryak, et al. (eds.), *Istoriya ukrains'koj radyans'koj literatury* (Kiev: Akademiya Nauk U.S.S.R., Instytut Literatury im. T. H. Shevchenka — 1964), p. 73.

when a "bourgeois-nationalist" writer was somehow to accommodate himself to Soviet policies and to undergo compulsory or voluntary mode of what is known as "socialist reconstruction" — he then was officially and ceremoniously accepted to be an acolyte among the Soviet Ukrainian writers. It is the largest and the most complete Soviet Ukrainian bio-bibliographical publication<sup>3</sup> that includes the Western Ukrainian writer Yuri Shkrumelyak<sup>4</sup> (1895-1964) among the Soviet Ukrainian writers despite his "bourgeois-nationalist past". As if by a chance, some other Western writers, who, in the 1920s and 1930s, gathered around Soviet-oriented "progressive" periodicals in Galicia (at the time incorporated into Poland), like *Novi shlyakhy* (The New Pathways), *Vikna* (The Windows), *Kul'tura* (The Culture), and professed an open admiration for events taking place in the Soviet Ukraine — they too are regarded to be Soviet Ukrainian writers and are listed in the quoted bio-bibliographical publication. Some of them had enthusiastically immigrated to the Soviet Ukraine during the 1920s. All who did — perished there sooner or later, after first being denounced as "capitalist spies".<sup>5</sup> One by one, their names disappeared from print or any mention, as if they never existed. Only during the past two decades, during the now abandoned attempts of official de-Stalinization, most of them were "rehabilitated" posthumously. Among them were such well known writers as Ivan Krushel'nyts'kyi<sup>6</sup> (1905-1934), Vasyl Bobyns'kyi<sup>7</sup> (1898-1938), and Canadian-Ukrainian writers of similar orientation, as Myroslav Irchan<sup>8</sup> (1897-1937), and Lyutsiana Piontek<sup>9</sup> (1899-1937). Nevertheless, there is no separate entry in the quoted *Dictionary* for the reputed leader

3) O. I. Billets'kyl; Ye. P. Kyryluk; P. K. Volyns'kyi; L. M. Novychenko; S. A. Kryzhaniv's'kyl (eds.), *Ukrains'ki pys'mennyky. Bio-bibliohrafichnyi slovnyk*. Volumes I. — V. (Kiev: Derzhavne v-vo Khudozhnoi Literatury and v-vo Khudozhnoi Literatury "Dnipro", 1960-1965). The first three volumes cover Ukrainian writers and literature from the earliest times up to and including the first two decades of the XXth century. The last two volumes cover the Soviet Ukrainian writers and literature up to and including the early 1960s. From here on this source will be quoted as: *Dictionary*, with indication of the volume and page number.

4) *Dictionary* V., pp. 779-780.

5) Victor Petrov, *Ukrains'ki kulturni diyachi Ukrain's'koi R.S.R. 1920-1940* (New York: Prolog — 1959), p. 56.

6) *Dictionary* IV., pp. 814-815.

7) *Ibid.*, pp. 110-113.

8) *Ibid.*, pp. 583-593.

9) *Dictionary* V., pp. 299-300. For additional information about these and other persecuted Soviet Ukrainian writers see: Bohdan Kravtsov, *Na bahryanomu konti revolyutsii* (New York: Prolog — 1960). Bohdan Kravtsov, now deceased, well known for his extensive research in the field of the Soviet Ukrainian literature.

of the above group Antin Krushel'nyts'kyi<sup>10</sup> (1878-?11), who was a noted novelist<sup>12</sup>, and who died after his two sons were executed by a firing squad.

If we are to accept the concept that the Soviet Ukrainian literature is the literature written and published in the Ukrainian S.S.R. by resident writers (some of their works, perhaps, having been started, or written in pre-Soviet times), then we must agree that Soviet Ukrainian literature is the literature of modern times, covering the period between 1920s and the present. During this period there was very little or no objective exposure whatever of the truly hard and erratic course Soviet Ukrainian literature had ran through already, and even now continues to endure. To follow this course is like walking through an endless labyrinth of contradicting sources which are scattered wide apart, their guidance quite insufficient, and, more often than not — unreliable. It is expected, therefore, that if any light is to be shed on this course, much of it shall be done here. To expose the concealed and to voice the unsaid.

Born and educated in the Ukrainian S.S.R. Vasyl Symonenko belongs, in view of what was determined so far, to the Soviet Ukrainian literature. He was exposed directly, consciously or sub-consciously, to the accumulated experiences of the other Soviet Ukrainian writers. Here, again, we have to distinguish between: the collective experience of the Soviet Ukrainian writers (on one hand those who were consistently oppressed and finally liquidated or put away, and, on the other hand, those who were repeatedly lauded and promoted, as well as those in between, who were continuously kept in suspense of fear and uncertainty to live through their ups and downs) and the individual experiences of the Soviet Ukrainian writers, focused against the background of the governmental policies directed towards Soviet Ukrainian literature, which (at times oppressing, at times promoting, and at times uncertain) were difficult to predict. Such distinctions must be made not only with regard to creative activities and various psychological attitudes demonstrated by the Soviet Ukrainian writers (what-

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10) Father of Ivan Krushel'nyts'kyi. He is mentioned only in the entry listing his son. See: *Dictionary IV*, p. 814.

11) Bohdan Kravtsiv maintains that Antin Krushel'nyts'kyi died in 1935. Other sources vary their estimations, naming various years.

12) Bohdan Kravtsiv, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

ever such creative activities and psychological attitudes should imply, considering the circumstances, during the Soviet regime), but also with regard to the broad facts of the political history and the social development of Ukraine. Gradually, ever since the alliance with Muscovy of 1654, Ukraine was forced into a *de facto* vassal dependency that grew in proportions until it had finally reduced the once proud and independent state to a province of Imperial Russia, when in 1781 the regimental administrative system of Ukraine was completely abolished. Two years later the Russian system of total serfdom was applied to the Ukrainian peasants and by 1786 the monastic estates were secularized, the incorporation of Ukraine into Imperial Russia was thus completed. Nobody can deny, however, that political and social issues became ever more interconnected with literature in Imperial Russia since the dawn of the XIXth century.

In that sense, Soviet Ukrainian literature was, and still is, an innovatory continuation of the Ukrainian literature written during the XIXth and early XX centuries. During that time, before the revolution, Ukrainian literature was one of the major means of expression for the oppressed and divided people. Since Ukrainian schools became outlawed in Imperial Russia it was the Ukrainian literature and the theatre pulling together the vehicle of national identity. Both served as potent instruments of education. As a result, the broad facts of the Ukrainian literary movements become not only evolutive in styles and genres but also united in the development of the Ukrainian spirit and mind.

There is conclusive evidence of how the Ukrainian spirit and mind reached full growth (at this time, considering the circumstances during the Tsarist regime) in the second half of the XIXth century. Indeed, some 120 years ago, the renowned poet Taras Shevchenko<sup>13</sup> (1814-1861), whose: "creativity reaches the peaks of philosophic, historiosophic analysis of the present, past, and future"<sup>14</sup>, was writing and divinely "propheying in a desert"<sup>15</sup> which became known by then to the rest of the world by a derogatory name, "Little Russia". Yet, in 1863, only two years after Shevchenko's death, the Russian Minister of the

13) *Dictionary III*, pp. 609-740.

14) Yuri Boyko, *Shevchenko i Moskva* (n. p.: Ukrain's'kyl Vil'nyl Universytet — 1952), p. 11.

15) *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Interior, Count P. O. Valuyev, had to declare that there never was, is not, and never will be any separate "Little Russian" language, by the decree of his "ill-conditioned circular"<sup>16</sup>. Russian Slavophiles, by efforts of their spokesman Mikhail Niki-forovich Katkov, after the danger of a Ukrainian peasant rebellion had subsided, dubbed the Ukrainian movement "a Polish intrigue", while Katkov himself had become known as "a mad antagonist to all that bore a Ukrainian label"<sup>17</sup>. Obviously, the Russians feared this new wide-spreading realization of the fact that there are three individual Slavic nationalities existing side-by-side in Imperial Russia, different from one another in the areas of language, cultural and historical traditions, customs, and sociological characteristics. What had followed, was a period of prohibitive Russian hysteria directed head-on against the re-awakening Ukrainian consciousness, which, crystalized by Shevchenko into a feeling of national independency, grew eventually into a conception that Ukraine belongs by inter-connexion of culture and spirit to Western Europe. All the hatred, censorship, and prohibitions, bestowed by the Russians upon the Ukrainian renaissance, could not arrest the wide spread new budding of these ideas.

With the dawn of the XXth century, after the failure of the Russian revolution in 1905-1907, there followed a period of unsparing terror. The reaction was directed mainly against the revolutionaries, however, the Minister of the Interior (later Prime Minister) Pyotr Arkadyevich Stolypin made certain that the reign of terror did not by-pass the Ukrainian population<sup>18</sup>.

"The persecution of the national liberation movement had intensified. Ukrainian people, their language and literature found themselves under cruel repressions"<sup>19</sup>. For the Ukrainians,

16) M. D. Bernstein, V. Ya. Herasymenko, Ye. P. Kyrylyuk, N. Ye. Krutikova, *Istoriya ukrains'koi literatury*, Volume III. (Kiev: v-vo "Naukova dumka" — 1968), p. 67.

17) Yuri Boyko, *op. cit.*, p. 39. For additional comments on Katkov and slavophiles see also: Marc Slonim, *Modern Russian Literature. From Chekhov to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press — 1953), pp. 16-17.

18) Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Decline of Imperial Russia 1855-1914* (New York, Washington: Frederick A. Praeger — 1969), pp. 304-305.

19) M. S. Hrytsyuta, N. L. Kalynychenko, P. I. Kolesnyk, F. P. Pohrebnyk, O. F. Stavyts'kyl, *Istoriya ukrains'koi literatury*, Volume V. (Kiev: v-vo "Naukova dumka" — 1968), p. 8.

nevertheless, a new era in history had already begun:

... The intricate socio-political scene of that time was giving birth to a struggle between the diverse movements, trends of thought, also in literary life. "Never before was there such excitement, such massive conflicts and controversial trends, polemics of various thoughts and the struggles, quiet, but significant upheavals, in the fields of our creative word" — noted I. Franko (*Literaturno-nauko vyi visnyk*, 1901, vol. XV., No. 6., p. 1.). He, of course, was right. The debut of M. Voronyi with modernistic slogans in 1901 and subsequent criticism of them by Franko; the appeal of 1903 by M. Kotsyubyns'kyi and M. Chernyavs'kyi to the writers, suggesting that they should stand closer to life, so as to broaden the thematic, ideological, and figurative diapason of the literature — and the resistance of the liberal-bourgeois statesmen to all this effort; the manifesto of the "Moloda muza" group in 1907, directed against the realism of progressive literature — and sharp condemnation of this manifesto by the entire democratic camp; finally, the nationalistic voluntarism of the "khata" adherers...<sup>20</sup>

This passage demonstrates, even to the non-consecrated, how much diversity, excitement, and experimentation there was on the Ukrainian literary scene, no matter how intensive the Russian repressions got to be, during the dawn of the XXth century. The consecrated know that the Ukrainian writers of the time continued to expand the horizons of the growing Ukrainian literature and affirmed the conception of the inter-connexion between the Ukrainian culture and spirit with that of Western Europe rather than that of Eurasia.

Even the most ardent foes of Ukrainian independence can not deny that the revolution (1917), the Ukrainian war of liberation (1917-1921), and the short-lived independence of the U.N.R. (Ukrainian Peoples Republic) — were powerful stimuli for the maturity of Ukrainian national inspirations. The very best literary example, demonstrating the joys of national and social liberation, is the poem "Zoloty homin"<sup>21</sup> (The Golden Sounding), by the *maître* of the Soviet Ukrainian poetry Pavlo Tychyna<sup>22</sup> (1891-1967). This poem, like most of the poems published by Tychyna in his early books: *Sonyashni klyarnety* (The Sun's Clarinets, 1918) and *Zamist' sonetiv i oktav*<sup>23</sup> (In Place of Sonnets

20) M. S. Hrytsyuta, et al., *op. cit.*, p. 25.

21) Yuri Lavrinenko (ed., comp.), *Rozstrilyane vidrodzennya Antolohtya 1917-1933* (Munich: Instytut Literacki — 1959), pp. 22-27.

22) *Dictionary V.*, pp. 586-619.

23) Yuri Lavrinenko (ed., comp.), *op. cit.*, pp. 15-18.



and Octaves, 1920), will continue to impress a reader with the heretofore unequalled tonality of his unique individual style and with sensitive portrayal of elate feelings for those who fought in bitter campaigns against the imperialist forces of all kinds and colours to win Ukrainian independence and freedom.

The Ukrainian war of liberation was lost. The Bolsheviks, who fought under the international slogans for the dictatorship of the proletariat to establish social equality for all, won a decisive victory. Hence even the Bolsheviks, who defeated all of their foes on the battlefield, could not bring themselves to deny the Ukrainian aspirations for independence. Under pressure to fulfil the promises made during the hostilities they were to acquiesce for the proclamation and maintenance of what they claimed to be "a sovereign and independent Ukrainian S.S.R.". Indeed, it seemed at first that the Ukrainians, frustrated in their ultimate goals, secured at last a large measure of independence. Among other things, this measure of independence was employed in carrying on with the struggle for the unfettered development of Ukrainian literature. Ukrainian writers adapted themselves to the new way of life in great numbers and displayed enthusiasm, imagination, and individuality. During the first years of the Soviet regime they established numerous literary organizations, continued with their modernistic experiments, ventured into new literary genres, and devoted themselves full-heartedly to the processes of Ukrainization, massively introduced to the population for the first time in the history of Ukraine.

Notwithstanding the fact that some writers left the country during the final phases of the Ukrainian war of liberation (Oleksandr Oles'<sup>24</sup> 1878-1944; Mykola Voronyi<sup>25</sup>, 1871-1942; Volodymyr Samiilenko<sup>26</sup>, 1864-1925; et al.), those who remained, even when leaning from the very start toward the Bolshevik or

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<sup>24</sup> Maksym Ryl's'kyl, "Poeziya O. Olesya", Oleksandr Oles', *Poezii* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'mennyk". Biblioteka poeta — 1964), p. ii.

<sup>25</sup> Bohdan Kravtsiv (ed., comp.), *Obitvanti struny. Antolohiya poezii* (New York: v-vo "Naukove Tovarystvo im. Shevchenka v Amerytsi" — 1955), p. 26.

<sup>26</sup> Iosyp Kupyans'kyl, "Vystup", Volodymyr Samiilenko, *Vybrani tvory* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'mennyk". Biblioteka poeta — 1963), pp. 10-13.

the *Borot'bist*<sup>27</sup> orientation were by their sense of belonging and political convictions unmistakably Ukrainian. Later on most of them were to perish in the Soviet death mills, or re-adjust and conform.

On the other hand, the first years of the Soviet regime, often referred to as "the years of the war Communism", were confronted with internal struggles against the Ukrainian insurgents, who exhaustingly fought on, for control of the rural areas. Those years had echoed in the works of almost all Ukrainian writers of the time, became the beloved literary topic for such renowned literary masters as Yuri Yanovs'kyi, Hryhorii Kosynka, Mykola Khvyi'ovyi, Andrii Holovko, as well as the topic for the renowned antagonist of the Soviet regime, the insurgent poet Hryhor Chuprynka,<sup>28</sup> who eventually was captured and shot by the Bolsheviks along with some other members of *Vsepovstankom*<sup>29</sup>.

The subsequent years of the N.E.P.<sup>30</sup> (New Economic Policy) brought about a relaxation of the regime. The insurgents were defeated, the few who had survived — disappeared into passive underground. The N.E.P. period re-introduced some measures of private ownership and this cunning manoeuvre improved the staggering economy to a great extent. One may even maintain that the N.E.P. period, short-lived as it was, provided people with economic prosperity. This period influenced literary developments as well. The activities of the literary organizations intensified, literary output grew larger than ever before, the

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27) *Borot'bisty*, named so after their party press organ *Borot'ba* (The Struggle), were left-wing Ukrainian Socialist-Revolutionaries, who sided with the Bolsheviks during the Ukrainian war of liberation. In 1920 the *Borot'bists*, after collision with and a sort-lived warfare against the Communist party, were dissolved as an independent unit, while their membership was in the great majority forced to join the Communist party of Ukraine. *Borot'bists* have provided several able political leaders, like Oleksandr Shums'kyi, Hryhorii Hryn'ko, Mykola Poloz, et. al. The literary figure among them was Vasyl Ellan-Blakytnyi (1893-1925), who played a major role in Soviet literary politics in Ukraine. See more on this topic in: George S. N. Luckyj, *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine, 1917-1934* (New York: Columbia University Press — 1956), pp. 38-39, 59, 127, 192, 251-252. In Soviet source: M. S. Hrytsyuta, et al., *op cit.*, pp. 62, 412, 508.

28) Bohdan Kravtsov (ed., comp.), *op. cit.*, p. 95

29) *Ibid.* *Vsepovstankom* was a popular acronym under which the Central Committee of the Insurgents, who were fighting against the Bolsheviks during the early years of the Soviet regime in Ukraine, was known. Thirty-nine members of this committee, along with Hryhor Chuprynka, were shot after a military trial on the 21 August 1921. The armed insurgency, nevertheless, continued in Ukraine until about 1924 and that period is focused in various controversial interpretations, depending upon the source.

30) V. A. Dyadychenko, F. Ye. Los', V. Ye. Shpyts'kyl. *Istoriya Ukrains'koi R.S.R.* (Kiev: v-vo "Kyivs'koho universytetu" — 1965), pp. 294-299.

literary quality of works became most impressive. It was truly a remarkable period in the intellectual life of the Soviet Ukraine, a true Ukrainian renaissance<sup>31</sup>.

Obviously, such a renaissance, the qualitative maturity of the Ukrainian literature along with the broad Ukrainization of the masses, pricked up Moscow's ears with unease. Besides, there were the growing complications that appeared out of such a substantial dose of relative independence in the literary activities, as well as in the political life of the Soviet Ukraine. In the meantime, other complications, more of a social origin, intensified throughout the Soviet Union.

Moscow's unease resulted in annulment of the N.E.P. and was followed by gradual re-application of terror, this time the terror was indiscriminately directed against people in all walks of life. In the Soviet Ukraine, what had so inspiringly started as a renaissance, ended with a *pogrom* aptly referred to as the "fusilladed renaissance"<sup>32</sup>. Promising Ukrainian scholars and writers were decimated in repeated purges, millions of Ukrainians perished.

The Ukrainian revival was "fusilladed" during the late 1920s and early 1930s on direct orders by Stalin, who considered it to be a serious threat to his totalitarian dictatorship, emerging from dependence on Russian great-power chauvinism. It seemed easier to betray the revolution and make it a policy to build socialism in one solid, centralized State rather than within individually thinking and independently acting Soviet Republics. Adaptation of such a policy had to bring about centralized Russian controls over the autonomous Republics and the first step was to gain total control over the national literatures throughout the Soviet Union. So, by the order of the Central Committee of the all-Union Communist Party (of the Bolsheviks), issued on 23 April 1932, all of the existing literary organizations were simply abolished. In the Soviet Ukraine they were replaced by a "Soviet Ukrainian Writers Union", a branch of the newly created "all-Union Soviet Writers Union", with the headquarters in Moscow. Soon after, in 1934, a new literary

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31) For a very interesting presentation of this period see: *Ukrainian Literature*, ed. by B. S. Buryak, et al., op cit., pp. 62-66, 69-83.

32) The term "fusilladed renaissance" was first used by the author. See his op cit. work for a detailed panorama of the

style named "socialist realism" was hammered out and officially proclaimed to be the only valid and creative vehicle for literature. What followed was, and still is to a great extent, a dark and tragicomical period, known in general to the outside world as the *Soviet literature*. Needless to say, the most vigorous enforcement of "socialist realism" took place in the Soviet Ukraine. Ever since, Moscow has come to be the legislative centre for the affairs of multi-national literatures in the Soviet Union. This raw, unconstitutional act is not concealed by Soviet Ukrainian sources<sup>33</sup>.

A renowned Soviet Ukrainian scholar (for several years after World War II an emigré in West Germany, later, mysteriously returned to the Soviet Union in the late 1940s or the early 1950s, and now deceased), himself a gifted writer of the time, had this to say about the period:

... The issuance of the Central Committee's order on literary affairs in 1932 meant that the Party is taking command over literature into its own hands. The slogan *proletarianize* was discarded and replaced with the slogan *Sovietize*. A number of writers, who in the former period were excluded from literary processes because of their non-proletarian origin, were now accepted to the Writers Union. However, this step toward "democratization", as well as the discarding of proletarian slogans, did not mean any easing of pressure. Exactly the opposite was true. To wit, it is from 1933, as we already know, that the wave of repressions rises up to unheard-of proportions, controls over the writers tighten so as to make it impossible to breathe. Intervention of the state security organs in cases concerning literature is now direct.

To write, that is to say, write while following the directives of the central Party line, had become a duty of the writer, a duty he could no longer elude. "I wish" — ceased to exist. Only: "you must", had remained. The work of a writer had to be a social must, or, better to say became a Party, or State obligation, a task subordinated to the Centre...<sup>34</sup>

All the way up to the outbreak of the German-Russian hostilities during World War II the period is remembered by the idealization of the Communist Party, hysterical exultations over the "construction of socialism", and enforced idolization of Stalin. Russian chauvinism was adapted and openly preached on the all-Union level, xenophobia became the Soviet way

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<sup>33</sup>) B. S. Buryak, et al., *op cit.*, pp. 203-211.

<sup>34</sup>) Victor Petrov, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62.

of life while "bourgeois nationalism, and deviations from the Party line" were sternly denounced and followed by numerous purges. It was then that the Russians were proclaimed to be, quite seriously, the *elder brothers* of all other people living in the Soviet Union. Although the abuses along these lines were relaxed for the duration of World War II, it was not until much later, after the de-Stalinization speech<sup>35</sup> delivered by Khrushchev during the XXth Congress of the Communist Party in 1956, that at least the idolization of Stalin ceased and some of the extremes were rectified. The *Personality cult* created by Stalin was blamed for all of the previous wrongdoings.

It was during this dark period that Vasyl Symonenko was born in the village of Biyevtsi, Poltava province, on 8 January 1935. Next to nothing is known about the childhood of this collective farmer's son, whose name today is well known beyond the boundaries of his homeland. It is known, however, that he lost his father quite early in life and was raised by his mother and grandfather.<sup>36</sup> His early years were no doubt influenced by surrounding realities and therefore could have had some impact upon his later formation as a Ukrainian writer. During the years of enforced Stalinism Ukrainian literature virtually ceased to exist and this fact could have left a trace in Symonenko's awareness. Member of the Academy, Professor Petrov made this comment:

... Pseudo-writers fill the ranks of the Ukrainian writers. True writers have been eliminated. The empty spaces were then filled with pseudo-writers. Ukrainian literature, in the Ukrainian S.S.R. during the 1930s, was a Soviet literature written in Ukrainian...<sup>37</sup>

The German invasion in 1941, as mentioned earlier, brought about certain changes. Stalin's fear of the possible collapse of the Empire forced him to re-examine his own policies and to apply new tactical manoeuvres, at least for the duration of the war. By secret directives Stalin ordered, among other things, a turnabout of the Party's attitude toward the literatures of the Republics, especially those that were occupied by the German armed forces. That included a large part of the Ukrainian territories.

35) For the text see: Basil Dmytryshyn, *U.S.S.R.: A Concise History* (New York: Charles Scribners Sons — 1965 ), pp.401-444.

36) Mykola Som, "Slovo pro Vasyla Symonenka", Vasyl Symonenko, *Zemna tyazhynnya* (Kiev: v-vo "Molod" — 1964), p. 4.

37) Victor Petrov, *op cit.*, p. 65.

Soviet Ukrainian writers were ordered to demonstrate "freedom of thought"; as a matter of fact, many of them were directly encouraged to start writing "bourgeois-nationalist" works. Such works, free from censor's intrusions, soon became evident: Maksym Ryl'skyi wrote his poem *Zhaha* (The Thirst), Pavlo Tychyna, who after his first two phenomenal books, for twenty years continued to produce only worthless scribble, came out with his solemn poem *Pokhoron druha* (The Burial of a Friend), and the quaint, exciting lyricist Volodymyr Sosyura wrote his "Lubit' Ukrainu"<sup>38</sup> (Do Love Ukraine). Yet, after the war, the one labelled by Moscow as the *Great Patriotic War*, literary controls were re-established at once by the Party bosses A. A. Zhdanov and L. Kaganovich<sup>39</sup>, with a new vicious onslaught against Ukrainian nationalism and against cosmopolitanism<sup>40</sup>. Evermore popular Sosyura was being denounced for his love to "the eternal" Ukraine, attacks against him continued for more than five years after the war had ended. Over and over again he had to humiliate himself in public by publishing apologies and retractions<sup>41</sup>.

In 1953 Stalin was dead. Soon after, in some works of Soviet Russian literature, such as *Ottepel'* (The Thaw) by Ilya Ehrenburg<sup>42</sup>, and of Soviet Ukrainian literature, such as *Kryla* (The Wings) by Oleksandr Kornichuk<sup>43</sup> (1905-1972), there appeared rather bold portrayals of abuses and irregularities permitted by the Soviet system. The mere fact that they were published and distributed widely led to speculations<sup>44</sup> about their intended purpose and aroused expectations that some imminent changes in Soviet policies, including, of course, literary policies, were forthcoming. It was even rumored that this latest relaxation of the regime and consequent de-Stalinization

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38) *Dictionary* does not list this poem by Sosyura among his other works that are listed there. Sosyura wrote this poem in 1944 and as soon as the war had ended was persecuted for writing it. He then, promptly, published a retraction in *Pravda*. After Stalin died, the persecution of Sosyura was considered to have been "an abuse by the "cult of personality" and the poem was reinstated as "patriotic". See Stepan Kryzhaniv's'kyl, *Khudozni vidkryttya* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'men-nyk" — 1965), p. 133.

39) B. S. Buryak, et al., *op. cit.*, p. 357.

40) *Ibid.*

41) Yuri Lavrinenko (ed., comp.), *op. cit.*, p. 168.

42) Vera Alexandrova, "On the Literary Front", *Problems of Communism* III. (July-August, 1954), pp. 11-14; Walter Z. Laqueur, "The 'Thaw' and After", *Problems of Communism* V. (January-February, 1956), pp. 20-25.

43) *Dictionary* IV., pp. 703-760.

44) Vera Alexandrova; Walter Z. Laqueur, *op. cit.*

of the system were brought about by the numerous strikes and uprisings that took place in the forced labour camps during 1953-1956. In at least one instance such rumors have been supported by a reliable source<sup>45</sup>.

In the Soviet Ukraine the initial stages of this new, official "thaw", initiated and directed from Moscow, consisted of stirrings against the deadweights of "socialist realism". At the same time some meek attempts to combat the wide-spread Russification started to be felt and that launched Moscow's counterpoise at once. Early in 1957 unsparing attacks were directed against writers Andrii Malyshko<sup>46</sup> (1912-1970), Mykyta Shumylo<sup>47</sup> (1903-), and Vasyl Shvets'<sup>48</sup> (1918-), accusing them of inimical attitudes toward the "friendship of nations living in the Soviet Union". One year later another wave of criticism was directed against Lina Kostenko<sup>49</sup> (1930-) and repeated against Vasyl Shvets'. It was in about that time that the well known group of the *shestydesyatnyky* (The Writers of the 60s) came into existence, a group of which Vasyl Symonenko was an integral part.

What were the motives that had propelled this group of writers into existence? Their appearance, spontaneous and courageous, made quite an impact upon the Soviet Ukrainian literature of the time. Perhaps this movement did start initially as a part of the all-Union cultural ferment "to broaden the horizons of socialist realism", nevertheless, it had, right from its inception, strong Ukrainian traits. Like their predecessors of the national revival movement in the XIXth century the writers of the 60s became again the spearhead of emancipation. Strange as it may seem, during the intensive pressures of Russification that after the downfall of Khrushchev has been steadily growing until by now it has reached enormous proportions, they, the writers of the 60s, proved over and again their strong commitment to

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45) Alfred Burmeister, "The Silent Reform", *Encounter* VI. (April, 1956), pp. 49-52; Herbert Passim and Fritz von Brissen. "The Strike in Norilsk", *Encounter* VI. (April, 1956), pp. 53-64. Both articles are part of a discussion entitled: "The End of Forced Labour?", continued by the editors of the *Encounter*, a periodical of British liberal opinion. The same view was voiced by the former inmate of Soviet concentration camps A. Shifrin (now residing in Israel), in his recent book (see bibliography).

46) *Dictionary* V., pp. 68-88.

47) *Ibid.*, pp. 800-803.

48) *Ibid.*, pp. 761-764.

49) *Dictionary* IV., pp. 771-773.

Ukraine and its national culture<sup>50</sup>. Many of them had chosen jail and forced labour camps rather than renounce this commitment. Some of them were permanently silenced. Others were broken by the notorious security organs and had repented, or are just about to repent. Their names are well known to the scholars and intellectuals abroad and I will not take upon myself the burden to name them one by one in this study adding, perhaps, to their suffering. What is more strange, is the fact that all of them are the product of the Soviet way of life. They grew up and were educated in a totalitarian environment.

The role, which literature is made to perform in a totalitarian environment, is another matter. First of all, it is well accepted in the Soviet Ukraine, as it is in all the other Republics that form the Soviet Union, to hold men of letters, poets, and writers in the highest esteem, enjoyed, perhaps, only by the movie stars and top musical performers elsewhere in the world. Literary works are eagerly awaited and books, as soon as they are printed and distributed, are rapidly sold out. The Central Committee of the Communist Party was always aware of the avidity by which literature is consumed and, therefore, while formulating the conception "socialist realism" had already in mind to subordinate literature to a role that would serve the regime. Such sub-ordination, as Victor Petrov promptly observed, created an avalanche of "pseudo-writers" descending upon the literary scene. All others, who dared to oppose the prescribed formulas, became repressed, haunted, censored, and finally silenced. The "reliability" of a writer and his work was demonstrated by the number of the printed copies of such a work and their distribution. The works of the "reliable" Oleksandr Kornichuk were always produced in hundred of thousands copies and distributed to the remotest corners of the Republic. It is fair to say, that any work, written by such a "reliable" writer is seldom "out-of-print" (a standard excuse used by the bookstore clerks, when a book is not available). I can say this from personal experience, having been in the Soviet Ukraine in 1969 and 1972 as a director of two separate groups of American students. I have found the works of the authors, who have not earned the "reliable" label, more often than not, to be

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50) Jaroslaw Pelenski, "Recent Ukrainian Writing", *Survey* No. 59. April, 1966, pp. 102-112.



simply "out-of-print" there. Such works, printed in editions numbering from several hundred to several thousand copies, are exported, mostly in bulk, for consumption by the Ukrainians living abroad. They are, as well as the works by those who for political reasons do not earn the privilege to be published at all, the works that are genuinely and eagerly sought. Quite often they circulate among people in typewritten copies in a clandestine manner.

What place did Vasyl Symonenko earn as a Soviet Ukrainian writer, how does he rate in comparison to others? To find out it becomes necessary to present his background, namely, to focus him against the background of all the other writers who did and who still are creating the Soviet Ukrainian literature. For several reasons I have selected to do the presentation relying primarily on Soviet Ukrainian bio-bibliographical publications. No other kind of publication, printed in the Soviet Union, shows more exactly the ups and downs of Soviet Ukrainian writers. By listing, omitting, or doctoring-up of the biography of each individual writer this kind of publication serves as a kind of political barometer. In many cases the "unreliable" work of an otherwise "reliable" writer is denied a bibliographical entry, as in the case of Sosyura (mentioned earlier). Fortunately, I have every bio-bibliographical and biographical publication ever printed in the Soviet Ukraine (some are by now quite rare) to make this study as complete as possible.

Quite a few scholars have relied on the statistical method in their research. What is new and unusual in this study, is the complete and exact statistical data (see the tables), based on the largest five-volume bio-bibliographical publication ever produced in the Soviet Ukraine, against the background of all the other similar publications printed there. This was not done before.

The last two volumes of the *Dictionary*, as we already know, are devoted exclusively to Soviet Ukrainian writers. However, some of the Ukrainian writers, who started to write and publish during the pre-Soviet period and then continued to do so during the Soviet period, are not included there. They are listed in the preceding two volumes, the ones that deal with the Ukrainian literature of the XIXth and early XXth centuries. It would have been acceptable, if only all of the writers

belonging to that category were so listed. This is not the case. Some of the writers in that category, those who did not allow themselves to be re-indoctrinated by the Soviet regime during or after the time of transition, were excluded from listing in the period of Soviet Ukrainian literature. Their biographies were dropped conveniently into the two preceding volumes. It can be presumed that by such a manoeuvre the editors of the *Dictionary* tried to avoid the responsibility for including writers with questionable political convictions and work into the period of Soviet Ukrainian literature. They are: Khrystyna Alchevs'ka (1882-1931), Kesar Bilylovs'kyi (1859-1934), Stepan Vasyľchenko (1879-1932), Mykola Voronyi (1871-1942), Dniprova Chaika (pen-name of Lydmyla Vasylevs'ka, 1861-1927), Yakiv Zharko (1861-1933), Ahatanhel Kryms'kyi (1871-1942), Olena Pchilka (pen-name of Ol'ha Kosach-Drahomanova, 1849-1930), Trokhym Romanchenko (1880-1930), Volodymyr Samiilenko (1864-1925), Mykola Chernyavs'kyi (1868-1946), Antin Shablenko (1872-1930), and Lyubov Yanovs'ka (1861-1933). All of them had published at one time or another works that could fall into the "bourgeois-nationalist" category. For writing ideologically "questionable" works at least two of the named above were driven to death. They were Mykola Voronyi<sup>51</sup> and Ahatanhel Kryms'kyi.<sup>52</sup> The biographies of these two, as well as of so many other Ukrainian writers, show some truly sad individual experiences. They are unparalleled by the experience of any other writer, in any other country in the world, with the exception of the short-lived Nazi period in Germany. The summary of these experiences, together with the collective experience of Soviet Ukrainian literature, was indeed, tragic. Some of the pertinent information will never be known for there are Ukrainian writers about whom memory is not kept alive and whose names are not to be mentioned in the Soviet Ukraine under any circumstances.

The two volumes dealing with Soviet Ukrainian writers list the biographies and works of 530 writers. They are the ones,

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51) Victor Petrov, *op cit.*, pp. 58-6, maintains that Voronyi and Kryms'kyi were driven to death. Mykola Voronyi did return to live in the Soviet Ukraine, shortly after the period of transition.

52) Oleh Babyshkin. "Koly daleke stave blyz'kym, a chuzhe — ridnym". Ahatanhel Kryms'kyl, *Poezii* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'mnyk". Biblioteka poeta — 1968), pp. 3-32.

whom the editors considered as such, that have contributed in some way to Soviet Ukrainian literary processes. Many of them are shown to have a solid "proletarian-progressive" background. There are others, some with a less "reliable" past. Regardless of the background, there are curious gaps and obvious inconsistencies in some of the biographical data and/or long periods of inactivity in-between bibliographical entries for quite a number of the writers. That means there were some things in the past of a given writer the editors would rather say nothing about and/or a long period of inactivity that suggest a given writer had served his time of "literary inactivity" in jail, or in a forced labour camp, and was then released and "rehabilitated" after de-Stalinization. Comparison of the *Dictionary* with all the other biographical publications is quite interesting in this respect. The biographical dictionary compiled by Khinkulov<sup>53</sup> in 1948, lists 253 Soviet Ukrainian writers. Only 51 of these writers were listed by Leites and Yashek<sup>54</sup> in 1929. Kylymnyk's<sup>55</sup> *Dovidnyk* (Book of Reference), published in 1960, lists 330 Soviet Ukrainian writers. Unlike Leites and Yashek, Kylymnyk included in his publication the names of the Soviet Ukrainian writers who write in Russian. However, two years before the Kylymnyk's publication, the editor of the last volume of the *Dictionary* commemorated 500 Soviet Ukrainian writers in the *Kievan Literaturna hazeta* (The Literary Gazette):

A significant event happened this year in the life of the Ukrainian Writers Union: its membership passed five hundred.

What does it mean? What is so significant in this number? Is it a lot, or a little?

In the past, mostly during the Great Patriotic War, the Ukrainian Writers Union suffered significant casualties. By the end of the war our union had only close to 250 writers. This was in a quantitative sense one of the smallest Republican writers organization, if one is to take into account the relationship to the general population of every one of the Union's Republics . . .<sup>56</sup>

This statement was made in 1958. Then, quite appropriately, the *Dictionary* listed 530 writers in 1965. But, 170 of the listed writers died before the *Dictionary* was published and are

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53) Leonid Khinkulov, *Slovnyk ukrains'kol literatury*, Volume II., No. 1. (Kiev: Akademiya Nauk U. R. S. R. — 1948).

54) A. Leites and M. Yashek, *Desyat' roktiv ukrains'kol literatury, 1917-1927*, Volumes I.-II. (Kharkiv: v-vo "Instytut Tarasa Shevchenka" — 1929).

55) O. V. Kylymnyk (ed.), *Pys'mennyky Radyans'kol Ukrainy. Dovidnyk* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'mnyk" — 1960).

56) Stepan Kryzhaniv's'kyl, "Pyatsot", *Literaturna hazeta* (April 25, 1958), p. 3.

listed with the date of their death shown. That leaves only 360 living writers at the time of the publication. Even so, if one considers that the *Dictionary* lists only the writers writing in Ukrainian, the figure for living writers (360) is much higher than Kylymanyk's figure (330) listed in 1960, taking into account that Kylymanyk includes also writers writing in Russian. The figures prove beyond doubt that during the first five years of the 1960s a considerable number of the persecuted writers had been "rehabilitated" and thus restored to the Soviet Ukrainian literature. All the same, a great number of *unforgiven* remained on the outside. They were neither "rehabilitated", nor "restored" and there is serious doubt if most of them will ever be. Keeping up with the promise to expose what is concealed and to voice the unsaid, the names of the best known writers, omitted from the *Dictionary*, are as follows:

Along with the insurgent poet Hryhor Chuprynka the following well known writers, active before and after the time of transition, were never mentioned: Mykola Filyans'kyi (1873-1938), Mykola Plevako (1890-1941), Maksym Lebid' (1889-1939), Mykhailo Mohylans'kyi (1873-?), Klym Polishchuk (1891-?), and Volodymyr Yurynets' (1891-?).

Representative writers of the liberal school in Soviet Ukrainian literature, who were eliminated by the trial of the *Spilka Vyzvolennya Ukrainy* (Union for Liberation of Ukraine) in 1930: Serhii Yefremov (1876-?), Andrii Nikovs'kyi (1885-1942), Lyudmyla Staryts'ka-Chernyakhivs'ka (1868-1941), and Mykhailo Ivchenko (1890-1939).

The Communist Party members, like Mykola Khvyly'ovyi (perhaps the most prominent and controversial figure in Soviet Ukrainian literature during the 1920s and early 1930s), and his followers Yulian Shpol (1895-1934), Ananii Lebid' (1898-?), Edward Strikha (pen-name of Kost' Burevii, 1888-1934), Roman Shevchenko (?-1934), and Andrii Richyts'kyi (?-?). Mykola Khvyly'ovyi committed suicide in 1933. Others were shot in 1934 or perished in the forced labour camps.

There is no separate entry, as stated elsewhere in this study, for the leader of the initially pro-Soviet *Novi shlyakhy* (The New Pathways) group, Antin Krushel'nyts'kyi. His followers Roman Skazhyns'kyi and Petro Karamans'kyi were also omitted.

The latter had tried his best to submit his poetry to the demands of the "socialist-realism"; all his efforts, however, did not earn him an entry in the *Dictionary*.

Some writers were omitted for reasons unknown. From all other Soviet Ukrainian neo-classicists only Mykhailo Drai-Khmara (1889-1939) is not listed. Omitted are critics Borys Yakubovs'kyi, Andrii Khvylya, and Samiilo Shchupak, the later two were helping to "cleanse" Soviet Ukrainian literature from nationalism. Also writers like Vasyl' Atamanyuk (1897-1939), Vasyl' Boiko (1892-1938), Arkadii Kazka (1890-1933), and Mykhailo Lebedynets' (?-1934) were omitted for no apparent reason.

Finally, there is no mention whatsoever about the writers who escaped during the World War II, and died, or live now, in exile. Among them: Yuri Klen (pen-name of Oswald Burghardt, 1891-1947), Ivan Bahryanyi (1907-1963), Arkadii Lyubchenko (1899-1945), Teodosii Os'machka (1895-1962), Mykhailo Orest (pen-name of Mykhailo Zerov, 1901-1963), Vasyl Barka, Yuri Buryakivets', Oleksa Veretenchenko, Petro Karpenko-Krynytsya, Dokia Humenna, Oleh Zujewskyj, Eaghor Kostetsky, Iwan Manylo, Leonid Poltava, Ulas Samchuk, et al. It was brought, indirectly, to my attention by the scholar and writer Vasyl Chaplenko, that he also belongs to this group. V. Chaplenko certainly deserves to be mentioned. His name, as well as any reference to his work *Propashchi Syly* were omitted in the Ukrainian version of this study. (I have never had access to this work about Soviet Ukrainian writers).

Now it is evident that by omitting the above named writers from listing in the *Dictionary*, the editors failed to show the Soviet Ukrainian literary processes in their entirety by subordinating the editorial policies to political limitations.

To elucidate the intricate structure of Soviet Ukrainian literature it is necessary to divide the writers into the four generations they represent. The first generation embraces those born during the XIXth century. They have entered the Ukrainian literature prior to, or during the time of transition. The second generation includes all those writers, who were born between 1900-1910, and who have entered Soviet Ukrainian literature in the 1920s, at the time of its blossoming renaissance. The third

— all those who were born between 1911-1929 and became active during the 1930s and 1940s, and the fourth includes all writers born during the dark, Stalinist 1930s and who entered Soviet Ukrainian literature during the late 1950s and early 1960s. The last generation is that of Vasyl Symonenko, representing what is known as the writers of the 60s.

The 530 Soviet Ukrainian writers listed in the *Dictionary* are divided into the four generations as presented in Table I. The only fourth-generation writer who died is Vasyl Symonenko. He died of cancer on 14 December 1963, at the age of twenty-eight.<sup>57</sup>

TABLE I.<sup>58</sup>  
Four Generation of Soviet Ukrainian Writers

Generation	Living	Deceased	Total
Up to 1899	35	84	119
1900-1910	125	65	190
1911-1929	184	20	204
1930 and up	16	1	17
Totals:	360	170	530

The figure showing only 17 fourth-generation writers is, as in most of the previous cases, far from being complete. Once again, prominent young writers are by-passed in silence. There is no listing of the brilliant literary critics Ivan Dzyuba and Ivan Svitlychnyi (exceptionally, Svitlychnyi, who was born in 1929, would belong to the third generation, except the fact, that the bulk of his publications coincide with that of the fourth-generation writers). Both of them were persecuted during the late 1960s and jailed, tried, and sentenced during the early 1970s: their predicament stirred world opinion.<sup>59</sup> Others, all promising and young Soviet Ukrainian writers, like Ivan

<sup>57</sup>) *Dictionary V.*, p. 432.

<sup>58</sup>) Total in this and the following Tables correspond only to the figures in 1965, the year of the publication. Some of the writers listed as living at the time have died after the *Dictionary* was published.

<sup>59</sup>) Almost all influential newspapers, including the *New York Times*, covered Ivan Svitlychnyi and Ivan Dzyuba predicaments at one time or another. Their problems started in the mid 60s and continued until early 70s, when both were arrested, tried, and convicted to serve time in the forced labour camps. Ivan Dzyuba is also known for his brilliant essay, translated into English. See: Ivan Dzyuba, *Internationalism or Russification? A Study in the Soviet Nationalities Problem* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson — 1968). Toward the end of 1973 Dzyuba was released because of ill health, but not before publishing retractions of the above named work. It is rumored that he is preparing a step-by-step repudiation of it.

Boichak, Volodymyr Drozd, Hryhorii Kyrychenko, Victor Iva-nysenko, Nadiya Prykhod'ko, Vasyl Holoborod'ko, Borys Rizny-chenko, Leonid Kovalenko, Mykola Synhaivs'kyi, Valerii Shev-chuk, Tamara Kolomyiets', Svitlana Iovenko, Marharyta Maly-novs'ka, and Ivan Zub — are also not mentioned. The last two, editors of the *Literaturna Ukraina* (The Literary Ukraine), the official newspaper of the Soviet Ukrainian Writers Union, were removed from their editorial positions (Malynovs'ka in 1969, and Zub in 1973). Nor is there any mention of the talented Russian poet Robert Tre't'yakov, who lives in the Soviet Ukraine and writes his works in Ukrainian. Should they have been included in the *Dictionary*, the figure for the fourth-generation writers would have been more realistic.

The Communist Party affiliation of the Soviet Ukrainian writers and their *social origin* (an extremely important factor, if one happens to be a Soviet writer), are provided in Table II., and Table III.

TABLE II.  
Communist Party Affiliation of Soviet Ukrainian Writers

Generation	Party members	Percentage	Total
Up to 1899	25	21 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	119
1900-1910	97	51 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	190
1911-1929	134	66 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	204
1930 and up	8	47 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	17
Totals:	264	49 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	530

TABLE III.  
Social Origin of Soviet Ukrainian Writers

Generation	Peasants		Workers		Intelligenzia		No. Data	Total
	Absolute Figures	%	Absolute Figures	%	Absolute Figures	%		
Up to 1899	57	48 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	20	17 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	33	30 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	9	119
1900-1910	88	46 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	54	28 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	40	21 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	8	190
1911-1929	107	53 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	38	19 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	47	24 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	12	204
1930 an up	6	33 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	4	24 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	6	33 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	1	17
Totals:	258	49 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	116	22 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	126	24 <sup>0</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	30	530

While studying Table II., it must be observed that the Communist Party membership increase with the stabilization of the Soviet regime and attained its height during the 1930s and 1940s. It dropped below the average (for all years) with the fourth-generation writers. Vasyl Symonenko is not listed as a member of the Communist Party in the *Dictionary*, only his membership in the Soviet Ukrainian Writers Union is mentioned. In other publications<sup>60</sup>, as well as in some of the obituaries appearing in the Soviet Ukrainian press after his death, *he is mentioned*, with a stress, as a member (of the Communist Party). Perhaps this hesitation of the editor<sup>61</sup>, to list Symonenko as a member of the Communist Party, had something to do with persistent rumors that Symonenko was secretly tried and expelled from the Party shortly before his death, and then had his membership restored posthumously. In any case, it is strange for the same Soviet Ukrainian scholar, who distinctly mentioned Symonenko as a Party member in 1962 to fail listing him as a "member" in the *Dictionary*, where all other Party members are listed as such, only three years later..

Before making any conclusions about the data on Table III., the changes that took place in the social structure of the Ukrainian population should be taken into account. According to the census taken in 1959 — 46.4% of the population in the Ukrainian S.S.R. was *urban* population. Back in 1926 — only 19.8% of the same population was urban. Table III. reflects this "rapid" process of urbanization that took place in the Soviet Ukraine. Certainly the mass elimination of "Kulaks" by the Stalinist terror of 1932-1934 (some 6 million by existing estimates) must have had something to do with this "rapid" urbanization. It also shows that more than half of the writers listed in the *Dictionary* came out of peasant stock, a social group that is known to be rather conservative and one that preserves strong national traditions. Of course, it is very possible that some of the data about the social origin of the Soviet Ukrainian writers could be false. Many a writer in the Soviet Ukraine had to

<sup>60</sup> The first listing of Symonenko as a member of the Communist Party is in the epilogue to his first book. See: Stepan Kryzhaniv's'kyl, "Radist' pershovidkrytya", Vasyl Symonenko, *Tysha i hrta* (Kiev: Derzhavne v-vo Khudozhn'oi Literatury — 1962), p. 151. Later the same year he is listed as a member in an editorial. See: "Bud'mo znalom!", *Literaturna Ukraina* (December 14, 1962), p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> Stepan Kryzhaniv's'kyl is also the editor of the *Dictionary V.*, where Symonenko's entry appears, listed as a non-member of the Party.



fabricate a *false* biography for himself in order to survive. This is true, especially for the first, — and the second — generation writers.

Table IV. — shows the educational level of the listed writers. In addition to the generation figures presented there, it should be pointed out that out of all the writers (341) listed as having completed higher education — 41 held an academic degree of a doctor, or a candidate of science. This indicates the rapid increase of education, mostly at the secondary and higher levels. According to the census of 1897, merely 13.6% of the entire Ukrainian population was literate<sup>62</sup>. Today illiteracy does not exist, it was completely erased in the Soviet Ukraine.

TABLE IV.  
Education of Soviet Ukrainian Writers

Education:	Higher		Secondary		Primary		Total	
Generation	Absolute Figures	%	Absolute Figures	%	Absolute Figures	%	No. Data	
Up to 1899	63	53%	36	30%	16	14%	4	119
1900-1910	110	57%	51	28%	21	11%	8	190
1911-1929	151	75%	44	21%	3	1%	6	204
1930 and up	17	100%	—	—	—	—	—	17
Totals:	341	64%	131	25%	40	%	18	530

Vasyl Symonenko completed his secondary education in 1952 and then entered the Taras Shevchenko State University in Kyiv, where he majored in journalism. During his University studies he belonged to a literary circle composed of other novice writers studying along with him at the University. He wrote his first poems and read them to the members of the circle, where the closest friends called him *Vasya Symon*<sup>63</sup>. He graduated in 1957 and subsequently worked out of the provincial Capital city Cherkasy as a journalist. He was on the staff of the *Cherkas'ka pravda* (Truth of Cherkasy), and the *Molod' Cherkashchyny* (The Youth of Cherkasy Province) until his premature death in 1963.

<sup>62</sup> V. Kubiľovyč, "The Size and Structure of the Population", *Ukrainie. A Concise Encyclopaedia* Volume I. (Toronto: Toronto University Press — 1963 p. 178.

<sup>63</sup> Mykola Som, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-6.

Table V., shows the national composition of the Soviet Ukrainian writers. The *Dictionary* lists writers of any nationality, provided that they write their works in Ukrainian and live in the Ukrainian S.S.R. Among the Russians in that category is the outstanding literary critic Iosyp Kysel'ov. Several Russian writers living in the Ukrainian S.S.R. write only in Russian, they are not listed. Among them Victor Nekrasov enjoys all-Union reputation, while Leonid Vyacheslavsky is well known for his translations from Ukrainian into Russian. The number of Russian writers moving into the Ukrainian S.S.R. is on the increase. Then, there are noted Jewish poets, novelists, and literary critics writing in Ukrainian. Poets Sava Holovaniv's'kyi and Leonid Pervomais'kyi acquired well-deserved fame not only for their original poetry, but for their first-rate translations from the world's classics into Ukrainian. Pervomais'kyi (recently deceased) is also noted for his prose. One of the best historical novelists is Natan Rybak (pen-name of N. Fisher). Among the literary critics are Yevhen Adel'heim, Yeremiya Aisenshtok, Mikhael Bernstein, et al. The popular lyricist Aron Kopshtein was killed on the front line during the Finno-Soviet Russian War in 1940.

TABLE V.  
Nationality of Writers in the Soviet Ukraine

Nationality	Writers	Percentage in the number of writers	Percentage in the total population
Ukrainian	492	92.9%	76.8%
Russian	11	2.8%	16.9%
Jewish	21	3.9%	2.0%
Polish	1		0.9%
Other <sup>64</sup>	5	0.4%	3.4%
Totals:	530	100.0%	100.0%

Table VI., shows the territorial origin of the Soviet Ukrainian writers, as well as the percentage of the Ukrainian population living, according to the census of 1959, in the listed provinces. It can be clearly seen that the provinces with the highest percentage of Ukrainian population yielded the highest crops of Soviet Ukrainian writers.

<sup>64</sup> Other: 2 Moldavian, 1 German, 1 Greek, 1 Gypsy.

TABLE VI.

## Territorial Origin of Soviet Ukrainian Writers

Province or State	Population, 1959 (in thousands)	Percentage of Ukrainians	Number of Writers
Actual Territory of the U.S.S.R.			
Vinnys'ts'ka	2,142	91.8%	30
Volyn'ska	890	94.6%	8
Dnipropetrovs'ka	2,705	77.7%	29
Donets'ka	4,262	55.6%	12
Zhytomyrs'ka	1,604	84.5%	17
Zaporiz'ka	1,464	68.3%	11
Ivano-Frankivs'ka	1,095	94.8%	11
KIEV (Capital city)	1,104	60.1%	25
Kyivs'ka	2,823	80.3%	43
Kirovohrads'ka	1,218	88.7%	25
Kryms'ka	1,201	22.3%	1
Luhans'ka	2,452	57.8%	5
L'vivs'ka	2,108	86.3%	14
Mykolaivs'ka	1,014	81.2%	5
Odes'ka	2,027	55.5%	12
Poltavs'ka	1,632	93.4%	66
Rivens'ka	926	93.4%	1
Sums'ka	1,514	87.9%	18
Ternopil's'ka	1,086	94.9%	8
Transcarpaty	920	74.6%	11
Kharkivs'ka	2,520	68.8%	38
Khersons'ka	824	81.1%	14
Khmel'nyts'ka	1,611	90.2%	14
Cherkas'ka	1,503	94.0%	28
Chernihivs'ka	1,554	94.5%	36
Chernivets'ka	774	66.9%	5
In Ukrainian S.S.R.:	41,869	76.8%	487

Continued over

Province or State	Population, 1959 (in thousands)	Percentage of Ukrainians	Number of Writers
Outside the Territory of the U.S.S.R. proper.			
Lemkivshchyna			1
Polissya			2
Kholmshchyna			3
Poland			6
Byelorussian S.S.R.			2
Russian S.F.S.R.			21
Moldavian S.S.R.			2
Romania			1
Georgian S.S.R.			1
No origin listed			4
<b>Total:</b>			<b>530</b>

Table VII., points out the collective experience of the Soviet Ukrainian writers under oppression and during the war. Out of the 174 writers, who took part in the World War II, 18 had fought in the Red Partisan units in the German-occupied territories and another 2 were members of the Soviet underground. Some of them held high posts in these movements. Yuri Zbanats'kyi was a commander of the Shchors Red Partisan Detachment and after the war was named Hero of the Soviet Union. Yakiv Bash was a Central Staff Member of another Red Partisan unit, Platon Voron'ko, Vasyl Zemlyak, Petro Inhul's'kyi, Mykhailo Savchenko, and Anatolii Shyyan were smaller unit commanders, and Mykhailo Khazan was a political commissar. After the war they formed a tight fellowship of the Red partisan veterans and there is a conjecture that they had for a time exercised a powerful influence on Soviet all-Union politics<sup>65</sup>. All together 86 out of the 174 received high decorations for gallantry. If we continue to examine the Table VII. data, we will notice that the figure of the 86 decorated writers somewhat exceeds the number of those writers (76), who were shot by the Soviet security forces, or who had perished in the forced labour camps. Most of the listed 76 are now con-

<sup>65</sup> Borys Lewytskij, *Die Sowjetukraine 1944-1963* (Köln, Berlin: Kipenhauer & Witsch Verlag — 1964), p. 721. The author is a well-known authority on Soviet affairs.

sidered to have been the victims of the "personality cult". The tragedy is difficult to grasp for the western intellectual, yet, here they are, listed side-by-side in the *Dictionary*, the former "heroes of the Great Patriotic War", and the former "enemies of the people" rehabilitated posthumously. However, this figure (76) does not, again, include all of the Soviet Ukrainian writers, who died, as a result of disease and exhaustion suffered in the forced labour camps, *after* their release.

TABLE VII.

Soviet Ukrainian Writers in Oppression and War

Generation	Took part in the World War II.	Killed in War	Shot or Perished in the Forced Labour Camps	Died of Natural Causes	Total
Up to 1899	3	2	46	36	84
1900-1910	54	13	28	24	65
1911-1929	117	11	2	7	20
1930 and up				1	1
Totals:	174	26	76	68	170

Table VIII. shows a more accurate view of the persecuted. Quite often to locate them the researcher has to read between the lines. Sometimes the editors would admit that repression was applied against a writer, sometimes vaguely admit wrongdoing by some unnamed forces responsible for the writer's suffering, hint at "erroneous convictions", speak about justified "rehabilitation". But, more often than not, a long gap in between the writer's literary activity is the silent witness to a horrid fate. For example: last work the writer had published is listed in 1932. Then follows a long gap, the next work is shown as published in 1945. There are 13 years of silence in between. The example was taken out of the bibliographical data provided by the editor of the *Dictionary* for the renowned humorist Ostap Vyshnya<sup>66</sup> (one of the pen-names of Pavlo Hubenko, 1889-1956). Most of these years Vyshnya spent in a forced labour camp. There is no mention of this fact in his biography as listed in the *Dictionary* in spite of the fact that the sentencing, time served

66) *Dictionary* IV., pp. 172-187.

in the forced labour camp, and final release of the famous Ostap Vyshnya are common knowledge in the Soviet Ukraine. There are several more writers in that category, the best known among them are Volodymyr Gzhyts'kyi and Borys Antonenko-Davydovych. The well-known scholar and critic Ahapii Shamrai shared the same fate. Many Soviet Ukrainian writers were already, and still continue to be, "rehabilitated" after they were killed or have died in the forced camps. Oleksa Vlyz'ko (1908-1934), Ivan Dniprovs'kyi (1895-1934), Yevhen Pluzhnyk (1898-1938), Dmytro Fal'kivs'kyi (1898-1934) — are among them. At times, those who had tried to aid in the processes of "rehabilitation", were jailed themselves, sentenced and served time in the forced labour camps. Several years ago a friendly article in support of the memory of the late symbolist poet Volodymyr Svidzins'kyi appeared in the official organ of the Soviet Ukrainian Writers Union<sup>67</sup>, along with some of his selected poetry. Strange honour. Volodymyr Svidzins'kyi was burned alive by the retreating Soviet security forces detachment, during the early days of the German invasion in 1941. He was locked in a house with some other escorted prisoners, taken without any apparent reason, and the house then was deliberately set on fire. Those who tried to break out were machine-gunned on the spot. The author of the article was Ivan Dzyuba, we already know about his predicament during the early 1970s.

TABLE VIII.

Persecution of Soviet Ukrainian Writers

Generation	Persecuted writers			Total
	Living	Killed	Deceased	
Up to 1899	13	46	7	66
1900-1910	20	28	4	72
1911-1929	-	2	-	2
1930 and up	-	-	-	-
Totals:	33	76	11	120

<sup>67</sup>) Ivan Dzyuba, "... zasvityvsya sam vid sebe", *Literaturna Ukraine* (October 22, 1968), pp. 3-4.

This is Vasyl Symonenko's background. The reality, hidden behind the cheerful slogans of the official Soviet propaganda, did not escape him. There is a bitter cry of dissent bursting out of his unpublished poems. They are circulated in clandestine copies throughout the Soviet Union, the message they imply carries an universal value. Symonenko feels as much compassion for a suffering Ukrainian as he does for a bereaved Kurd. This is documented in his credo poem "Kurds'komu bratovi" (To My Kurd Brother). I, myself, heard an unpublished poem by Symonenko read to an international crowd in Kizhi, Karelia, during my stay in the Soviet Union in 1969. Most of his poems are dedicated to his contemporaries, to their problems arising out of the evils of the *system* under which they are bound to live and toil. This is why his message is of universal value. Symonenko identifies with the oppressed and with the enslaved of any creed, while drawing immediate examples from his own, oppressed Soviet Ukrainian surroundings. He knew quite well that Soviet Ukrainian literature like all the other "Republican" literatures in Soviet Union, is not as "free" and "flowering", as proclaimed by the official slogans. His voice is bold, and fearless in condemning the System which having failed to carry out the promises made during the revolution of 1917 is merciless to those, who dare to speak about it. I firmly believe that Symonenko, should he have lived under any other oppressive system in the world, would have done the same.

Having provided the background of Vasyl Symonenko to the attention of Western intellectuals it is sincerely hoped by the author of this study that it will stir and motivate further research not only about him but about Soviet Ukrainian literature in general. Most of all it is hoped that the reader will continue to search out and grasp what Symonenko, himself, had to say to his contemporaries.

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## THE DIARY NAMED MARGES OF THOUGHTS

Literary analysis can be conducted after selecting one out of the two main avenues of approach: literary criticism or linguistic study. Each one of them maintains different methods, even schools of thought, concerning the evaluation of literary work, accomplished either on an individual, or on a comparative basis. Among other methods, literary criticism uses historical, psychological, tropical (figurative analysis of literary tropes), or semantic (analysis of the existing ties that are evident between the normative meaning of the word and the "psyche" of the writer) approaches<sup>67a</sup>. Linguistic study uses among other methods descriptive, structural, analogical, or phonematic approaches<sup>68</sup>. Among the more recent linguistic methods there are word counts (analysis of word categories to be found in a literary work and their repetition), computational analysis, adaptation of kibernetic models to solve more complex linguistic problems (Soviet linguistic experiments), and behavioural<sup>69</sup> study of the language in a literary text. There is only one official school of literary criticism in the Soviet Union. It is based on the theory of dialectical materialism. As K. M. Storckhak puts it: "Dialectical materialism is a conception of the world by the Communist Party"<sup>70</sup>. Literary criticism reveals further dichotomy into history of literature and theory of literature. Both

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67) Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism. Four Essays* (New York: Atheneum — 1968), pp. 31-146, 243-251.; Adam Schaff (Olgierd Wojtasiewicz, tr.), *Introduction to Semantics* (New York: A Pergamon Press Book — 1962), pp. 53-59.; Michael Bréal (Mrs. Henry Cust, tr.), *Semantics: Studies in the Science of Meaning* (New York: Dover Publication, Inc. — 1963), pp. 99-106.

68) Boguslav Havranek (Paul L. Garvin, tr.), "The Functional Differentiation of the Standard Language", *A Prague School Reader on Esthetics, Literary Structure and Style* (Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press — 1964) pp. 3-16.; John T. Waterman, *Perspectives in Linguistics* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press — 1963), pp. 61-99.; Nils Erik Enkvist, John Spencer, Michael J. Gregory, *Linguistics and Style* (London: Oxford University Press, Reprint — 1965), pp. 3-6, 59-60, 83-91.

69) John B. Carroll, *Language and Thought* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., Third printing — 1964), pp. 45-58.

70) K. M. Storckhak, *Osnovy metodyky literatury* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'mennyk" — 1965), p. 20.



disciplines are correlative, both agree in general that the writer should be considered and studied within the framework of his writings, times, and surroundings.

There is only one major issue upon which all of the literary schools seem to agree: the cultural level of a given society is documented best by its literature. The two best known contemporary literary theorists stress the importance of an author and his surroundings:

... The social allegiance, attitude, and ideology of a writer can be studied not only in his writings but also, frequently, in biographical extra-literary documents. The writer has been a citizen, has pronounced on questions of social and political importance, has taken part in the issues of his time...<sup>71</sup>

It would be difficult to name another Soviet Ukrainian writer, who "has pronounced on questions of social and political importance" and "has taken part in the issues of his time" more passionately and more up to the point than Vasyl Symonenko among his contemporaries. Not only in his poems, but in public appearances and extra-literary documents. One such document is his diary. He himself regarded this diary to be his only true confidant and named it *Marges of Thoughts*. Symonenko started this diary on September 18, 1962 and wrote his last entry on September 20, 1963 — somewhat less than three months before his death<sup>72</sup>. Authenticity of the diary was confirmed by Soviet Ukrainian sources<sup>73</sup>.

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71) René Wellek & Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. A. Harvest Book — 1964), p. 97.

72) The diary was first published by *Suchasnist'* (January, 1965), pp. 13-18. This Ukrainian periodical dedicated to literature, art, and public life of the Ukrainians abroad is published monthly in West Germany. The excerpts of the diary, according to the editorial statement, arrived from the Soviet Ukraine. Somewhat later, almost identical excerpts appeared in the clandestine *Ukrainian Herald*, No. 4., circulated in Soviet Ukraine. They, in turn, were reprinted by *Vyzvolnyi shlyakh* (June, 1971), pp. 689-693., a Ukrainian monthly published in Great Britain. Recently this issue of the *Ukrainian Herald* was published by two competing Ukrainian political groups abroad.

73) Authenticity of the diary was first confirmed by a letter of Symonenko's mother printed along with an article by Mykola Nehoda, "Everest pidlosti", *Radyans'ka Ukraina* (April 15, 1965), p. 3. Ivan Koshelivets' (the "former" and present editor of *Suchasnist'*) does quote this source erroneously as being printed on April 5, 1965 (See: Vasyl Symonenko, *Bereh chekan'*, pp. 12 and 47). There was no issue of the *Radyans'ka Ukraina* printed on April 5, 1965. Just as interesting to note that the Polish emigré poet Josef Lobodowski also quotes that issue of the *Radyans'ka Ukraina* as printed on April 5, 1965 rather than April 15, 1965, in an article about modern Soviet Ukrainian writers printed in a Polish liberal monthly published in France, *Kultura*. This proves that Lobodowski did not use prime sources in documenting his article but relied on works of Koshelivets' repeating the error. In the second, extended edition, of *Bereh chekan'*, printed in 1973, this error was eliminated. Another article verifying authenticity of the diary is: Vasyl Kozachenko, Petro Panch, "Tobl, narode", *Literaturna Ukraina* (April 27, 1965), p. 2.

There is a good reason for selecting the diary for initial analysis within the framework of this study. It proves to be essential for proper understanding and interpretation of Symonenko's writings. Often the diary serves as the only key to complex cases of the semantic signification of separate words and phrases in his poetry and prose. Since Symonenko, a lyricist, felt deeply everything he wrote, it is clear that:

The most obvious cause of a work of art is its creator, the author, and hence an explanation in terms of the personality and the life of the writer has been one of the oldest and best-established method of literary study.

Biography can be judged in relation to the light it throws on the actual production of poetry...<sup>74</sup>

There is no better way to document Symonenko's personality as well as the final years of his life than quoting the entries in his own diary. There can be no doubt that he had no need to conceal the facts, nor intimate thoughts and feelings from himself. It is reasonable to assume, since he knew all about his incurable disease, that the notes providing interpretations to his poems were made deliberately. In one entry he explains distinctly the camouflage used in a poem (see the entry dated 8. X. 1962 and the excerpts of the poem "Roses in Mourning" provided later on). These explanations actually prove that certain words used in the poem mean other things than what they imply. They, in turn, demonstrate the use of semantic signification over and above the normative meaning of the words in Symonenko's poetry.

Turning the pages of the diary one gets a feeling that Symonenko had not only a mature outlook on life, but that he was quite rational and veracious to the point of self-denial. Since this study aims to reveal and document various semantic significations placed by Symonenko upon certain words and phrases, this notion is of the utmost importance. In the first entry he wrote:

18. IX. 1962

I begin this diary not because I want to delude myself with a sense of importance. I need a friend with whom I might share all my doubts. I know of no loyal and sincere friend greater than paper.

The earth bears me for the twenty-eight *time* now around the sun. Little did I accomplish during that time that could be called good or beautiful. I did, however, learn to *drink whisky and smell*

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74) René Wellek & Austin Warren, *op cit.*, p. 75.

of tobacco, to keep quiet and to be careful at times when one should have shouted. And the most terrible of all — I have learned how to be insincere.

Lying is, perhaps, my profession. I possess an inborn talent of a liar. There are three categories of liars: some lie to gain moral and material comfort, others lie for the lie's sake, still others serve a lie as if it were an art. The latter really, contrive, or figment logical tail-pieces to the truth. They, and they are out of my own liars' mound, seem to be quite noble. *They are the artists.* They are a reserve of literature...<sup>75</sup>

Perhaps the most revealing statement here is the testimony about the conditions under which a Soviet Ukrainian writer can survive within the system. Hence, it is quite logical that "the liars" who must often rely upon devices to "contrive, or figment logical tail-pieces to the truth", cannot and would not depend only on the standard dictionary meaning of the words. If they are to publish at all, and to survive, if under the circumstances they are to say anything truthful at all — then their wordage must be *Aesopian* (a device more suited for the study of semantic signification, since the fable of a given literary work is already construed so as to mirror the reality of given surroundings), and/or must contain an entirely new meaning, created by applied semantic signification to the non-related word (a device less suited to decipher, because an analogy can not be drawn without a clue provided by the writer himself). Nevertheless, both devices are known to be used by the Soviet writers. They were used already by Ukrainian and Russian writers of the XIXth century. Specialized dictionaries of the language usage by Taras Shevchenko and Alexander Pushkin were published in the Soviet Union, pointing out the semantic significations, as applied both by a renowned Ukrainian and a renowned Russian poet. It would be strange to assume that Vasyl Symonenko, a poet in his own right, knew nothing about the aforementioned specialized dictionaries.

In the same entry Symonenko justifies to himself his identification with the "noble liars", he writes: "... such persons as I are also essential to literature, with our feeble thoughts we will

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<sup>75</sup> This and all of the following entries are quoted from: Vasyl Symonenko, *Bereh chekan'* (Munich: Prolog, Inc. — 1965), pp. 171-181. From this point on the reference to the diary will be: *Marges of Thoughts*, with indication of the page number. It must be pointed out that the editor of *Suchasnist'*, Ivan Koshe-livets' who also edited and wrote a foreword to this publication, did not always keep pace with the original, printed by him, first in *Suchasnist'* (*op cit.*). *Italics* indicate omitted or obscured words and/or phrases throughout the quoted entries.

fertilize the soil from which a giant shall arise . . .”<sup>76</sup> What kind of a giant is to appear? Could it be that Symonenko, raised and educated within the Soviet system is expecting another Lenin? He continues: “. . . A future Taras or Franko. I am awaiting him, as a believer awaits the advent of Christ”<sup>77</sup>. Perhaps in the future, should a specialized dictionary of Symonenko’s language be ever compiled, the term “giant” will carry added meaning of “national bard”, for that is what the names Taras Shevchenko and Ivan Franko seem to represent to the Ukrainian people. In the very next entry Symonenko leaves no doubt about his feelings regarding an all-Union giant:

19. IX. 1962

Once in a while children, without knowing it, say important things. I remember, about a year ago, we were strolling with Oles’ around the Kazbets’kyi market place. Coming face to face with a statue of a despot, he asked:

— Father, who is that?

— Stalin.

He kept on staring at it for a while and then asked me in a nonchalant way:

— What reason did he have to climb up there?

True enough, Stalin did not ascend the pedestal, people did not put him there. He himself had climbed up by treachery, meanness, climbed up bloodily and boldly, like all butchers. Now this tiger, who fed on human flesh, would croak from fury, if he found out what a find for the scrap-iron collectors his crude, dull statues have become . . .<sup>78</sup>

It is common knowledge in the Soviet Union by what means not only Stalin, but most of his predecessors and *all* of his successors have climbed upon the pedestal. Conscious of that, knowing that Stalin was not the very first, nor the very last “despot” in that part of the world, Symonenko concludes his entry by saying:

. . . It’s horrifying, if glory and dedication in life become shame in death. Such is no glory at all, but, perhaps, a plaything amusing the grown-up children. Only the frail in soul and mind could fail to understand that.<sup>79</sup>

Semantic value placed by Symonenko on the word “butcher” surpasses the normative meaning of the word. In the preceding

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<sup>76)</sup> *Marges of Thoughts*, p. 172.

<sup>77)</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78)</sup> *Marges of Thoughts*, pp. 172-173.

<sup>79)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

chapter an attempt was made to show the effects of the *Stalinist* period upon the Soviet Ukrainian writers. Symonenko did live to see the period of posthumous deposition of Joseph Stalin. He did not live to see the sudden downfall of Nikita Khrushchev, the man responsible for exposing the crimes of his former benefactor, for it occurred about a year after Symonenko had died. Now that Khrushchev is dead too, *after spending his last years in total obscurity*, judging by the past, the deposition processes in the Soviet Union are far from being a thing of the past, even if it does seem that for the time being Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny have things under control. (At the very time this volume goes to print Podgorny was dropped from the *Politbureau* and became a "non-person").

Suppose one does imagine the rigid Soviet conditions under which Symonenko had to live and create. In such a case it becomes clear more than ever that: "... biography explains and illuminates the actual product of poetry..."<sup>80</sup> Symonenko's writings, therefore, should be viewed in their proper context, not only as the final product of his great talent, but as an impulsive reaction against the evils surrounding him and his contemporaries as well.

In the next entry, dated 27. IX. 1962, Symonenko wrote about a surprise visit to Cherkasy by his acquaintance V., whom he had not seen for a period of four years. He writes that V. had forgotten their meeting in 1958, but: "... I didn't. Even then he had made quite an impression upon me. I began believing in him since our first acquaintance and I think that I have not been mistaken..."<sup>81</sup> Symonenko goes on to complain about a shortage of funds that made it impossible for him to join Mykola on a journey to Kaniv<sup>82</sup>. The mention of the first name of the mysterious V. points to Mykola Vinhranovskiy<sup>83</sup> (1935-), who is a promising Soviet Ukrainian poet, movie actor, and had directed several films. (At present time *all* references to M. Vinhranovsky have ceased). Such probability is further evident by what is said in the next entry:

8. X. 1962

Three days and a hundred impressions. Vinhranovskiy, Pyanov,

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80) René Wellek & Austin Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

81) *Margos of Thoughts*, p. 173.

82) Kaniv — a village near Kiev, Taras Shevchenko was burried there.

83) *Dictionary IV.*, pp. 197-198.

Kolomyjets' and your sinful "I" have made cavalry-like attacks on Kryvyi Rih and Kirovohrad. And though not even once did we succeed in appearing before large audiences, I have remained content. Mykola — he really is a tribune. The words in his poetry are simply bursting with passion and thoughts. When side-by-side with him one's soul expands . . .<sup>84</sup>

Before continuing with this entry, in which Symonenko made reference to his poem "Roses in Mourning", I would like to provide the excerpts of this poem. These excerpts and what is said by Symonenko in the "entry" shed light upon his religious beliefs, convincingly prove the use of semantic signification. The excerpts of this poem were published in a Soviet Ukrainian youth periodical:

## ROSES IN MOURNING

### Excerpts from a poem

#### A MONOLOGUE BEFORE THE ICONS

If you, the saints, were not rachitis ridden,  
If you, the saints, were not so blind at least  
I would escort you over the new world  
Without the Jesuits, nor Roman and Greek priests.

What did you know? The ploughs to you were bowing,  
To you they've prayed: the mattock and the hoe,  
Oh, you, black idols of a cruel epoch,  
You feeble servants of the cunning Pope.

You are all mute and cold, and fully strengthless,  
In honour places — not for long you'll stay.  
To us you've promised paradise forever —  
Well, thanks, you go on live there, if you may!

We live right here, upon this earth, not badly!  
We have enough to do on earth, thank Lord!  
The bright day spreads a glowing path before me  
And lifts the darkness on a fiery sword<sup>85</sup>

After reading the excerpts one must conclude that Symonenko was a convinced atheist and that the poem itself is sacrilegious. However, after reading how Symonenko himself explains the meaning of the poem it becomes clear that his thoughts were

<sup>84</sup>) *Marges of Thoughts*, p. 174.

<sup>85</sup>) *Zmina* No. 9. (September, 1962), p. 10.

directed against a different kind of "saints".

... I have argued with Pyanov about the "Roses in Mourning". It seems to me that one can not confuse the Madonna created by the artists with the strictly spiritual Mother of God. Hypocrites in cassocks have converted the beautiful Jesus and His Mother into rapists of human flesh and spirit. For if even the most beautiful legend (and I consider Jesus and the Virgin Mary as unique creations) has become a tool for spiritual oppression, then I cannot judge the *personae dramatis* of the legend without connecting them to the deeds that the infidels are doing while hiding behind their names. No highly noble and highly humane precepts of any teaching can be of service to progress if they have become a fixed dogma. The purity of the Virgin Mary is worthy of admiration, but, forgive me, could not stand as an example to follow. Self-denial of the flesh works against nature, and, therefore, is cruel and reactionary.

Besides, in the "Roses in Mourning" my intention was not at all aimed at "overthrowing the gods". There I rise in opposition to the new religion, against the hypocrites who are trying, and not without success, to convert Marxism into a religion, into a Procrustean bed of science, art and love. Sad examples are found in kibernetics, genetics, the rapid growth of the fairy-mushrooms in literature and Fine Arts, everlasting appeals calling for sacrifices, and the never-ending promises of the "paradise to come". Is all that really so far removed from the tragedy of Bruno and Galileo, from psalm-writing and icon-painting, from the monasteries and the Kingdom of Heaven?

If Marxism will not withstand the violent advance of dogmatism then it is doomed to become a religion. No teaching can monopolize the intellectual life of humanity, ever. Einstein, after all, was not my political adherent, yet he made discoveries that had shaken the very roots of science.<sup>86</sup>

Now it becomes clear that "the saints" of his poem carry along additional semantic signification. They stand for "the leaders" of the Soviet Communist Party. The "Jesuits" and the "Roman and Greek priests" (referring to the Catholic and the Orthodox clergy) are at the same time reduced to the contemporary *apparatchiks* of the Soviet system. Symonenko calls them "the black idols of a cruel epoch". If the topic was confined to religion alone then not about an "epoch" but the "history of mankind" would be this line of his poem. Religion of one kind or another accompanied mankind from earliest times; an "epoch" could be compared only to what had followed the revolution of 1917. Symonenko's prophecy is that: "in honour places — not for

<sup>86</sup>) *Marges of Thoughts*, pp. 174-175.

long you'll stay" even if the promise was to provide for a "paradise forever". In such a clever way, leaving behind a clue in his diary, Symonenko had his laugh at the expense of the "servants of the cunning Pope" in their own periodical, and, I repeat, predicted that "in honour places — not for long you'll stay". At least in the case of Nikita Khrushchev and Nikolai Podgorny his prophecy has already come through. Toward the end of the 1960s a similar prophecy was made by the Russian historian Amalrik in his pamphlet *Will the Soviet Union Survive 1984?*. Amalrik was sentenced twice to a three-year term in a forced labour camp for writing the pamphlet, then released to serve the remaining time of the second three-years term in internal exile. Now Amalrik is abroad to tell his own story.

After graduating from Kievan "Taras Shevchenko State University", as already mentioned in the first chapter, Symonenko was assigned to work on the staff of *Cherkas'ka pravda* and *Molod' Cherkashchyny*, an assignment which often gave him the opportunity to roam the countryside. It would have been impossible for him, a person with a deep feeling for justice, not to notice what was going on at the various collective farms which he was visiting. He had to report, and it must have been a torture for him to write in a manner acceptable for publication under the circumstances. There is no material available for study regarding his journalistic activities. Symonenko contributed his journalistic features mainly to the above-named newspapers. These are regional newspapers and as such are not distributed outside of their own region, more so — outside of the Soviet Ukraine. This is done to prevent the other regions to compare the existing conditions elsewhere. However, in the next available entry Symonenko reveals what probably is not an isolated case of an authoritarian abuse on a collective farm:

16. X. 1962

Nothing could be more horrible than unlimited power in the hands of a limited man.

The head of the collective farm in Yaremenko's village was screaming in helplessness and fury during a meeting:

— I'll arrange another 1933 for you!

Naturally, nobody even dared to think of taking this scoundrel by the scruff of his neck. And yet this fool with one idiotic phrase would destroy the achievements made by dozens of sensible people.



If our leaders had more brains than they really do, such loudmouths would be admiring the sky from behind iron bars . . .<sup>87</sup>

This episode points out that Symonenko knew the fate of his predecessors who went through the horrors of 1933 in the Soviet Ukraine. This is also his first direct accusation against the existing order. Consistent to the previous entry Symonenko holds the “leaders” responsible for allowing such “scoundrels” as the head of the collective farm in Yaremenko’s village to hold office.

Very interesting and revealing are Symonenko’s thoughts about poetry in the Soviet Ukraine during the last few years of Khrushchev’s literary politics. His first comments relate to the official wisdomless patterns of the “socialist realism”, later he has some harsh words in regard to modernistic snobbery. In the next entry he says:

21. X. 1962

I hate to the point of selflessness official, patented, well-fed wisdom. No matter what quotations the dullards would utilize trying to shore up their intellectual ceiling, it’s still hanging too low to accommodate a normally proportioned human being. Just as the space is unthinkable without motion so is poetry unthinkable without thought. What kind of a space is it if one can’t move freely within it? What kind of poetry is possible without a thought? Poetry is a magnificent wisdom . . .<sup>88</sup>

There is a whole conception of the poet’s world contained in these few lines as Symonenko signifies poetry to be a “magnificent (he means aesthetically superb) wisdom”. He questions the humorless, “well-fed wisdom” of the literary dullards with regard to the plain, simplified modes of the “socialist realism” and continues:

... To what extent our humor had shoaled, how impoverished our satire got to be! Stylars, huckstress’, narrow trousers and modish hair-dos, — is it worth it to lose words as well as nerves on account of this wastrel for serious people? A lot of bantering was done already toward bad literary consultants! I have never even attempted to write serious, meaningful rebuttals on account of some shallow works. You can’t dive deep into a puddle, even if you happen to be a Japanese pearl-diver.

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<sup>87</sup>) *Marges of Thoughts*, p. 175.

<sup>88</sup>) *Marges of Thoughts*, pp. 175-176.

I'll just have to write a poem about Herostrates. This is very topical nowadays. The whole earth swarms with Herostrates'<sup>89</sup>

A remarkable observation. The advent of Herostrates<sup>90</sup> to the Soviet Ukrainian literary scene, marking at the same time that "the whole earth swarms" with the phenomena. The dismissal of literary stylars and huckstress' as "wastrel" not even to be mentioned, contains a two-fold significance: on one hand there is the contempt directed against any manifestation of modernistic snobbery, on the other — a complicated significance of what Symonenko meant when referring to a literary "Herostrates". The latter can be viewed in proper context only against the background of what Khrushchev's literary politics were at one time or another during his tenure at the Kremlin. They were rather flexible and depended upon circumstances. The literary revival, which followed in the footsteps of the official de-Stalinization during the second half of 1950s and very early 1960s, was from its very inception opposed by strong pro-Stalinist forces on all-Union level. Any sudden changes in the established pattern of intimidation and fear were regarded by many old guards to be harbingers of the system's collapse. Not to alienate the old guards, for whom Stalin was still very much alive and the preservation of his image essential to their own survival, Khrushchev's literary politics consistently wavered. At one time he would support the new literary revival only to step down on it at another. He would then support it again, and step down on it again, time after time. His literary politics were in full agreement with his own personality: they were controversial. Some of the writers quickly recognized these new trends and even more quickly adapted themselves to play along with whatever the mood of the day should be, as long as such behavior would gain for them personal glorification. Symonenko, a straightforward person as he was, deplored such literary acrobatics. He saw a chance to make the Soviet Ukrainian literature better, he believed that all the efforts of a writer should be directed to improve literature, and not to seek instant glory at any cost. That is what he meant when referring to literary Herostrates'. It is also true that "the whole earth"

<sup>89</sup>) *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>90</sup>) Since any mention of Herostrates is often deliberately avoided in most of the appropriate reference sources it must be pointed out that Herostrates was the notorious one-time arsonist who burned down a famous temple to become immortal through this deed.

swarms with people eager to glorify and immortalize themselves at any cost.

Fortunes have varied on the Soviet political battlefields. The culminating point for the de-Stalinization protagonists was the granting of semiofficial amnesty to thousands of inmates in the forced labour camps and their consequent release and rehabilitation in 1956. Among those released at the time was a former artillery officer, one Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who later was allowed to appear in print on permission granted by Khrushchev himself, with his *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (another landmark in the achievements of the de-Stalinization supporters) in November, 1962. This occurred less than a month after Symonenko wrote the above entry in his diary. The culminating point for the pro-Stalinist forces was the downfall of Khrushchev in 1964. Some ten years later the same Aleksander Solzhenitsyn was to be disgraced and then ousted out of the country (another landmark in the achievements of the pro-Stalinist forces) for having the first parts of *The Gulag Archipelago* published abroad.

The next and final entry for 1962 is of a personal nature:

9. XI. 1962

The holidays are gone and I feel ashamed of myself when I recall my behavior yesterday, I conducted myself as a riff-raff, I even insulted some people. How sad that nobody punched me in the nose. Somehow I have to take hold of myself and do less blasting off with my tongue, use my head more.

Belated repentance always looks like pose-striking. Nevertheless, I have no other way out. One should learn how to observe oneself from a distance.<sup>91</sup>

At this point the diary is interrupted for almost half a year.

In the meantime, 1962 was a very productive year for Soviet Ukrainian poetry. The first book of Symonenko's poems *Tysha i hrim* (Silence and Thunder) was published in July; Ivan Drach published his *Sonyashnyk* (The Sunflower), Mykola Vinhranov'skyi his *Atomni prelyudy* (Atomic Preludes), and Yevhen Letyuk his *Cholom tobi, svite!* (Greetings, World!) to name only those, who were met on one side with enthusiasm and ovations, official dismay and hissing from another. The old guards received another chance to be disturbed, they

<sup>91</sup>) *Marges of Thoughts*, p. 176.

started to apply the usual pressure. The final say was offered by the front-page editorial in the official periodical *Radyans'ke literaturoznavstvo* (The Soviet Literary Knowledge), responsible for guidance of what the Soviet Ukrainian literary policies are to be, attacking in a devastating manner what they described as symptoms of formalism in the contemporary Soviet Ukrainian literature. The austere editorial included charges along these lines against M. Vinhranovs'kyi, Ye. Letyuk, and I. Drach, all published in 1962, and against Lina Kostenko, whose third book of poems *Mandrivky sertsya* (Journeys of the Heart) was published in 1961. Among other charges the editorial maintained:

... A certain amount of the creative intellectuals turned to formalist experiments, some of them even got enthused by the extreme manifestation of formalism: abstractionism, which by itself represents the product of decadence and corruption of bourgeois culture. And certain, separate literary and art activists talked themselves even to the point of acceptance of "peaceful coexistence" for any-kind of literary and art *genres* as an idea to be promoted within our creative activities. This, objectively speaking, sounds already as calls for peaceful coexistence in the field of ideology, that is, as calls for cohabitation of the uncohabitables: the foremost Communist ideology with the ideology of decaying imperialism...<sup>92</sup>

The editorial actually did nothing more but echo the notorious speech on literature and arts delivered by Khrushchev on 8 March 1963 and printed at once by all major Soviet Ukrainian newspapers. In that speech it was pointed out, without a shadow of a doubt, that the Communist Party was still in full control of literature and arts and that any new deviation from its line was not to be tolerated. Khrushchev was beginning to lose ground from under his feet, for him, personally, the speech was a complete turnabout. He, now, needed all the support he could get, including that of the strong pro-Stalinist forces. Suddenly, for Soviet Ukrainian intellectuals the illusions concerning hope for some relaxation of the regime burst up like soap bubbles. In the instant the editorial appeared in *Radyans'ke literaturoznavstvo* Symonenko decided to resume his diary. His notes differed sharply with the official appraisal of the existing situation:

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<sup>92</sup>) "Vyrnist' partii, vyrnist' narodovi!", *Radyans'ke literaturoznavstvo* (May-June, 1963), p. 5.

21. VI. 1963

Almost half a year has elapsed since I looked into this notebook, despite the fact that some events occurred during the past six months which somehow should have been recorded.

I have almost choked from the powder smoke of ideological campaigns. Realism again emerged victorious, not by literary works, of course, but by having the administrative measures on its side.

To be sure, I think that the danger of formalist madness was somehow overplayed. At least in Ukraine I have not encountered even a single advocate of abstractionism or of some kind of neo-futurism. The real danger, just as before, remains the threat of formalist thoughtlessness in literature. For isn't it formalism, when hundreds of underling clerks use up stereotyped patterns in sucking dry the so-called eternal ideas, like: — love, labour, respect for father and mother, don't see evil in your neighbour, and a dozen or two others? Formalism starts where thought dies...<sup>93</sup>

Symonenko rejects formalism altogether as a phenomenon that "starts where thought dies". At the same time he applies two different significations to the adjectival form of the term: formalist *madness* and formalist *thoughtlessness*. By formalist madness he labels the contemporary nonconstructive literary trends leaking into the Soviet Ukraine from the outside. Earlier he discarded them as wastrel. On the other hand, under formalist thoughtlessness he understands the "stereotyped patterns" practiced by "hundreds of underling clerks" and regards namely this phenomenon to be "the real danger" to further literary developments. Only the official, approved by the Communist Party, *socialist realism* falls into the latter category. That means that Symonenko does not reject *creative experimentations*, he stands against "pose-striking" and blind, mediocre imitations of any kind. He stands for *originality* and for creative experimentation within the endless labyrinths of *new thoughts*, his dismay is with the literary toadies, be it "abstractionism", "neo-futurism", "socialist realism", or any other "ism" they should lean on, on the spur of the moment. Inference: *literature can not be subservient to any genre, all genres must be subservient to literature*. Only a new thought can bring innovation. This is how he concludes the above entry:

... When a poet fails to produce new thoughts and emotions — he is a formalist. It does not matter at all if and how he advertises

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<sup>93</sup>) *Marges of Thoughts*, p. 177.

his alliance to the realists. Realism can not be toadyist. There is the realism to which Shevchenko contributed and the realism which relies on the services of Dmyterko.<sup>94</sup> Two different things! For "dmyterkos" will never inherit literature. They live off and not for literature. It is doubtful if anybody could accuse me of formalism, and yet nothing of mine is being published.<sup>95</sup>

When the above entry is compared to the very first one in the diary (dated 18. IX. 1962, where Symonenko writes about the "three categories of liars"), then an analogy between these two entries can be drawn into a distinct association:

*The first category of liars, who "lie to gain moral and material comfort" — is comparable to what is signified in the above entry as formalist thoughtlessness; the second category of liars, who "lie for lie's sake" (art for art's sake!?) — to what is signified as formalist madness; and the third category of liars, who "serve a lie as if it were an art", or "really contrive, or figment logical tail-pieces to the truth" (Symonenko regards himself to belong among the third category) — contains all of the writers who search and innovate literature within the realm of new thoughts. Symonenko did believe that. He noted in the first entry: "with our feeble thoughts we will fertilize the soil from which a giant will arise. A future Taras or Franko".*

Symonenko held Taras Shevchenko in the highest regard. What both of them had in common was their tireless effort to attain better fortunes for the Ukrainian people. Toward the end of the following entry he underlines the symbolic meaning of Shevchenko to the Ukrainian people and the fear of this meaning demonstrated by cowards and *apparatchiks*:

6. VII. 1963

Don't know, does such a thing happen to everybody, or only to me. Quite often doubts destroy any kind of trust I have in my own courage. Don't know how I will behave when real tests start falling upon my head. Shall I remain, then, a human being or will they blind not only my eyes but my mind as well? For me, to lose courage is to lose human dignity, which I regard above everything. Even above life. Yet, how many people — wise and talented — backed down as far as human dignity is concerned to save their life, and, indeed, changed it into inanition needed by nobody. This is most horrible.

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<sup>94</sup> Lyubomyr Dmyterko (1911-) is a convinced "socialist-realist" poet, well published in the Soviet Ukraine. See *Dictionary IV*.

<sup>95</sup> *Marges of Thoughts*, p. 177.

Last Sunday we were in Odessa, where local numbskulls amused us plenty with their idiotic fright, like: "something might happen". As a result we were forbidden to appear at an evening dedicated to Shevchenko. It seems that there are some afraid of Taras even now. Philistines of the revolution.<sup>96</sup>

This shows that local authorities in the Soviet Ukraine have power to invoke literary censorship. It becomes even more significant when one considers the fact that most of the works written by Taras Shevchenko are not forbidden and are widely (according to Soviet interpretation) read. The *idea* itself, a literary evening in honour of Shevchenko, was objectionable to the local "numbskulls".

By the time Symonenko wrote his next entry he was beginning to feel the advent of his near end:

22. VII. 1963

I think that my extinction has begun. Physically I am almost helpless, though morally I am not completely exhausted. Thinking about dying I feel no fear. It is so, probably, because the end is still far away. Funny thing: I do not want to die, and yet I have no special longing for life. Another ten years would be more than enough for me.

I glance back upon my past with irony: soon I'll be twenty-nine, and what have I accomplished? Did I even begin to scratch the surface of something worthwhile? Not a life but a chain of petty worries, petty failures, petty disappointments, and petty achievements!

No, I didn't imagine myself living like I do. Fortunate is he who wants little from life — he never gets to be disappointed in it. The most simple and most lapidary path to so-called happiness is to become a Philistine. The brain can give birth to thoughts, yet is not capable of making its owner happy.<sup>97</sup>

To great regret not "another ten years" but somewhat more than four months was destined for Symonenko as he was writing the above lines. Nevertheless, before the approaching end, he made still another serious accusation, at this time directed against the Soviet Ukrainian printing media, for having censored his works. In the next entry, dated 3. IX. 1963, after reminiscing about the past Summer and his journey to Kaniv, he wrote:

... My friends have fallen silent, nothing can be heard about them. The press media became even more inept and impudent.

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<sup>96</sup>) *Margins of Thoughts*, p. 178.

<sup>97</sup>) *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

*Literaturna Ukraina* castrates my article, *Ukraina* (Ukraine) treats cruelly my poetry. Every lackey is doing as he pleases. How is it possible not to burn with thankfulness, how can one fail to pray every morning and every evening for those, who bestowed such "freedoms" upon us? To all this one can add that in April my poetry was taken off the press in *Zmina* (The Relay), lashed out at *Zhovten'* (The October), and later rejected by *Dnipro* (The Dniepr) and *Vitchyzna* (Homeland).

Ay, ay, ay, merrily, we're all under press.  
That's what is needed for the progress.<sup>98</sup>

At this point a careful search was carried out by the author of this study throughout the issues of *Literaturna Ukraina* and *Ukraina* for the year 1963 to locate the article and poetry by Symonenko which the poet claimed to have been abused by censorship. In *Literaturna Ukraina* (August 20, 1963), there appears the only article by Symonenko printed during the year, under the title "Dekoratsii i zhyvi dereva" (Decoration and the Living Trees). There can be no doubt, therefore, that this is *the* article, mentioned by Symonenko as "castrated" by censors. In it, Symonenko presented a whole chain of critical thoughts about contemporary Soviet Ukrainian poetry. One can only imagine the size of Symonenko's indignation in the original version. Nevertheless, although mutilated ("castrated") by censors, the article still carries quite a punch and, therefore, is provided here in translation from what was printed in the *Literaturna Ukraina*:

#### DECORATIONS AND THE LIVING TREES

They say that Chukchi people know forty different "sorts" of snow. In their language, however, there is no common notion for snow. There is creaking snow, bluish snow, web-footed snow, even, hot snow, and, each one of them continues to live its separate life, stubbornly refuses to unite with its brothers into a word-federation, into one, common nation. It is not clear, how the Chukchi poets find their peace with such an outrage. The poor devils have to learn by heart all these "sorts" of snow. And that occurs at the time, as experience tells us, when some of us should remember, no doubt,

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<sup>98</sup> *Marges of Thoughts*, pp. 179-180. The entry contains some titles of the popular Soviet Ukrainian periodicals. They are: *Literaturna Ukraina* (described already earlier), *Ukraina* (a fortnightly, published in Kiev), *Zmina* (now re-named *Ranok*, a Communist Youth monthly journal, published in Kiev), *Zhovten'* (a literary monthly magazine, published in Lviv), *Dnipro* (a literary monthly magazine, published in Kiev), and *Vitchyzna* (the official literary monthly magazine, published by the Soviet Ukrainian Writers' Union in Kiev).



that snow is white, and that one can intersperse poetry with it to full heart's desire.

Of course, each highly developed language contains countless amounts of common notions. To complain about it would be unwise, yet, it seems to me, that a writer, or an artist should remember about the other phenomena once in a while. At least, while drawing a forest, one should not draw just an image of a tree, it would be much better to depict with the pencil certain species, let's say, a maple tree. More so, as this beautiful tree is mentioned only when there is lobbying about someone's dissertation, or discussing an article.

It seems to me at certain times that in our literary grove, especially in poetry, there "sprout up" quite a few synthetic free-growers, which, having all the common indications of a tree (green, wooden), do not possess their own crowns, or their own deep roots. Again, it seems to me, that the best breeding ground for such marvel-free-growers is our rather loose, so to say, really boundless, admiration for common words and notions. Let's take, for instance, such a notion as *work*, sacred to all of us, and let's measure with the eye's corner what kind of treatment we afford this notion.

To what senior writers arrived by painstaking efforts, through human suffering and doubts, what for them used to be a windfall and discovery, we, with the selfassurance and importunity of dabblers, turn into banality. When we write about work then we know, quite convincingly, that it can be physical, or, that it can be mental. If we are lauding physical work, then — "let's have" corns on palms of the hands, if mental — a pensive brow and inspired look. For deductions we do not always look. Inference is readily there: work glorifies the human being, work is needed by society, therefore, thank you, Mary, for your corn-covered hands, for your sleepless nights, and for the noggin of tasty milk.

All this is quite true and very noble. Yet, it is not poetry, it is only Philistine lisp, profanation of literature. Well, anyhow, can a thoughtless, repetitious writing, marked by "vile, pupillary desire to make everything smoothly correct", be ever regarded as poetry?

In the contemporary, average, young poetry, one can observe a paradoxical phenomenon: separation of work from the human being. If a poem happens to fall into the "labourite" category, then what is lauded by it is not the individuality, but some kind of a central-arithmetical toiler. Human work has its own internal content and if the poet does not notice it, if he can only admire mechanical gestures made by, let's say, the turner by his lathe, then, he is not writing about work, but about who-knows-what. The production processes can and should be mechanized, physical work can, eventually, disappear completely. Yet, the poetry of work will stay, if there is to be poetry and not the mechanized process of versification.

Maksym Ryl'skyl has written a short cycle called "In the

Harvest". It was done so humanely and so cordially that after first reading it I have literally mused on it.

Sung away, this scythe of mine,  
The warm hays dry and soothe.  
I am passing the forests by —  
Quietude, quietude . . .

While reading this cycle some kind of tempestous joy awakens within the soul, tender and beautiful. Here, the poet does not take into account how any of the swathers handle the scythe, instead, he splashes upon the paper his sunny mood — and, indeed a strange miracle occurs! The words spread with the aroma of intoxicating hops, with tart joy and with the sweet fatigue of labour. At such times one can see, and hear, and feel so much in common.

You raked the whole day long into tight cones  
Intoxicated hay, with wine and honey.  
The heat, without a mercy, burned on  
Your barren knee, exposed without cunning.

And even this, grandiose, "lyuto" (fiercely), which appears so suddenly out of the combination "bez zhalyu tobi" (without mercy to you), in the middle of the third line, how justified it seems to be within the context. Permit me to provide also the final accord to this little symphony.

Oh, how green is my land,  
Bluish river-bank rows!  
By a blot, blot so grand,  
Wind the pastures had thrown.

In the labour joy I do sink —  
Hundreds scythes are joy-strong . . .  
From the red kerchief, as by wink,  
Wind delivered a song.

So much about human labour, for this is a clot made out of energy and thought. Can't say anything better about a swatherer, no matter how much you strain. One can only add that the above cycle was written almost thirty years ago, yet, time did not touch it and will not touch it, ever. Because it is the real thing, not a duffer. You can't fail to love such poetry, you can only try and compete with it in a nice way.

Therefore, it is a great joy, indeed, when a young poet is most demanding to himself, while realizing this elementary verity, that Ukrainian literature does not begin with him, that he only contributes to its development.

But how sorry one feels to read a young poet, when he, in captivity of declaratory generalities, confines himself to the follow-

ing screams and conjurations while writing about labour:

Everywhere today away we're flying:  
To the Kazakhstan, Lena, Donbas.  
In the workshops — the machines we're building,  
So the wheat in songs should grow for us.

(Dm. Holovko)

Of course, it is not my contention that every poet should muster out copies of the above cited cycle, written by Maksym Ryl's'kyi. Every truly talented poet must be innovatory. A talent can not remain conservative and keep on repeating long known notions. A talent must be an innovator and a searcher, an explorer of the spiritual deposits.

Mainly with such a demand in mind it is necessary to approach the evaluation of every poet, and young poets also can and should be evaluated without any regard for their youth. Anyway, there is no room for compassion in literature, it only spoils writers. What is needed, is stern and merciless criticism. Criticism, that would develop our brains, not our self-esteem. To start believing in one's own genius can be done without the flattery of review writers. No special down payments to the brain are needed for that. But to pass stern judgement over oneself, that — not everybody can do. If all a poet can do is to get insulted by criticism, then, already, he is no poet at all.

Many discussions are being conducted about the sensitive, delicate, impressionable soul of the writer, which, as they say, should be protected from all kinds of unpleasantries. Yet, what kind of sensitivity is it, what kind of spiritual daintiness, when all it can see in honest criticism is a nuisance? It should be remembered, that from overconsumption of sugar one loses teeth.

I am saying all this because, as it is well known, criticism is of stupendous importance to a writer's work. By its help alone we can achieve, that in our literary forest fewer trees should be "growing up" as some undetermined species.

Cherkasy

V. Symonenko

The first thing to remember, after reading the above article, is that it was written in the Soviet Ukraine and published there, after going through censorship. Such lines as "a talent can not remain conservative and keep on repeating long known notions", well known by and often repeated to a western intellectual — are not to be taken for granted in the world, where the established patterns of "socialist realism" say practically the opposite. It takes special courage in the Soviet Ukraine to say, for instance, that "a talent must be an innovator and searcher,

an explorer of the spiritual deposits", and that there is more to labour than "flying to the Kazakhstan and Lena". Such bold statements, considering the circumstances, allow one to speculate that not everything was "castrated" in the above article by the censors. It is obvious why the cycle written by Maksym Ryl'skyi is "the real thing", while the poem by Dm. Holovko, who "is a captive of declaratory generalities" is "a duffer". There is no way one could tell to what extent this article was mutilated by censors, what remained shows that Symonenko had a well-developed aesthetic taste, and that he tried to pass the general conceptions of that aesthetic taste to his young contemporaries.

Further research revealed in *Ukraina* No. 19 (August, 1963), p. 10, two short poems "Zemne tyzhinnya" (The Earth's Gravity) and "Ridna zemle . . ." (Oh, My Native Land), a short biographical note and a portrait of the poet. Both poems were also included in Symonenko's posthumous book published in Kiev<sup>99</sup>. These finds allow me to document the censor's intervention on the basis of two Soviet Ukrainian publications or what Symonenko meant by stating in the entry dated 3. IX. 1963 "*Ukraina* treats cruelly my poetry". To illustrate this the variants of both texts are provided below in translation as they appeared in the two Soviet Ukrainian publications mentioned above. Omissions and word changes are shown in italic type.

In *Ukraina*:

### THE EARTH'S GRAVITY

Oh, my hollow world, *millioneyeful*,  
*Tender, and benevolent, and cruel* —  
*Passionate, perturbed, evermute*,  
Give me all your ampleness, turmoil,  
Fill my thirsty soul with sun astute!

With the dynamite my thought do torch, and  
Give me love, and goodness for me save,  
Oh, my world, roar into my fortune,  
With the Dniepr river's ancient waves.

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<sup>99</sup>) Vasyly Symonenko, *Zemne tyazhynnya* (Kiev: v-vo "Molod'" — 1964), p. 7 and p. 49.

Don't deny to me, a man, good chattels,  
Or kind bliss toward my years to turn —  
Anyway, I'll drop by drop these riches,  
Back to you shall lovingly return.

\*

Oh, my native land! My brain does lighten,  
And more tender gets to be my soul,  
As your hopes and daydreams truly brightened  
Tear themselves into my life by storm.

Just by you and for you I am living,  
Out of you I came, to you I'll pass,  
Under your high-forehead sky upheaving  
I have forged my strength with youthfulness.

He, who'd steal from you, in love unkindly,  
He, who'd pass your worries, let you down —  
The earth's gravity should be denied him,  
He, with curse, be gulped by the unknown!

Now, the same two poems, as presented in the posthumous book of poems *Zemne tyazhinnya*:

\*

*What a world — a fairytale embroidery!*  
*What a world — no foreground and no end!*  
*Stars and pastures, glimmer in the morning,*  
*Magic face I love and understand.*  
Oh, my hollow world, millioneyeful,  
*Passionate, perturbed, evermute,*  
*Tender, and benevolent, and cruel,*  
**Give me all your ampleness, turmoil,**  
**Fill my thirsty soul with sun astute!**  
**With the dynamite my thought do torch, and**  
**Give me love, and goodness for me save,**  
Oh, my world, *roar* into my fortune,  
With the Dniepr river's ancient waves.  
Don't deny to me, a man, good chattels,  
Or kind bliss toward my years to turn —  
Anyway, I'll drop by drop these riches,  
Back to you shall lovingly return.

\*                    \*  
                                 \*  
                                 \*  
                                 \*

*Native land of mine!* My brain does lighten,  
And more tender gets to be my soul,  
As your hopes and daydreams truly brightened  
*Pour* themselves into my life by storm.

Just by you and for you I am living,  
Out of you I came, to you I'll pass  
Under your high-forehead sky upheaving  
I have forged my *soul* with youthfulness.

He, who'd steal from you, in love unkindly,  
He, who'd pass your worries, let you down —  
The earth's gravity should be denied him,  
He, with curse, be gulped by the unknown!

As can be immediately seen, the first four lines of the first poem were omitted by *Ukraina*. The order of the next two lines was changed and there was a different spelling for two separate, identical words ("millioneyeful" and "roar"). The first poem in *Ukraina* also carried the title "The Earth's Gravity" while in the posthumous volume it is marked only by three asterisks. The next poem suffered only minor changes. The word order of the first sentence in the first line was changed, one different spelling changing the meaning of the word "pour" to "tear" (vlyvayut'sya — vryvaut'sya) and replacing the word "dushu" (soul) by the word "sylyu" (strength) in the eight line of the poem.

All these omissions and changes in both poems do not carry some special political significance, it is also possible to assume that two different variants of the poems existed and that the variants appearing in the posthumous book were part of Symonenko's files, from which the book was compiled. However, Symonenko did accuse *Ukraina* of "cruel treatment" and all these omissions, changes and different spellings do not improve the poems as they appeared in the posthumous volume (even here it would be hard to believe that the posthumous volume contains poems as written by Symonenko). Exactly the opposite is true, after the volume appeared in print there were some protests printed in Soviet Ukrainian periodicals, which lead to

believe that the posthumous volume was also abused and severely mutilated. Here is one of them:

... A few words I wish to say about the editorial work done in preparing the book for publication. If today they talk about the publication and say "it's a good book", then what is meant by it is the content. The shaping of it is rather slipslop. To begin with the portrait, where the retoucher used all his skills to distort the face of the author, through some kind of an "allurementary" foreword by Mykola Som, and ending with the very principle of selecting the order of the presented poems. Why was it necessary to spread the entire cycle "Ukraini" (To Ukraine) throughout the book? It is now impossible to tell to whom the poet is speaking — to his native land, or to his beloved woman? ...<sup>100</sup>

That is precisely what Symonenko meant, as he wrote in the entry of 3. IX 1963, that "every lackey is doing as he pleases". The above statements confirm his indignation and show that censors continued to abuse his poetry even posthumously. The official censorship did not fail to notice the above complaints of Zhanna Bilychenko; her book review was ridiculed in the parody section of the *Radyans'ke literaturoznavstvo* five months later<sup>101</sup>.

When Symonenko said, in the same entry of 3. IX. 1963, that: "to all this one can add that in April my poetry was taken off the press in *Zmina*" — he, probably, did not see yet the issue of *Zmina* for September, 1963. In that issue a cycle of Symonenko's poems appeared, along with his portrait. It is possible that this was the same cycle "taken off the press in April". After comparing the poems to the same ones printed in the posthumous volume we note, besides some insignificant syntactic changes, that in one poem, marked by three asterisks, the fourth stanza was omitted in *Zmina* altogether. Here, in translation, is the entire poem. The stanza, omitted in *Zmina*, is shown in italic type:

\* \* \*  
\*

The sun fell to the dusk of an evening,  
Silence crawled from the village out.  
Ruffled up heavens started, stormingly,  
With the hovering threats to sprout.

<sup>100</sup> Zhanna Bilychenko, "Na semy vitrakh", *Zhovten'* (February, 1965), p. 140.

<sup>101</sup> Yuri Ivakin, "Parodii", *Radyans'ke literaturoznavstvo* (July, 1965), p. 91.

Night was nearing with roaring rumble ring,  
Night was carrying madness and fear,  
With it's shadows misshapen, creeping,  
In the terse-rebound bushes appeared.

Night was screaming to me, torn to pieces,  
By the lightning engirdled crosswise.  
In her tense birch-tree wailings and hisses  
A loud-simmering protest arose.

*And the long-napped clouds were groping,  
The moon prowled the sky, like a cat,  
The wind settled on gray hut's topping  
Whirling thatch roof to zenith by fret.*

. . . But the nacreous dawning is rising  
Through the cold and ill-roaring to height,  
And the sunbeams — the wounds are belicking  
Of the trees slaughtered during the night.

Helpless are, agonies of the fury,  
Break through harmony — no fury does!  
The sun visits us, not in a flurry —  
The sun lives among us!

Out of dusks, by the dawnings, it uppers  
And sheds pollen on grasses around,  
And sails on, only angering gophers,  
Full of power and tenderbound.<sup>102</sup>

This poem, basically, consists of a three-foot *anapaest*, but does not adhere to it in every line. Whenever the *anapaest* is broken off it creates a rhythmic dissonance within the poem. That, in turn, gives an impression of a raging storm, the main topic of the poem. The poem also shows a whole chain of contrarious images and antonyms: "sun — moon", "silence — screaming", "dawning — night". At the same time the *day* and the *sun* contain positive qualities in the author's interpretation and the night — negative qualities. The *day* and the *sun* include "silence" (it crawled out of the village only when the day

<sup>102</sup> Vasyl Symonenko, *Zemne tyazhinnya* (Kiev: v-vo "Molod'" — 1964), pp. 63-64. For the omissions within the same poem, see: *Zmina* (September, 1963), pp. 4-5.



ended), "life", "healing wounds", "tenderness", "power". The *night* carries along "madness", "fear", "roaring rumble ring", "misshapen shadows", "lightning", "clouds" (and a prowling moon!), "slaughtered trees", and "agonies of fury". The *dawning* wins with the *sun*, that is, the *goodness* and *light* prevail, Symonenko's optimism here is self-evident. This is a literal interpretation of the poem and we could stop right here, but, let us remember Symonenko's poem "Roses in Mourning", where literal interpretation would amount to an *anti-religious* demonstration. Symonenko, himself, states that it is not so in the entry dated 8. X. 1962, saying, that his poem is directed against the "hypocrites who are trying, and not without success, to convert Marxism into a religion", that is, against the Marxist "dogmatism". Accordingly, one could imagine, that the above poem is also open to a different interpretation, and, that the main symbols in it, the *dawning* and the *night* could contain additional semantic signification, as was the case with the poem "Roses in Mourning". There are certain hints, comparisons, and metaphors that allow us to speculate, for instance, why did the sun "fall" to the dusk of an evening, the term "fell", as used in the poem, indicates a sudden, rapid, disappearing, rather than mild, slow descent; what kind of a "storm" is it, when "night was screaming" and a "loud-simmering protest arose"? Is it possible to protest against a night carrying a storm, no matter how "loud"? And, then, the "dawning", that is "belicking the wounds of the slaughtered trees". What kind of a "protest" is it, who got "slaughtered" during the night? Can "bushes" be "terse-rebound" during a storm? Exactly the opposite is true, the "bushes" relax and breathe with the rain during a storm. "Madness and fear" can be brought about not only by a stormy night but also by a *battle*. Could it be, really, that the "gophers" would get angry at the "sun", or could it be that the term "gopher" carries in the poem a semantic signification completely other than its literal meaning?

The possibility of interpretations *other than literal* is motivated even more if we turn our attention to the stanza omitted in *Zmina*. There, "the moon prowled the sky, like a cat", and we all know, that there can be no *moon* in the sky during a raging storm. Not in a *realist* poem, anyway. But in Shevchenko's

poem "Prychynna" (The Mad Woman), there is a "pale moon" in the sky during a storm. In the very same poem it is said about the girl, that "not into a bed, into a casket, like an orphan, she will lie down". Vasyl Symonenko, an orphan himself, gravely ill, could not have failed to compare his own predicament to that of "prychynna". In the poem there is also the line "night was screaming to me", by which Symonenko underlines the lyrical aspect of the content. To conclude, it is possible to assume that by the *night* Symonenko meant the *present*, and under the *dawning* — he meant the *future*. Therefore, the optimism of a gravely ill poet is in his belief of a better day to come, and that can indignant only the "gophers".

I can not bring myself to insist that the above interpretations are the only valid way to interpret the poem. What is certain is that the poem *could* be interpreted like that and the possibility of *more than one* interpretation proves the existence of semantic signification in Symonenko's poems.

There are only two more entries in the diary. Both are quite important to understand fully Symonenko — the poet, and Symonenko — the human being. In the first he mentions Mykola Nehoda<sup>103</sup> (1928-), namely, he states that their friendship has ended. It is the same Mykola Nehoda who later appointed himself to denounce Ukrainian cultural workers in exile for daring to print Symonenko's diary and for using excerpts of it in the broadcasts to listeners in Ukraine. He made his accusations in Symonenko's name, in the name of "a departed friend". About that newspaper article by Nehoda, "Everest pidlosti", there was already a mention in the beginning of this chapter. Quite an irony, as we see that three months before his own death, Symonenko crossed Nehoda out from among his friends:

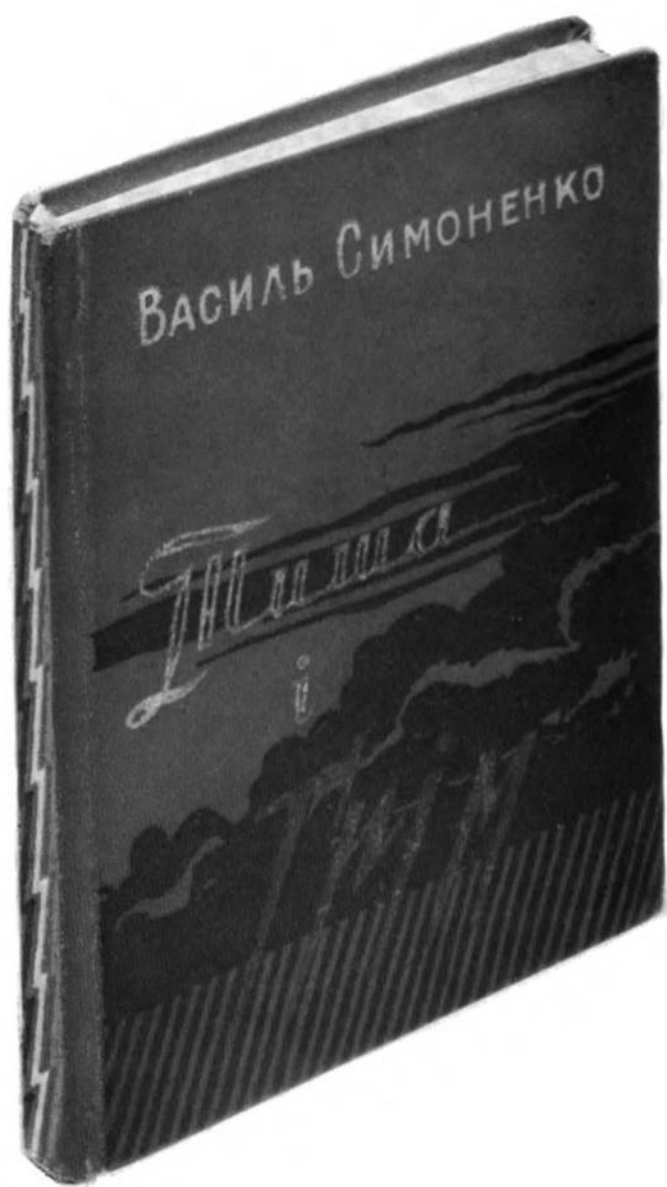
#### 5. IX 1963

Yesterday I wrote "Kazku pro Duryla" (A Fable About Durylo). I wrote it in one breath, although some notes were taken before. Today I still like it, how sad that there is nobody to read it to.

Now I am even lonelier than before, here in Cherkasy. Even the group at the *Molod' Cherkashchyny* is now gone. The paths of friendship between me on one side, Nehoda and Ohloblyn on the other, one could say, were overgrown by thick rank weeds. To one of them I was useful, as long as I could have been helpful; the other one simply proved to be a fly-by-night operator. I have

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<sup>103</sup> *Dictionary V.*, p. 190.



*TYSHA I HRIM* — the first book of poetry by V. Symonenko, published in Kiev, 1962.



**ZEMNE TYAZHINNYA** — the second (posthumous) book of poetry by V. Symonenko, published in Kiev, 1964.

no doubt that he will hound me down with the same enthusiasm with which he used to praise me earlier. Anyway, he already had demonstrated that from several pulpits at a number of meetings.

But — to each its own.<sup>104</sup>

The last entry refers to Symonenko's own poem "Samotnist" (Loneliness) which was first printed in exile, in the cycle "Poezii, zaboroneni v URSS" (The Poems Forbidden in the Ukrainian S.S.R.), that appeared in the same publication containing the diary. The poem was printed in the Soviet Ukraine only three years after Symonenko's death, in another posthumous volume<sup>105</sup>. This fact again testifies to the authenticity of Symonenko's works published in exile. The poem and the last entry:

### LONELINESS

Often I am lonely, like the Crusoe,  
From beyond horizons — await boards.  
Feebly my thought sinks and loses  
Itself in the mud, swamp of words.

On my wild, by all forsaken island,  
Draped in pelt of the hopes butchered here,  
I'm knifing the sky with my lashing eyes:  
Where are you, my Friday, where?

Volleys of despair tear out of me,  
To apathetic distance fret:  
Oh, God, send to me down an enemy,  
If sending a friend you regret!

20. IX. 1963

When I speak about a "wild island" and my loneliness I do not mean it in contempt of people. The fact that in Cherkasy I have almost no friends does not mean that I regard everybody as objects, not worthy of my attention, etc. (my wife is accusing me of that). It is simply that I have not found among them anyone with the same spiritual outlook as I, and friendship, as we all know, can not depend upon "ratio" alone.

Not long ago I have become acquainted with B. H.

<sup>104</sup> *Marges of Thoughts*, p. 180.

<sup>105</sup> Vasyi Symonenko, *Poezii* (Kiev: v-vo "Molod' " — 1966), p. 189.

It seems that I am writing worse than a year ago. My brain and heart have fallen into idleness.<sup>106</sup>

After comparing the poem to the last entry we can clearly see that they relate to one another. The entry also mentions Symonenko's wife, in one of the earlier entries Symonenko mentioned that he had a son. That means that besides the aging mother Symonenko left behind a widow and a small son. What became of them now is not known. From the scarce literary notes appearing in print after Symonenko's death we learn that shortly after his departure there were commemorating literary evenings in his honour organized by his friends, that those attending listened to his voice reading poetry on a taperecorder. Some of those evenings were attended by his mother. There never was any official mention of his widow, or of his son.

Passing along with the diary one year and two days of the poet's life we have learned about his philosophy of life, his doubts, his worries, and above all — his honesty. Symonenko started the diary with the motto: "To read other people diaries without permission is the mount Everest of baseness (unknown aphorism of commoner Wilson)". Mykola Nehoda did not forget to remind us about that in his newspaper article. Well, to ask Symonenko's forgiveness will have to be done in the world beyond.

The Diary shows distinctly the place of Vasyl Symonenko among other Soviet Ukrainian writers. This place is not on the side of the regime, nor on the side of "socialist realism", nor on the side of the literary "stylars". The place of Symonenko is among the creative searchers, among them — he is one of the prime discoverers, he is the fearless spokesman for the truth, for the Ukrainian people. Getting to know his *Marges of Thoughts* we have followed the secretive paths of these thoughts. There he left for his heirs a key to the understanding of semantic significations in his works.

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106) *Marges of Thoughts*, pp. 180-181.

## THIRTEEN SHORT STORIES

After Symonenko died it was discovered that he left behind some short stories. From the study of all available sources it could not be established whether some of them appeared in print while he was still alive<sup>107</sup>. Ten of them were printed posthumously in Soviet Ukrainian periodicals<sup>108</sup>. In late 1965 the only book of Symonenko's prose was published in the Soviet Ukraine. This little book contained thirteen short stories<sup>109</sup>.

What makes a short story, as viewed through the Soviet Ukrainian interpretation? In the best Soviet Ukrainian book on theory of literature we find, among others, one statement to agree with:

... A short story is a very important aspect of literary prose, which demands great skill from a writer, for here, extensive contents must be presented in concise form. In a short story it is not possible to describe exactly, to narrate, like in a novel. Here every word must carry considerable charge...<sup>110</sup>

To carry "considerable charge" words must be frequentative, or should be, like in the case of Symonenko's poetry, charged with semantic signification. Symonenko did effectuate the

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107) After a search of all major Soviet Ukrainian periodicals, such as *Vitshyzna*, *Dnipro*, *Zhouten' Zmina* and the bi-weekly newspaper *Literaturna Ukraina (hazeta)*, for 1960-1965 — no short stories by Symonenko, printed prior to January, 1964, could be located.

108) The following short stories appeared posthumously: "Duma pro dida", *Zmina* (January, 1964); "Vyno z troyand"; "Kukurikaly pivni na rushnykakh", "Chorna pidkova", "Vin zavadzhav il spaty", "Vesillya Opanasa Krokvy", *Dnipro* (January, 1964); and "Neimovirne interv'yu", "Psyhologichnyi poyedynok", "Posmishky nikoho ne obiazhayut", "Siryi paket", *Literaturna Ukraina* (April 10, 1964).

109) Vasyl Symonenko, *Vyno z troyand* (Lviv: v-vo "Kamenyar" — 1965). From now on this source will be quoted as: *Vyno z troyand*, with the appropriate page numbers.

110) P. K. Volynsky, *Osnovy teorii literatury* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'ka shkola" — 1962), p. 265.

principles defined in the quoted statement in a masterly way<sup>111</sup>. "Polysemy is essential in words, if language is to be the material for creation of an image"<sup>112</sup> — said a contemporary of Symonenko and the author of several books on literary criticism in the Soviet Ukraine. Anyhow, within the limited framework of a short story, Symonenko did succeed in revealing the polysemic qualities of words, particularly those used in characterization of his heroes, who, while ordinary people, come to life in a very extraordinary way. They win the reader over to their side and remain memorable. His images are immediate as only a direct personal experience can be. Dialogues, external and internal monologue, stream of consciousness instances in Symonenko's prose are presented in conformity to his own literary style in an open, matter-of-fact manner; narrative is in such exact pace and precision, containing its own rhythmic structure, that not a single word could be omitted without damaging the content. Symonenko uses his words selectively, they become ponderable and notional in his short stories. Often a few words reveal a complex situation, only a few phrases — the meaning of a complex plot. Let us examine the essence of one characterization as demonstrated by the narrator's elaboration on Olga in the first short story:

Even staid old men were lost in contemplation of her and seldom a young fellow would not survey her from head to foot. Some held in their eyes gleaming admiration, some — undisguised lust, still others feasted their eyes on her like on a *chef-d'oeuvre* of beauty.

111) The statement from P. K. Volynsky's book was selected quite consciously. At the time of publication it was perhaps the only book on theory of literature published in Ukrainian language during the 1960s. It must have been well known to Symonenko, whose most accomplished period of creativity was achieved during 1962. The above statement by Volynsky is worth being accepted not only because he seems to be well versed in his subject matter, but also because it represents the very essence in description of short story as a genre. For more definitions and discussions of short story as a genre see also: V. Tsvirkunov, *Syuzhet* (Kiev: Akademia Nauk URSR — 1963), pp. 219-226.; Vasil Fashchenko, *Novela i novelisty* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'mennyk" — 1960), pp. 3-13.; L. I. Timofeev, *Osnovy teorii literatury* (Moscow: "Prosveshchenie" — 1966), p. 346.; I. V. Gutorov, *Osnovy sovetskogo literaturovedeniya* (Minsk: "Vysheshaya shkola" — 1967), p. 305.; G. L. Abramovich, *Vvedenie v literaturovedenie* (Moscow: Ministerstvo Povechcheniya RSFSR — 1961), pp. 272-273.; Jack London, "Neizvestnoye pis'mo", *Literaturnaya gazeta* (January 11, 1960), p. 4.; Jack Fields, *A Study of the Short Story* (Wichita, Kansas: McCormick-Mathers Publishing Co., Inc. — 1965), pp. 1-3.; William Flint Thrall, Addison Hibbard, and C. Hugh Holman (ed.), *A Handbook to Literature* (New York: The Odyssey Press — 1960), pp. 456-459.; Kenneth Burke, "Semantic and Poetic Meaning", *The Southern Review* (Winter, 1939), pp. 501-523.; Caroline Gordon, "Notes on Chekhov and Maugham", *The Sewanee Review* (Summer, 1949), pp. 401-410.; René Wellek, "The Mode of Existence of a Literary Work of Art", *The Southern Review* (Spring, 1942), pp. 735-754.

112) H. K. Sydorenko, *Osnovy literaturoznavstva* (Kiev: Kiev University Press — 1962), p.108.



When she threw black braids over her resilient breasts and drifted across the village with a mattock over her shoulder, the boys used to go mad. They came diffidently to her gates and spoke with inspiration about love, and she would listen and keep silence. Nobody dared as much as touching her, as if afraid to defile the beauty. She scorned no one, never scolded, just asked bidding good-bye:

— Don't pay court to me anymore. Allright?<sup>113</sup>

There is nothing unusual in this passage at first sight, many a writer devoted attention to village beauties, plots involving country-side are nothing new to literature. New in this passage, nevertheless, is the penetrating, phenomenal condensation, what takes some writers pages indeed, paragraphs to relate, is passed here to a reader in only seven sentences. The point is: Symonenko's mastery of the genre is embodied in his rigid condensation.

Comparative analyses of creative works must be conducted in tight boundaries of the same genre (short story versus another short story, novel versus novel, poem versus poem). Symonenko's short story competes quite favourably with short stories of the preceding Ukrainian writers. None of his forerunners achieved such economy of words and concentration of meaning in only a few lines. Almost all the critics praise these qualities of Symonenko's prose (their opinions will be quoted later in this chapter), they underline his delicate feeling for polysemy in words of his selection.

How appropriate, psychologically motivated is, for instance, the attitude of men toward Olga in the village, how considerably charged is the word "drifted" in picturing the rhythmic way of walking of a village beauty. Equal amounts of polysemy (some of these words create instant scenes for the imagination) can be found in Symonenko's use of words like "survey", "throw", "diffidently", "keep silence" in the contents of the quoted passage. In only seven sentences Symonenko showed the mode of life in a typical Ukrainian village, for every village there has its own "beauty", an object of common admiration. He showed that mode of life without the unnecessary pathetics, folkloristic underoil and gross sentimentality of Hryhor Kvitka-Osnov'yanyenko (early XIX century writer), without the deliberate dram-

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113) *Vyno z troyand*, p. 3.

atization and exaggerated attention to detail of Mykhailo Kotsyubyns'kyi (late XIX and early XX centuries writer), and without the dialectal peculiarities of Vasyl Stefanyk and Marko Cheremshyna (the first late XIX and early XX centuries writer, the latter XX century writer), with an economy of words accessible by none of the above, widely acknowledged masters of Ukrainian short story writing.

A very important device in Symonenko's short stories is his ability to involve the reader, to make him a part of the story. Although such seems to be the aim of every writer this aim is particularly difficult to achieve in genres of small form. Symonenko succeeded with this device because he had a gift to foresee the response of a reader with above average psychological insight. In each of the thirteen short stories the reader gets to know Symonenko's heroes at the very beginning and becomes a tiny part of what is happening within the story. He feels, he loves, and he hates together with the heroes, for Symonenko not only introduces the reader to them, he re-creates readers' own prototypes from his experience and knowledge of the *typical*. Symonenko gives his heroes the gift of life. Although they bear no likeness to one another within the plots they do resemble very much real, living people. Similar people were encountered by all of us in our own *milieu*, we did behave in one way or another after meeting them, according to the existing situation, formed our opinion of them. And that is how the writer succeeds in pulling the reader within the story. This proves his mastery in typification, not accessible to many a writer. Let us examine a psychological tension existing between two young people in the shortest of Symonenko's stories. The story is provided here in its entirety:

#### A BLACK HORSESHOE

The clouds were creeping so low that people seemed to appear out of them suddenly and to fade away just as abruptly. The girl raised her head up, as if wanting to pierce the foggy gloom. She was touching the cloud-corners with her long eyelashes, her eyes were the only blue spots in the pre-storm gray.

— I do not love you, — she said, looking into the sky. — You have lied to me...

— I did not lie to you...

— You didn't love me.

He was looking at the ground and didn't see what was happening over them.

— I do love you, — the boy scraped nervously a little green hump with his shoe, and already knocked out an impression of a black horseshoe in it. — I do love you . . .

— You're simply afraid to lose me, to be left alone. —

— Nonsense! — his temper rose sharply. — If I am now indifferent to you, then . . .

She threw at him two blue bolts of lightning.

— Why are you looking at the ground all of the time?

He lifted up his eyes as if they were two cannonballs and glanced at her, but a second later they fell back to the grass.

— It does not matter where I look.

— You never look directly at me. You were always avid and impatient, — she was fustillading his suspicions. — You didn't wish to be happy with me, you simply wanted to bestow happiness upon me.

All of a sudden she began to cry, and it took much of her effort not to fall into his arms.

— I too would like to make at least one person happy, — she stamped her heel into the soft ground angrily and ran.

— Wait, — he started after her.

The thunder let out sporadical coughing and large, hail-like raindrops started to punish the leaves. Then clouds released the two of them. They were holding hands as they ran directly for cover under a maple tree. They stopped, out of breath, wet, and happy to find such a thick crown of maple.

— Look, a horseshoe! — shouted the boy.

They bent down over the black arc soldered into the green craziness. Somehow, unintentionally, their eyes met, then hands, and lips.

— Finding horseshoes means happiness, — rustled her lips.

Those who find horseshoes never think about the one who lost it.<sup>114</sup>

The typification of the two young people is done here, to great extent, by focusing on their *eyes*. The girl is gifted with “two blue bolts of lightning”, the boy with “two cannonballs”. The girl “threw” them at the boy, the boy “lifted” his, but a second later they “fell back to the grass”. This seems to indicate that the girl is the more aggressive of the two. The dialogue between such two young people could have taken place anywhere in the world. It is this universal mirror of humane psychological insight, demonstrated by a writer who wrote only thirteen short stories, that proves a successful debut in miniature

<sup>114</sup>) *Vyno z troyand*, pp. 14-15.

prose by an untimely silenced talent. He, therefore, must be regarded as a beginner, who at once mastered this difficult *génére*.

In order to demonstrate the important role words play in creative work, let me quote a reminiscence of a prominent contemporary Soviet Ukrainian writer and linguist:

... The poet and literary critic Ya. Savchenko had opportunely scorned a factitious, up to a point of frenzy, picture in one of my works... "Again outside, just like yesterday, just like three days ago, gray, blind, colourless and tiresome like *typical intelligentsia* clouds were roving".

... After some time, when I had read Chekhov's: "The wistful August moon was shining, wistful, because Autumn was near", and noticed that this short, simple phrase had created a picture of pre-Autumnal night setting me to a minor key: only then I understood, that after having turned over upon the paper tons of wordly ore I had not yet mined out a single gram of new word radium...<sup>115</sup>

This is an admirable example of self-criticism and justly so, for: "just like yesterday", "just like three days ago" (if "gray" then why "colourless" at the same time?!), "like *typical intelligentsia*" (italic type by Antonenko-Davydovych) — are all superfluous statements in the phrase scorned by Ya. Savchenko. Try to submit Symonenko's prose to similar scrutiny, it will soon be discovered that such an endeavour is not so simple, perhaps impossible, without doing serious damage to his short story. For instance, in "A Black Horseshoe" the term *fusillading* could, at the first glance, seem to be out of place if not superfluous. Yet, it is namely this term that contains ironical polysemy, meaning at the same time "destroying all doubts", "repudiating", "disavow", "deny", "convince". How justifiable is this phrase, considering the setting and circumstances (stormy weather, a moment of anger): "She was fusillading his suspicions..." It is no secret that quite a few people were, once and forever, "convinced" in the Ukrainian S.S.R. in similar manner, anybody who ever had "suspicions" or "doubts".

At this point I would like to underline once again the observation made in the previous chapter, that Symonenko stood by his convictions to experiment with new thoughts, with low regard

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<sup>115</sup> Borys Antonenko-Davydovych, *V literaturi i kolo literatury* (Kiev: v-v-o "Molod' " — 1964), p. 175.

for "socialist realism". These convictions are demonstrated in his short stories as well. In "Vyno z troyand" (The Wine of Roses) love and admiration of the village beauty Olga is won not by a typical representative of the "socialist" youth, but by a hopeless romantic in love with flowers, by an idealist without any trace of "dialectical materialism" within his system, by a cripple with a fairy-tale world of his own. In "Vin zavazhav yii spaty" (He Disturbed Her Sleep) the narrator entering Hnat's stream of consciousness says: "Some time ago he used to make fun of the positive heroes in cheap novels. He always used to dream that a workbench or a tractor were positive . . ."116 In "Posmishky nikoho ne obrazhayut" (Smiles Insult Nobody) a representative of Soviet "neo-Victorian" prudery scolds two youngsters who dare to smile to each other:

... But we don't even know each other! — smiled the girl.

He almost turned into a stone monument from the shock.

— What? You don't even know each other? And you dare to sit side-by-side and smile to each other for the whole town to witness?

I thought that he would burst from anger as he went on to daub us with banalities, even the sun lost its footing and stumbled over the blade of a poplar tree. At that point I wanted to shut my ears and shoot away wherever I might hit, but now again spoke that gray-gray man.

— For devil's sake, why do you keep sticking up, on to those youngsters? Let them smile, that could insult only hippos.

— Yeah! Connivers like you are responsible for what is happening to our youth, — blasted back the defender of chastity at the gray-haired with the bile of self-righteousness.

— Why don't you dry up, before I call a cop, — tiredly retorted the other. — Twaddler.

— It's you who should be taken to the police! Impudents! — wailed out the insulted one, but decided it was time to move on, and a while later his figure, filled with contempt and copy-book maxims, disappeared behind the hedge.

And we sat on and smiled. Even the sky above us was bursting with laughter, so hard, that one could see its pink gums.<sup>117</sup>

The importance of strategically placed polysemic words, like "hit" (wherever I might), "daub", "defender", "bile", "hippos", obviously varies, each of them contains more than its normative

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116) *Vyno z troyand*, p. 16.

117) *Vyno z troyand*, pp. 34-35.

dictionary meaning. Metaphors, like “copy-book maxims”, “the blade of a poplar tree”, and “pink gums of the sky” only intensify our emotional involment with the episode.

Due, not exaggerated, attention to detail (by which concentration of a plot is achieved), as well as the usage of metaphors — are quite essential to a short story. Here is how a Soviet Ukrainian critic sees it:

... Detail is not the only important element in a short story. A short story, like literary work of any génre, is saturated with distinct epithets, accurate similes, ponderable metaphors, precise synonyms and other figurative devices, selection of which is motivated in each separate case by lofty thematic contents, and, while carrying maximum charge is subordinated to the task of revealing an image...<sup>118</sup>

The fact that Symonenko was first of all a poet allowed him to enrich his miniature prose with devices borrowed from poetics. This is particularly true with regard to metric systems. Quite often entire lines in his prose have a distinct *iambic* intonation: “... a tíń’ uzhé syahnúla dídovýkh kolín...” (and sháde had reachéd alréady grándpa’s knées), p. 23; “... a hlýan’, shcho yá prynís vid zaítsya...” (and lóok what Í from rábbít bróught), p. 28.; “... hrozá obmýla vtómu...” (a stórm had wáshed awáy the tíred féeling), p. 32.; “... my póvertálysya z vokzálu...” (we wére retúrning fróm the ráilroad dépot), p. 37. The *iambic* impetus prevails in Symonenko’s prose, however, other metrics can also be found: “... B’ili prývydy zakhódylý do véstybýlyu, húpotily...” (Phántoms cáme to véstibúle, they stámped — *trochee*), p. 44.; “... osínni svitánky tryvózhni, yak márennya...” (the mórnings of Aútumn unéasy, like níghtmares — *amphibrach*), p. 10.; “... koly póyzid u dál’ zahurkóche...” (when the tráin will be póunding the dístance — *anapaest*), p. 36.; “... skórchyv porépani húby Omél’ko...” (líps burnt by féver Omél’ko had twísted — *dactyl*), p. 49., to name only the basic ones. Such rhythmic patterns are present in each one of Symonenko’s short stories. They are responsible for that intimate tie between word and music that comes from discriminate selection and distribution of not only *what* is to be said but *how* it should be done..

<sup>118</sup> M. Biletsky, *Opovidannya. Novela. Narys*. (Kiev: v-vo “Dnipro — 1966), p. 42.

Art is always only an imitation of reality. It uses symbols to express and stylistic devices to impress. My aim is also to view Symonenko's short stories as a reflection of his age, the contemporary state of affairs within Soviet Ukrainian literary society. Any serious student of the period knows that it is not possible to by-pass socio-political problems while analysing any Soviet literary work. Socio-political issues simply cannot be ignored by the writers themselves, for their very livelihood depends upon them. Moral sense of right and wrong places a writer in a very peculiar position in the Soviet Ukraine. On one hand he would like to scream out the truth, on the other he knows only too well, that should he do so — his work would never be published and he even might earn a long stretch in a forced labour camp for his effort to tell it as it is. Symonenko was no exception, he knew that the only way to have a clear conscience and get published at the same time is to turn to Aesopian language, or to charge innocent words with semantic signification. Perhaps this is also the reason why he, primarily a poet, ventured into other genres (short story, fairy-tale). His fairy-tales will be analysed in the next chapter; however, already in one of his short stories he left a clue, that the term "fairy-tale" often equals "reality". In the short story "Vyno z troyand" Andrew tells the following fairy-tale to the children:

... He was telling them what flowers see in dreams, how they exchange whispers with gray stars, thought out fairy-tales about strange lands, where flowers not only smell but can talk, and walk, and play hide-and-seek, and fade only then, when in that land an unhappy human being should appear.

— Flowers love happy people. In our land they do not fade on sight of unhappiness but cry. Did you see how many dew-drops they carry in the dawn? That's their tears. Who should ever find one a dewy dawn a flower without tears — he shall be very happy.

— Did you ever find a flower without tears?

— No, I never did, and, perhaps, I never will...<sup>119</sup>

Is it possible for an average person to find a "flower without tears" in the land that under "socialism" understands "governmental capitalism" and where happiness is a luxury afforded to the ruling circles? Andrew told a *fairy-tale* about lands "where flowers not only smell but can talk, and walk, and play hide-and-seek..." And what is the *réalité* of Andrew's surroundings?

<sup>119</sup> *Vyno z troyand*, p. 5.

— “In our land they do not fade on sight of unhappiness but cry.” Is it not possible that Symonenko had placed semantic signification upon the term “flower” to mean “human being” as well? Only people “talk, and walk, and play hide-and-peek” as Andrew’s “flowers” in “strange lands”. People also “cry” when faced with “unhappiness”. The entire excerpt then could be interpreted in the following way: there is no happiness in our land, for it is not possible to find a flower (person) without tears. This analogy could be widened out: the reality of Andrew’s surroundings takes place in a Ukrainian village, where real happiness is impossible and can be only heard about in a fairy-tale about “strange lands”.

All that I said about Symonenko’s short stories so far indicates also strong ties between language and thoughts. While reflecting in his thoughts what he regards as “objective reality” (in the subjective cognition of whatever such “objective reality” should be), the language he selects covers and blends in his own psychic experiences with what such “objective reality” intuitively is. This, in turn, could be viewed as the *function* of/or creativity within.

With exception of one short story — all others reflect various problems facing the Soviet Ukrainian youth. The exception is “Vesillya Opanasa Krokvy” (The Wedding of Opanas Krokva). The others try to face up to contemporary complications involving young people, young people that seem to detach themselves from the “established criteria” of official platitudes.

Little has been written about Symonenko’s prose in the Soviet Ukrainian printed media. Nevertheless, on rare occasions of attempted comment, critics, book reviewers, and even readers in the Soviet Ukraine are all in cautious agreement by voicing admiration and praise:

Our periodicals began to devote more time and effort lately to literary works of truly talented young writers. I would also like to add my deliberations about the creativity of one of the young, whose voice sounds on so sincerely, directly and with emotion. The living voice of a poet, who is among us no more.

It is necessary to have a say about him, perhaps, for the reason that his vivid creativity, profound world of associations, ardent love to his native nature, trust in high civic ideals, meditations about the



place of a human being in society, beauty and spiritual nobility of mankind — received until now no due evaluation.

Not long ago a talented lyricist left us, a poet of great civic courage, a poet of pure and tender sounds, profound conceptions — Vasyl Symonenko.

He left us, but what a fine memory he left behind, what a remarkable trace in literature (in poetry, and in prose). About Symonenko's poetry a lot was written already. And now, in the magazine *Dnipro* (1, 1964), there appeared, posthumously, these amazing, sincere attempts of Symonenko in prose.

Here, too, he remains a true poet. His short stories "The Wine of Roses", "A Black Horseshoe", "The Wedding of Opanas Krokva" sound like a poetical requiem to human beauty, courage and nobility, to purity and faithfulness in love, like an anthem to life, though the writer knew already of his own dreadful, incurable disease.

The language of his short stories (like that of poetry) is imaginative, melodious, in portraying nature he appears as a true and accomplished artist...<sup>120</sup>

And in the conclusion:

... The heroes of Symonenko's short stories are sincere, inspired, beautiful people, people one wants to remember and imitate.

The short stories contain sound folk humor, lyricism, and true sincerity that immediately build bridges between the reader and the author.<sup>121</sup>

Almost two years later the following thoughts about Symonenko's prose were printed in the same magazine:

The book of Vasyl Symonenko's short stories *Vyno z troyand* came into my hands only by chance. I opened it, read the first line, and did not close it before reading the last.

Until now I knew V. Symonenko as a talented and original poet. And though he had a chance to sing only a prelude of his much-promising song, even so one can judge what a gifted fellow he was...<sup>122</sup>

After mentioning the publisher's concern and thanking those who had such a fine book printed Matsenko goes on to say:

... The book contains thirteen short stories and in every one of them Symonenko remains a poet. A poet of great public sound and salvaging aesthetic effort. There are no conditional beautifications or purely stylistic effects in his works. His language is laconic and in

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120) Ivan Hrytsal, "Slovo chytacha pro prozu V. Symonenka", *Vitchyzna* (September, 1964), p. 215.

121) *Ibid.*

122) Ivan Matsenko, "Poeziya v prozi", *Vitchyzna* (April, 1966), p. 192.

this laconism the resilient might of a bow-string is concealed. It seems, at first, that it does not take much for Symonenko to portray, let's say, the exterior and the mental shape of his hero, to convey action. But it only seems that way, for in the text not a single word can be omitted, it is not possible to switch them around or replace one by another...<sup>123</sup>

There is also a short mention about Symonenko's prose in an article discussing the contemporary Soviet Ukrainian writers published by *Dnipro* magazine:

... Beautiful people, perhaps not so much on the outside as on the inside, live in the talented poetical short stories of Vasyl Symonenko. They are our contemporaries...<sup>124</sup>

Again, almost two years later in the same *Literaturna Ukraina* a book review contained the following:

In the book *Vyno z troyand* there is no short story that would fail to bring that "strange whimper in one's heart", though the author is far from melodrama or sentimentality. Quite the opposite, both in the tragic episodes, and in episodes filled by good-natured irony, he remains stern and even merciless when it concerns those, or that, that shade away a human being, that conceal life...<sup>125</sup>

Somewhat later the author of the book review tries to consolidate Symonenko's prose with "party positions":

... *The party line, Communist position* of the artist are shown distinctly in both: confirmation and denial. Vasyl Symonenko does not fall victim to chamber-tone, he does not divide people into "individual" and "civic" and does not play one against another. He is interested in a whole human being, united in its individual and civic responsibilities. It becomes easy to reveal the heroes he likes, they are present in every short story...<sup>126</sup>

To arrive at a conclusion that Symonenko approached his works from "the party line, Communist position" is rather far fetched. Not even one of his "official" personages can claim Symonenko's benevolence. That can be documented by words and deeds of the very same "heroes", who the reviewer claims are so "easy to reveal". The entire "Communist position" of

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<sup>123</sup> Ivan Matsenko, *Poeziya v "prozi", Vitchyzna* (September, 1964), p. 215.

<sup>124</sup> S. Adamchuk, "Nevelychki rozpovidl pro velyke zhyttya", *Literaturna Ukraina* (January 31, 1964), p. 2.

<sup>125</sup> Ivan Doroshenko, "Mova talantu", *Literaturna Ukraina* (January 7, 1966), p. 3.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.* Italic type added by I. Shankovsky.

Symonenko, based on all of his literary works known hereto, is culminated in two separate lines of his poetry. In one line he claims that he might find strength to continue along "the path that was prescribed by Lenin". In the other he, more pathetically than seriously, exclaims: "Oh, my Communist joy!". These lines of two separate poems, considering the entire heritage, are too little, indeed, to talk about the author's "party line and Communist position". There is no reference to Communism in Symonenko's prose. But, sure enough, "reference" to "bureaucrats" existing and thriving handsomely in Soviet society, like one Mykola Panasovych Krekoten', can be found:

... He is the child of his times. Once, somehow, he had lifted himself and others took and sat him down in this here chair. And he keeps on sitting. He'll continue to sit without any complaints until they pick him up and re-sit into another one. As it always happens with people of low culture and poor minds conscience does not bother him. He even keeps on looking down on people, especially restless ones, and considers himself irreplaceable. Indeed, it is hard to replace emptiness...<sup>127</sup>

This is about all that can be said on Symonenko's prose at the present time. Perhaps future researchers will be able to find more than the available thirteen short stories. However, even these thirteen short stories place Symonenko, at least in the field of word selection and economy, somewhere near the top of contemporary Soviet Ukrainian short story writing.

## TWO FAIRY-TALES FOR ADULTS

The word *kazka* in Ukrainian defies literal translation into English. It contains *génre* singularity of its own and comes closest to what we understand under the term *fairy-tale*, although it could as well be a story or a poem directed at children. A similar, but not identical, *génre* definiteness applies in Ukrainian to the term *baika* (fable); and Stepan Rudans'kyi<sup>128</sup> (1834-1873) originated still another *génre* variant, something between *kazka* and *baika*, which he named *spivomovka* (singing talk). Both *kazka* and *baika* can be rendered in verse, or in prose. *Spivomovka* — only in verse. *Baika*, like a fable in English, is miniature in form, appears usually in verse and concentrates on some sort of a detail with a moral message, using, as a rule, allegory. By recreating peculiarities of human life, focusing on behavioural patterns with the help of images, it uses animals, insects, and even inanimate items as substitutes for people. In such a way *baika* communicates a certain verity, its purpose is to moralize and to be didactic. *Kazka*, on the other hand, is regularly larger in size and, unlike a fairy-tale in English (only one category: fantastic), is divided by Ukrainian literary criticism into two categories: *mode of life* fairy-tale and *fantastic* fairy-tale. *Mode of life* fairy-tale must be in some relation to reality and by means of personification, or, like in *baika*, by means of allegory — re-create more than one problem, focus on more than one selected detail. *Fantastic* fairy-tales, like in English, occupy plots beyond the realms of reality, there fight seven-headed dragons, fly fire-throwing serpents and magic carpets, live one-eyed giants, etc.

Both Symonenko's tales are written in verse and must be regarded as *mode of life* fairy-tales. They were printed in fairly

<sup>128</sup>) *Dictionary* III., pp. 114-129.

large editions in the Soviet Ukraine<sup>129</sup>. They became available abroad only toward the end of 1966, re-printed in the second posthumous volume<sup>130</sup>.

To understand *why* both of Symonenko's fairy-tales are directed at the adult I would like to point out the guidelines toward a definition of *kazka*, as provided by the Soviet Ukrainian literary printed media. Taking the only dictionary of literary terminology in print, first published in 1961 and later released in a revised and extended edition, the definition of *kazka* contains one sentence that is meant to serve as an unmistakable guideline of what the fairy-tale in Soviet times should be:

... In fairy-tales of the Soviet times — heroism of the people during the days of the Great October, the Great Patriotic War, leading role of the Communist party, activities of the great Lenin, famous field commanders, heroes of labour — are shown . . .<sup>131</sup>

Now it is all clear. If a fairy-tale is to be written following the above guideline it can hardly be meant for child consumption. I have searched through quite a few volumes dedicated to literary criticism (published in the Soviet Ukraine) and found no other definition for "fairy-tales of the Soviet times". Since the first edition of the above quoted dictionary was published in 1961 (that means that Symonenko must have been familiar with it), and since no other definition of "fairy-tales in the Soviet times" could be found<sup>132</sup> — the guideline available *must* be regarded as mandatory for the Soviet Ukrainian writers.

Going through a bookcase filled with books written for children and published in the Soviet Ukraine — out of 78 illustrated publications only 12 did not contain the name "Lenin" (or his portrait) at least once and a great number of these booklets had *Lenin* as one of the heroes in the plot (P. I. Makrushenko, *Myn'ka*; V. Yu. Bandurak *Dyadya Vanya*; V. V. Kaniyets', *Khlopych i zhar-ptytsya*; F. B. Petrov, *Tsikava ekskursiya*; Z. I. Voskresens'ka, *Sertse materi*; Yu. A. Kosach, *Fil'my*

<sup>129</sup>) Dictionary V., p. 432. The edition of both fairy-tales is listed as 158,000 copies each.

<sup>130</sup>) Vasyl Symonenko, *Poezii* (Kiev: v-vo "Molod'" — 1966), pp. 161-176. From now on this source will be quoted as: *Poezii*, with the appropriate page number.

<sup>131</sup>) V. M. Lesyn and O. S. Pulynets', *Slovyk literaturoznavchychk termintov*, Second edition (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'ka shkola" — 1965), p. 159.

<sup>132</sup>) In the Russian equivalent publication there is no separate mention for "fairy-tales of the Soviet times", only "contemporary Russian fairy-tale" is defined. See: A. Kvyatkovsky, *Poeticheskii slovar'* (Moscow: "Sovietskaya entsiklopediya" — 1966), pp. 270-271.

*pro naidorozhche*; M. A. Pryhara, *Ruchai*, to mention only a few), and only 3 out of 78 had no relation whatsoever to the guideline for “fairy-tales of the Soviet times”. I am consciously mentioning here all these details, they relate to the subject matter of this chapter, for I suspect that *Lenin* happens to be one of the heroes in Symonenko’s fairy-tale *The Journey to the Land in the Reverse*. I would also like to mention, that out of all the scholarly publications printed in the Soviet Union after the de-Stalinization, regardless of the subject matter, I have yet to encounter one where the name *Lenin* was not mentioned, quoted, or praised (the same is true for the name *Stalin* during 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s). Sure enough, Symonenko had to be aware of that.

There could also be little doubt that Symonenko was quite aware of the purpose for which fairy-tales are written in the Soviet Ukraine, and namely, that they are *not* having the desired impact upon the child. What is produced for children there, with very few exceptions, is received with a forbearing smile. More so, therefore, he was aware of the great potentiality, the influence, and the impact a fairy-tale could have, when directed at the adult. It is no secret that by means of *Aesopian* language it is possible to cross the most rigidly guarded frontiers, between *mode of life* and *fantasy*. Symonenko enjoyed great popularity, his followers had testified to that in essays, book reviews, collective obituaries, erecting a monument to his memory. Before and after his death millions have read his poems, short stories, newspaper articles, therefore, why not fairy-tales? The name Vasyl Symonenko alone, as can be seen from the quoted passages about him, written over a literary work of any genre, meant that this work would be read. The same is true for literary works of any popular writer. Such writers know that people will read their works. Symonenko is aware of his responsibility to the reader too, even in his fairy-tales. We had a chance to notice already how close the reality and fantasy really are, on the basis of the analysis of Symonenko’s diary and his short stories. Reality, hand-in-hand with fantasy, predominate in his fairy-tales as well, regardless if to apply literal or allegorical interpretations of the texts. The result is the same in one sense: the plots of both fairy-tales show events which point out broad injustice directed

at the Ukrainian people by *foreign* rulers. There were no *tsars* of Ukrainian origin throughout the history of Ukraine, therefore, the *tsars* of both fairy tales *must* be regarded as personages of some other nationality in the *literal* and in the *allegorical* interpretations. The question remains open, if it is possible by the use of *allegorical* interpretation to compare the negative *tsars* of the fairy-tales to those in power now, and this was perhaps the way Symonenko meant to interpret the plots.

## TSAR LACHRYMAL AND THE TITILLATOR

a fairy-tale

### The Tsar's Family

Where the valleys meet the mountains,  
Where the blow-wind dances, veers, —  
There — a beauty-land is blooming  
With a strange name Shedontears.  
In this land, upon a time,  
Sat on throne tsar Lachrymal.  
Well, his head was like a barrel,  
Watermelon-like — his eyes.  
Tsar was father to three daughters  
And three sons, who always cried.  
Eldest daughter's name was Languor  
And the middle one's Way-way,  
The third daughter was Tearhangon —  
Overcrying all, they say.  
And the tsar's three sons were down  
By the name of Snivellers known.  
That's the family, my pal,  
Of the tsar, of Lachrymal.  
Day-by-day they would be sitting,  
Crying on and heavy-breathing,  
Moaning, screaming were all dears,  
By the buckets shedding tears . . .<sup>133</sup>

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133) *Poezii*, p. 161.

*Literal interpretation:* The Tsar — a ruler of imperial Russia, so the scene takes place in the pre-revolutionary times. He has a fairly large family: three daughters and three sons. He is portrayed with *hyperbolic* expressions “head like a barrel”, “eyes like watermelons” (hyperbole is used in poetics to express either admiration or hate). The behavioural patterns of his children’s activities are also shown by a hyperbole “by the buckets shedding tears”. All sons are simply named “Snivellers”, yet the daughters are named in the traditional manner of Russian literature (the, name of a person often points out the character of its owner). The middle daughter’s name is given in Ukrainian as “Vai-vai”, that could indicate German or Yiddish origin from the word *Weh* (pain). This way all of the daughters are kept in orderly progression: “Languor”, “Pain”, “Tearhangon” — as if to indicate that languor is often followed by pain, resulting in hanging tears.

*Allegorical interpretation:* under “tsar” and his “family” — the Soviet government could be understood. It must be remembered that at the time the fairy-tale was written Khrushchev was in power, several members of his immediate family holding responsible high offices. The same was true for Stalin and some members of his family. It could, therefore, be quite rational to suppose that one of these periods is the topic of the fairy-tale. More probable, however, seems the hypothesis that it is the personality cult of Stalinist period, for “upon one time in this land”, not “now”, the events were taking place. If all this seems too far fetched at this time — let us remain with the literal interpretation, that the events are taking place in imperial Russia under a genuine tsar. What is the governmental system of the fairy-tale land we can determine from what follows:

... Lachrymal gave orders madly:

“Day-by-day, without a miss,

All the little kids cry sadly,

For to laugh, to be in bliss

In my tsardom — no-no is!

Who should smile by a chance

I will swallow down at once!”

As it happens, from the start,

Lachrymal had vicious guard:



There in service were young lads  
Bullies — tearforeversheds.  
Who would laugh — they took in grips  
And beat up with scourging whips,  
So in tsardom, it appears,  
Was enough of cries and tears.  
Tsar just loved when children cried,  
For to drink their tears he liked.  
That's how tsar was, Lachrymal,  
In the Shedontears, my pal . . .<sup>134</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* there can be no doubt that “Shedontears” is a land with a *totalitarian* system. In the tsarist times “bullies” serving in the guard were not sparing with their “scourging whips” to those, who dared to think, or act against unjust laws. Can a law “forbidding to laugh” be regarded as good? By all means — yes, but only under a totalitarian system.

*Allegorical interpretation:* this passage could be compared to the contemporary situation in the Soviet Union as well.

Then follows the appearance of the first “positive hero”:

### Uncle Titillator

Well, in this amazing tsardom,  
With contempt for law of grief,  
Undergoing trying, wandering,  
Uncle Titillator lived.  
Every evening he'd be coming —  
Should it rain, or should it snow —  
To all kids with hungry stomachs  
He would laughter bring somehow.  
Warmth, sincerity implanted,  
In one eye — a shining speck.  
And there was a grayish mantlet  
On the Titillator's back.  
His moustache — so titillating  
and so fluffy, it appears,  
His fair hair was encompassing,  
Softly falling over ears.

On whom tickles he unleashed —  
 He'd laugh, even without wish.  
 Well, wherever he would pop  
 Up — the crying there would stop  
 And immediately them all  
 Good, loud laughter would befall.  
 Didn't like the Titillator  
 Lachrymal and Snivellers-sons,  
 Kept issuing proclamations,  
 Banning tickling, on and on.  
 And for uncle Titillator,  
 Armed with scourges in their claws,  
 Searching huts in eager hatred  
 Hunted keepers of bad laws.  
 Uncle Titillator, though,  
 Did not fear their eager prowls.  
 Throughout all the land, and back then —  
 He brought laughter on his trips  
 In his decorated handbag,  
 In his tender finger-tips . . .<sup>135</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* the new hero, “uncle Titillator” — must be regarded as a “positive hero”; though he lives “in contempt of law” — this law, according to Symonenko’s narrator, is a “bad” law, enforced by “keepers” that carry “scourges in their claws”. Uncle Titillator is gifted with warmth and sincerity” and “carries throughout all the land” *laughter*, creating a conflict, because “laughter” is forbidden.

*Allegorical interpretation:* because uncle Titillator is wearing a “grayish mantlet” and “decorated handbag” — it can be speculated that he is an Ukrainian. “Sira svyta” (gray mantlet), “siroma” (unfortunate creatures), “siryak” (homespun peasant’s coat) — were used quite often as *epithets* describing Ukrainian people in poverty, or destitution, throughout Ukrainian literature. For instance, in the works of Taras Shevchenko: “I tvoya hromada u *sir’yakakh*” (And your community is wearing homespun peasants’ coats too), *Haidamaky*; “Ta i zaplakav *siromakha*, na kyi pokhylyvsya” (Started to cry, the poor creature, leaning upon his cane), *Haidamaky*; “Naikrashchy

<sup>135</sup> *Poezii*, pp. 162-163.

parubok Mykyta stoit' na lavi v sirii svyti" (The best lad Mykyta stands on the bench in a gray mantlet), "Tytarivna". Symonenko's expression in the fairy-tale is "sira nakydka" (a gray cape), which is a sort of a modern "gray mantlet", and that phrase also permits to place uncle Titillator within contemporary times. A "decorated handbag", carried on a strap over a shoulder is also typical Ukrainian gear, especially in mountain regions.

Symonenko wrote one poem entitled "Kurds'komu bratovi" (To my Brother Kurd) in which he boldly condemns chauvinism. This poem begins with a citation from Shevchenko's poem "Kavkaz" (The Caucasus), as if to indicate that Shevchenko's poem is very much topical in contemporary times. It is interesting to note that one of the passages in "Kavkaz" resembles the country "Shedontears" of the fairy-tale:

. . . Not just a few trained people fell.  
And tears? and blood? Enough to drown  
All Emperors, and drown them well,  
With all descendants — all to drown  
In tears of widows . . . And young girls,  
Who quietly at night shed tears?  
And those hot tears shed by the mothers,  
And fathers', aged bloody tears?  
Not rivers — ocean-flows of them,  
A fiery ocean! . . .<sup>136</sup>

In a country with a *totalitarian* system, he, who dares to live "in contempt of law", sooner or later gets arrested. This is exactly what happens to the Titillator:

#### Arrest of the Titillator

Lachrymal got mad and fierce —  
Tsar of country Shedontears.  
From his throne he hollered: "Hey, you,  
Lazy tearforeversheds!  
He, who'll catch the Titillator,  
Shall be husband to my brat!

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<sup>136</sup> Taras Shevchenko, *Kobzar* (Buenos Aires: v-vo "Poltava" — 1950), pp. 185-186.

He, who'll put him under key —  
Will select one out of three!  
Titillator's carrying on  
Soon could tumble down the throne:  
And what shall we all be drinking,  
When the children stop their crying?"  
The bold tearforeversheds  
Moved at once, as that was said,  
To catch up with Titillator  
And convict the troublemaker.  
For a long while they were seeking,  
Through all eyelets duly peeking,  
Dug up every courtyard too,  
And combed every forest through —  
Only wasting time around:  
Titillator was not found.  
Why, on all such close encounters,  
People hid him from the hunters.  
Then, at midnight, Titillator,  
When just dreams to people cater,  
Would the pauper's houses choose  
All poor children to amuse.

Lachrymal did at the time  
Have a stubborn stuck-up,  
An insidious snake, in prime,  
One, captain Macaco.  
Son-in-law to Tsar so much  
Wished to be this milter  
That no sleep he ever touched  
Through entire winter.  
Always snooped, to all eavesdropped,  
Finally — the case unwrapped.  
Titillator in the morn,  
Having brought kids laughter,  
Between maple branches, worn,  
Went a deep sleep after.  
Cunning captain, like a snake,  
Sneaked up to him, presto,

Titillator by the neck  
Caught with noosed lasso,  
Tied his hands behind the back,  
Bound his feet, and horny  
Back to Cryingrad with smack  
He commenced the journey . . .<sup>137</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* Titillator must be caught and placed “under key” for his activities “soon could tumble down the throne”. The people, however, love the laughter — inducing Titillator and keep on hiding him from “the hunters”. It looks as if Titillator just couldn’t be caught. Then, to help the Tsar, comes the “insidious snake” captain Macaco (ape species). Tsar had promised to wed any of his three daughters to the one who would capture Titillator and Macaco is eager to get such a bargain. He “snoops” and “eavesdrops” and, finally, as the exhausted Titillator hides in the forest (“between maple branches”) and falls asleep — Macaco catches him with a lasso, ties him up, and takes his prisoner to Cryingrad.

*Allegorical interpretation:* one of the first things we notice here is the way Symonenko had named tsar Lachrymal’s capital city: *Cryingrad*. Tsar Peter the Great’s capital city St. Petersburg was re-named before the revolution to *Petrograd* and later, after the revolution, re-named again to *Leningrad*. The city of Tsaritsin (Tsar’s City) was re-named Stalingrad after the revolution and still later, after Khrushchev had exposed the despot, re-named *Volgograd*. Symonenko deliberately selected the name for Lachrymal’s capital city with a typically Russian suffix, he did this in a fairy-tale written in Ukrainian, a language in which the same suffix would be *horod*, not *grad*. One can also be bewildered *why* one of Macaco’s qualities is “insidious”. He does not seem to be “insidious” to the Tsar, his treachery could only be directed toward the people who were hiding Titillator, and only, if he was one of their kind. It is obvious that one can be insidious only to somebody who trusts him. Mutual trust is granted among people who have something in common. It can be, therefore, presumed that the thing in common between Macaco. and the people who were hiding Titillator is

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<sup>137</sup> *Poezii*, p. 163-165.

their nationality. Macaco became a traitor to gain favours of the Tsar and the hand of one of his three daughters. The whole episode could also easily be imagined to take place in contemporary times. In the aforementioned poem "Kavkaz" Taras Shevchenko also describes an arrest:

... So they had you taken, my only friend, Jacob,  
Not for the Ukraine now you were made to shed  
Your good and not black blood, for her evil headsman  
Your good blood was spilled. And to drink you had  
From Muscovite goblet the Muscovite poison.  
Oh, my friend, my precious, good and forgotten!  
With your living soul — do fly o'er Ukraine;  
Fly with fearless Cossacs over banks of rivers,  
Robbed out graves observing in the open plains,  
Cry thy tiny teardrops together with Cossacs,  
Me out of captivity, in the steppes await . . .<sup>138</sup>

In the meantime there are preparations for the wedding in the Palace:

#### Wedding in the Palace

They threw Titillator, alas,  
Behind narrow grating  
And decided in the Palace:  
— Time, to play the mating . . . —  
Hey, there came the tsarist kin  
And all courtly nobles  
To betrothed to be keen,  
Children's tears to gobble.  
Groom is leading to be wed  
Dried up lady Languor  
And one can not look at them  
Without rising anger.  
Though Macaco was a bloke  
And she — much worse rated  
One plump poet had for both  
An ode dedicated.  
So much praise it did contain

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<sup>138</sup>) Taras Shevchenko, *op cit.*, p. 187.

And unsightly flatter  
 That the frogs in total shame  
 Dived into the water!  
 Only Tsar walked round and glowed,  
 Kissing with the son-in-law,  
 And bragged on: "Well, that is that,  
 Titillator is but dead!  
 There is no one to bestow  
 Loud and honest laughter now.  
 So, go on, and jump in joy!  
 From your joy — go on and cry!  
 Everywhere, it now appears,  
 We'll raise Tsardom of the Tears!"  
 Lachrymal, thus, bragged on here —  
 Tsar of country Shedontear . . .<sup>139</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* Titillator is jailed and in the Palace the promised wedding is taking place. In spite of the fact that Macaco was a "bloke" and the bride "rated much worse" — one "plump" poet had written and dedicated a poem to them. This is just another detail that indicates *where* the plot is taking place. *Ode-writing* in honour of the Tsar and of his court of nobles (or Tsarina), occupies one of the important periods in the Russian literature of the XVIII century. At least this detail points out Symonenko's consistency with the plot in this direction.

*Allegorical interpretation:* this detail can also be regarded as taking place in contemporary times. Writing odes in honour of Lenin, and during the Stalin's period — in his honour, was and still is widely practiced in the Soviet Union. Application of *oxymoron* (a figure of speech where words that are usually contradictory are combined in one expression, e.g., "from your joy — go on and cry"), is, perhaps, related to the second fairy-tale, where *oxymoron* is repeatedly used in place of metaphors. This is done in the best probability to point out identical *mode of life* situations in both fairy-tales; life under imperial domain. Tsar Lachrymal, toward the end of the above passage, states clearly: "*Everywhere*, it now appears, we'll raise Tsardom of the Tears". In the Ukrainian text Symonenko has *vikovichne* (eternal) "Tsardom of the Tears" (not shown in the translation).

<sup>139</sup> Poezii, pp. 165-166.

Is this phrase so far removed from the prophesies about the triumph of Communist ideas in the entire world? The analogy here is obvious, since there is no other ideology that would brag about conquering the entire world.

It appears, however, that Lachrymal's joy is premature:

#### Release of Titillator

While the wedding went on hooting  
Titillator's drunken guards  
Having drunk some potioned rootdrink  
Fell asleep in grass, apart.  
To the jail, as night had fallen,  
Workers, poor folks, in deep mist,  
Were on Titillator calling,  
Him, forever, to release.  
**All obstructions were abated,**  
**Iron bars were bent like twine:**  
— Hey, you merry Titillator,  
Your own brothers have arrived!  
Come with us, our merry brother,  
Join in our friendly clan,  
Then — to Lachrymal, together,  
To play wedding we'll attend . . .<sup>140</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* this passage seems to underline that the events are taking place in pre-revolutionary times. Symonenko has "workers" and "poor folks" come to liberate Titillator. They ask him to join their "friendly clan" and go to attend the "wedding" at Lachrymal's palace. This, in turn, can be meant to show a *class* revolution (the working class attacks the Winter Palace).

*Allegorical interpretation:* class revolution could have been a device to camouflage, applied deliberately by Symonenko to allow the fairy-tale to be published. There can be serious doubt if this fairy-tale could ever be published *without* such camouflage. It is interesting to note that there is no mention whatsoever about Titillator's *class status* up to this point in the fairy-tale. There is, however, much hinting about his *nationality*, the fact that was already interpreted earlier. The most important

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140) *Poezii*, p. 166.



information, therefore, is: Titillator's *brothers* came to liberate him, and that could mean — Ukrainians.

Here is what happens when freed Titillator and his liberators attend the wedding:

### The Wedding Continues

In the Palace — all are jumping,  
Bitterly from joy keep crying  
Tears — flow like a stream, ahoy,  
That is their kind of a joy.  
Suddenly Tsar fell on throne:  
— Help, the Titillator's on! —  
Everybody "ouch!" and "wow!"  
Fear in eyes and on their brows.  
And the merry Titillator  
Jumped the throne to Tsar and later  
Said to him: — Now and not after  
You'll, for once, be full of laughter! . . . —  
When he started Tsar to tickle —  
Lachrymal began to giggle,  
From hard laughter he was trembling,  
Stumbling, raving, double-bending,  
To rub eyes — his fists applied,  
Then he burst, and, simply, died.  
What a joke for now and after,  
Lachrymal had died from laughter!  
Courtly nobles — turned to stone,  
How to laugh — they did'nt know.  
And the Tsar's three growing pawns,  
The three braves, his Snivellers-sons,  
Kept on such loud laughter, hence —  
Down fell off their very pants.  
So, all three, without their slacks  
Took to foreign lands their backs.  
The three princesses — defected  
In four different directions.  
Bloody tearforeversheds —  
Turned out leeches in stream-beds.  
And Macaco, killer-waif,

Ate himself from fear alive.  
That's how merry Titillator  
Heathen throne annihilated.  
**He lives on**, for children tending  
To bring laughter on his trips,  
In his decorated handbag,  
In his tender finger-tips . . .<sup>141</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* starting again with *oxymoron* ("crying bitterly from joy") Symonenko places Titillator into a grotesque and quick ending of the plot: Lachrymal dies laughing, his sons lose their pants and run away to "foreign lands", all "three" daughters run in "four" different directions, "tearforeversheds — turn out leeches" and Macaco — "ate himself from fear". The "throne" is "annihilated", that means that an upheaval took place.

*Allegorical interpretation:* must conclude that it is impossible for *three* princesses to run in *four* different directions. There is also doubt as to what kind of a "throne" was "annihilated" by Titillator, since he destroyed a "*heathen throne*" and the tsarist throne in Imperial Russia adhered to Orthodox Christianity. Again, we can understand that the continuation of the "wedding" takes place after the revolution. The contemporary aspect of the fairy-tale is especially underlined by Symonenko by its ending, where he invites the reader to "find this land" *now* (you just can't find something that *was* and is no more):

If you wish to find this land,  
This itinerary tend:  
First, you'll go a long time straight,  
Take a right, as it gets late,  
Then, again, among oak trees,  
To the left you turn, like this.  
After that go slowly, heed —  
Where your feet will surely lead:  
If you don't fall from exhaust,  
Then — this land will be your host.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup>) *Poezii*, pp. 166-168.

<sup>142</sup>) *Poezii*, p. 168.

This is the ending and it is also grotesque, as grotesque it would be that this fairy-tale should not carry a message for the adult.

The next fairy-tale is also about a strange land, very similar for its totalitarian system to the country Shedontear. This fairy-tale contains numerous applications of *oxymoron* as well, which permits literal and allegorical interpretations of the text. The plot consists of strange adventures of four little boys in a country called Upside-down, into which they are brought *by their own wish* by some kind of a "small bearded man with cunning eyes":

### JOURNEY TO THE COUNTRY UPSIDE-DOWN

Lesyk, Tolya, two Volodyas  
Were desponding on a log, thus,  
Lesyk grumbled on: "My buddies,  
It is hard to live for me —  
Mother to obey, and father,  
And to wash up day-by-day.  
Hard to live and to obey!"  
Tolya also sits and suffers,  
Pours out sorrows over there:  
"Sister Tonya is a duffer,  
Must amuse her, it's not fair . . ."  
And Volodya squeaks out: "Father,  
Forces me to water flowers . . ."  
So, all four are further groaning:  
"How we suffer!  
How its bitter!"  
Suddenly "bang", out of nowhere —  
Little bearded man appeared  
With his cunning eyes before them  
At the four he sternly peered.  
And as sternly he was saying,  
This chimerical small man:  
"All your troubles I've been hearing,  
O'er the mountains, o'er the valleys,  
Over here my beard was dragging —  
Speeding over to your team

All your troubles to redeem.  
Not too far away at hand  
Is a very funny land —  
Where there is no day, nor night,  
All are doing what they like . . .”<sup>143</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* four children complain about their little troubles. All of a sudden there appears “out of nowhere” a “little bearded man” afore them and proposes a visit to a “very funny land” that lies near at hand, where “all are doing what they like”. There is “no day, nor night” in this land indicating that it is a fantastic, utopian land.

*Allegorical interpretation:* the “little bearded man” came to make his proposition for the children to visit an *utopian* land from far away, he said to the four that he dragged his beard “o’er the mountains and o’er the valleys” to “redeem” them from their “troubles”. It can be immediately suspected that the “little bearded man” must have had a special reason to go through so much troubles just to satisfy the children’s caprice. Such a “promised land”, as he had offered to the children, *could never exist* and, therefore, must be considered as utopian. People in the Soviet Ukraine, who are quite sensitive to hidden messages in literary works, could not fail to draw conclusions after comparing the fairy-tale land to what their own “promised land” turned out to be.

The children, however, meet his proposition with enthusiasm:

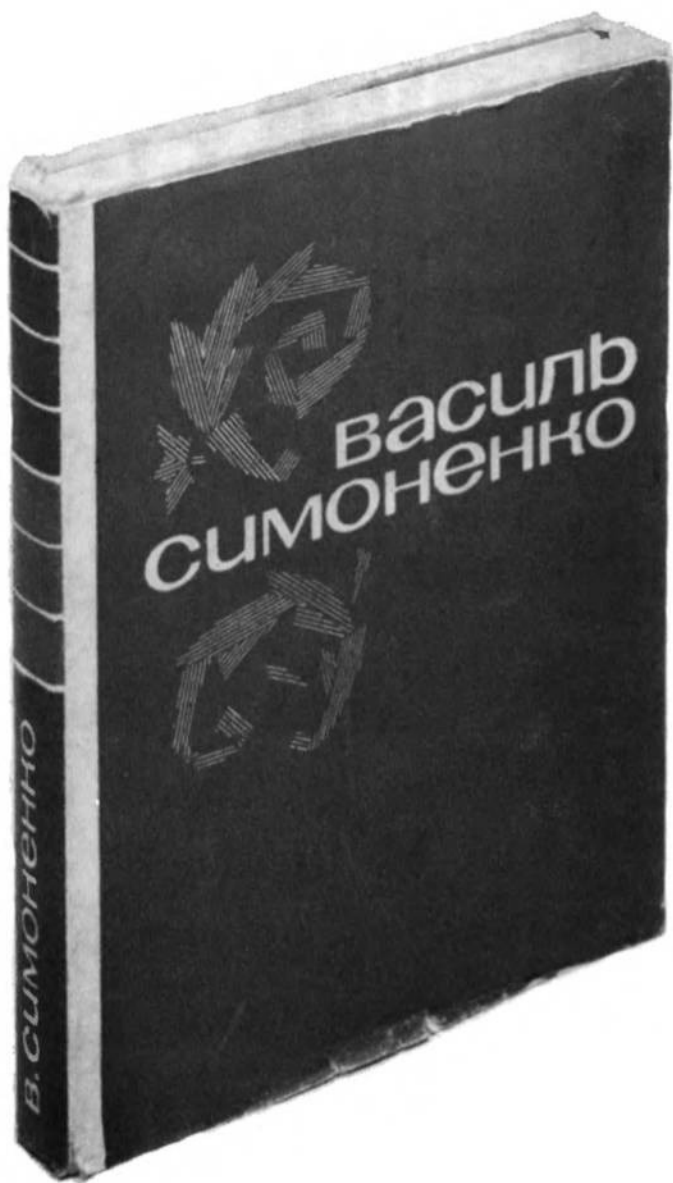
. . . Now, all four together, started:  
“Help us, help us, oh, please do!  
How could we for there depart? — and:  
— Tell us, tell us all anew!”  
“I will help you very gladly, —  
Says the owner of the beard, —  
Shut your eyes a moment, steadily,  
And I’ll fly you, like fast birds”.  
Just as soon as they have done so —  
All were lifted by a wind blow,  
Whirled, tumbled in the mist,  
Roared and rumbled and like this —

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<sup>143</sup> Poezii, pp. 169-170.



VYNO Z TROYAND — the only (posthumous) book of prose by V. Symonenko, published in Lviv, 1965.



*POEZII* — the third (posthumous) book of poetry  
by V. Symonenko, published in Kiev, 1966.

O'er the steppes  
 And o'er the forests,  
 Way — under the sky did twist.  
 As they opened up their eyes,  
 Hollered happy:  
 “Tru-lu-lu!  
 Now I can do, what I want to,  
 What I want to — I shall do!  
 As it happens, we are now  
 In the country Upside-down ! . . .”<sup>144</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* the “small bearded man” is in possession of magic powers. He tells the children to shut their eyes and after they obey — flies them over to the “promised land”, a country called Upside-down.

*Allegorical interpretation:* there are two lines in the above portion of the fairy-tale that allow comparison between the country Upside-down and the Soviet Ukraine. First of all, the children were flying “over the steppes”. This can be regarded as a hint, but only as a hint, since there are “steppes” in other parts of the world. However, the last line strongly underlines this hint. In Ukrainian this line is given as: “*U krainu Navpaky*” (Into country Upside-down). But, the combination *U + krainu Navpaky = Ukrainu Navpaky* (Ukraine Upside-down). This is only a surmise, yet, if such an observation is at all possible, then it is, obviously, exposed to all of the readers. Therefore, it can be maintained, that the combination *U + krainu* is not accidental. At least such a supposition can be supported by the entire fairy-tale, as further analysis shall clearly indicate. It is remarkable, however, that the title of the fairy-tale (containing this phrase) is given in Ukrainian as: “*Podorozh v krainu Navpaky*”, though such “zh-v-kr” (given above in italic type) combination of consonants is against the laws of language tonality. This too, perhaps, was done by Symonenko deliberately, so that the strong message this combination can imply was less noticeable to the censors.

What follows is a repeated use of *oxymoron* that culminates into a grotesque image to show that the country in question is truly “upside-down”:

<sup>144</sup> *Poezii*, p. 170.

. . . Well, for kids, this magic land —  
Is a paradise at hand:  
Only ink in rivers flowing,  
No one heard about a soap-cake!  
All — in mud, up to their ears,  
Bawling, shouting loud and clear,  
See by ear and hear by eye,  
Jump, feet upwards, all the time.  
Chimney-sweeps paint houses white,  
Land-surveyors — sky divide,  
Scythemen — heavy trees cut down,  
Carry logs by tongues around.

And now, culmination into grotesque:

Taking nose-bags, little tarts —  
Go to heaven to pick stars.  
By a handful they would pick,  
Even to their pockets stick,  
Then — back home from heaven — flick! —  
One on barn floor, one on haystack.  
Lesyk, Tolya, two Volodyas —  
Like young calves in crops around, thus,  
The whole day long bucking, playing,  
Laughing loudly, rolling, swaying,  
With some boys they met before  
Played, by throwing dumplings, war,  
Then, in bushes, they commenced  
Dancing on their very hands.  
Hollered happy:  
“Tru-lu-lu!  
What I want to — I shall do!”  
Finally, tired, but unwrapt,  
Hanging on a plum tree — slept.  
After napping — picked in bliss  
Watermelons from oak trees  
And from bushes on the valleys  
They ate chocolate, without malice . . .<sup>145</sup>

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145) *Poezii*, pp. 170-171.



*Literal interpretation:* the boys never had it so good, they are all happy, for they can “do what they want”. The first day in the country Upside-down was well spent. Then, after a nap (while “hanging on a plum tree”), they breakfast on “watermelons from oak trees and chocolate from bushes” and are ready for some new adventures.

*Allegorical interpretation:* if we are, conditionally, to accept the contention that *U+krainu Upside-down* is not an accidental phrase, then we can immediately notice that there was a similar situation in the Soviet Ukraine during the NEP (New Economic Politics), introduced by Lenin to prevent an economic disaster in the 1920s and already commented upon in the first chapter of this study. Let’s compare: “only ink in rivers flowing” to massive literary and journalistic production in Ukrainian, that was flowering during the period. As “no one heard about a soap-cake” we can compare that to non-existing “censorship”, or even milder — “non-existing self-discipline”. All are “bawling, shouting loud and clear” reminds us of the well-known *literary discussion* started by Mykola Khvyly’ovyi, that took place in the second half of the 1920s. It can truly be maintained that, indeed, the NEP period in the Soviet Ukraine turned the country “upside-down”. Economic initiative was returning to the individual, an utopian Communist Mykola Skrypnyk<sup>146</sup> (1872-1933) was enforcing *Ukrainization* on the Russified urban population and institutions . . . True enough, there were some repressions during that period too. However, Symonenko does not fail to mention that in the fairy-tale, for: “one on barn floor (hard) and one on haystack (soft)” they were “falling” after “picking stars in heaven”, After the revolution many “went for” and later “wore” on their caps or in the lapels “red stars”. Therefore, we can accept that Symonenko meant by “what I want to — I shall do” as the NEP period in the Soviet Ukraine.

The NEP period had a tragic ending. The same thing happens in the fairy-tale:

. . . By a millhouse, on their part,  
Once they met with funny guard —  
Yes, these soldiers in blue slacks  
Were all riding on pig’s backs.

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<sup>146</sup> One of the very best sources published on Mykola Skrypnyk and his period: is: Ivan Koshelivets’, *Mykola Skrypnyk* (Munich: v-vo “Suchasnist’” — 1972).

“And who are you, tell me, will-ya? —  
 Asked the highest ranking villain. —  
 These are traitors, not just kids!  
 Grab them, tie them, no one pleads!”  
 Soldiers rapidly advanced,  
 Carried order out at once  
 And then chased the humble blushers  
 To the palace of No-washers.  
 In a doghouse, for their lot  
 Waited Tsar, Great Dowashnot —  
 He was elder among peers,  
 Didn’t wash one hundred years.  
 As he saw the little kids,  
 Howled, screamed, out of his wits:  
 “What are they, for devil’s might,  
 Their right hands are on the right,  
 Why, with eyes they look and see,  
 What should that, my servants, mean?  
 They should all be washed in ink,  
 For they still with soap do stink.  
 Later, so they’d understand,  
 Twisted out should be their hands,  
 Then, to cut away their ears,  
 Teach them with their eyes to hear.  
 Only then can we allow  
 Them to live in Upside-down.  
 And for now take these impure  
 To the dungeon to immure”.  
 That’s how, leaning on a cudgel,  
 Dowashnot barked, mad like hell,  
 And the kids, at that, all four  
 Servants threw to dungeon’s floor . . .<sup>147</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* now it is, all of a sudden, revealed that the country Upside-down is ruled with a *totalitarian* system, just like the country Shedontears was in the previous fairy-tale. The boys are thrown into a dungeon not for some committed crime but because they are “traitors”, not just kids; by that the “highest ranking villain” means that they are unlike other “no-

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147) *Poeziti*, pp. 171-172.

washers". After they are brought "tied up" to the palace, on for interrogation — the "Tsar Great Dowashnot" happens to agree with the decision of the "highest ranking villain": the kids must go through some kind of a "socialist reconstruction", or to put it better, have to learn how to "hear with their eyes" if they are to be allowed to live in the country Upside-down. They must conform, and in the meantime — are jailed.

*Allegorical interpretation:* here, like in the previous fairy-tale, Symonenko makes a "Tsar" responsible for the regime. The "vicious guard as keepers of bad laws" of the previous fairy-tale are now represented by a "funny guard, soldiers in blue slacks". This is a rather strong hint, since "blue slacks" were worn by the NKVD (Stalin's secret police) forces as a part of their official uniforms. In the fairy-tale these "soldiers in blue slacks" are inseparable from "pigs" (informers?!) and constantly "ride their backs" (use their services?!). This is how they get to catch and arrest the non-conformist children, "riding on pigs". To follow up the interpretation of the period: after more and more power was accumulated in the hands of one man, Joseph Vissarionovich Dzughashvili (better known as Stalin), the NEP policies were more and more suppressed and driven to a tragic ending. Stalin started his climb to power by first eliminating the left-wing opposition in the Communist party with the help of the right-wingers on the all-Union level. Then, he eliminated the right-wingers too to establish a firm one-man rule of total terror. In the process of doing all that he centralized everything, from economy — to literature, in Moscow. He introduced forced collectivization of rural areas during which many millions of people had perished (the smallest estimate of those who perished in Ukraine alone is given as 4,000,000), and started what is labeled as "socialist reconstruction" of the entire population in the Soviet Union. Massive terror and Ukraine's share in the suffering during the "personality cult" is now history. They lasted, on and off, during Stalin's entire stay in power, that is, until his death.

The fairy-tale continues:

... In the dungeon, where sound dies,  
Rustled only sleepy mice,  
In the distance between walls —

Cockroaches took their crawls  
And in darkened corners sat  
Spiders, weaving dreary nets.  
All four children over here  
To their toes were struck by fear,  
So all four, at such avail,  
Started crying in the jail.  
Somehow, from their salty tears  
Dungeon weakened at its seams:  
First the walls began to thaw,  
Then — the sugar-door fell down.  
Kiddies, happy by the way,  
With a joyful cry "Hurrah!"  
All took powder out of callous  
And much dreaded Tsarist palace . . .<sup>148</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* the dungeon is infested with mice, cockroaches, and spiders. The children start to cry in fear and from their "salty tears" the walls "thaw" and the doors made out of sugar fall down, in a rather grotesque outcome. The children, thus freed, run out of the "dreaded Tsarist palace".

*Allegorical interpretation:* I do, continuously, point out the possibility of comparing the events in both fairy-tales with the development of historical events in Soviet Union. The continuity with which Symonenko makes such comparison possible is remarkable. Even this period in the dungeon, enforced by the "Tsar out of doghouse", is marked by "fear", "crying", and "salty tears" that bring about a *thaw*. The "personality cult" period enforced by Stalin was also followed by a "thaw". We can also permit an argument that the "little bearded man with cunning eyes" had *lied* to the children when he promised to bring them to a land where "all are doing what they like". It is exactly for "doing what they wanted to do" that they were jailed. Is it so far fetched to maintain that the "little bearded man with cunning eyes" symbolises one Vladimir Illich Ulyanov (better known as Lenin), who did his share of "promising" while preaching the Communist ideology to millions of naive Lesyky, Tolyas, and Volodyas? And didn't it all become "Upside-down" in reality? At least Lenin, as I have already underlined, is a

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<sup>148</sup>) *Poezii*, pp. 172-173.

hero of quite a few fairy-tales published in the Soviet Ukraine.  
After fleeing from the palace the children continue to run:

... And the soldiers in blue slacks  
Chased the children on pigs' backs  
Scolding them and loudly shouting,  
And with ripe tomatoes shooting.  
Would have had the children trapped  
If the piggies didn't stop  
To turn over to the shallows  
Watermelons down to swallow.  
Soldiers urged them on to hasten,  
Piggies wouldn't even listen —  
They were only scrunching, grunting,  
Watermelons eating, eating.  
After getting fed — they've gone  
To a mudhole, all like one.  
So the soldiers in small huddles  
Just ran after them to puddles  
And were begging:  
"Lovely piggies,  
Time to go to work indeed is!"  
Pigs let all these words pass by,  
Didn't even blink an eye  
And prolonged their mudhole plays  
For two seconds and two days.  
In the meantime our children  
Ran as if they all were frenzied  
Through a field and haying crop  
First in forest did they stop.  
In the forest on a glade  
Rubicundish flowers played  
Ancient ball game and in fact  
Danced Ukrainian *hopak*.  
When they saw the little ones  
Gathered round them all at once  
And applauding with their leaves  
Jumped around and then said this:

“Come to us!  
To our circle —  
And we’ll dance, just like a miracle!” . . .<sup>149</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* the children are being chased by the “soldiers in blue slacks”. “The pigs”, however, decide to “turn over to shallows to feast on “watermelons” so the soldiers can not catch up with the children and they escape to a “forest”. Like in the previous fairy-tale (for “uncle Titillator”) the forest proves to be a reliable warrant for children’s freedom. There “rubicundish flowers play” and dance *hopak* (a strictly Ukrainian dance and therefore underlined in the translation). After seeing the children the flowers ask them to join their “circle” to dance together “like a miracle”.

*Allegorical interpretation:* though the “thaw” has arrived and the “sugar-door fell down” the “soldiers in blue slacks” have not been discharged and continue to chase the children. But the “thaw” brings along some relaxation of the regime and possibilities to “feast”. The “helpers” of the “soldiers in blue slacks” are not in a hurry anymore to catch the escaping children. The children escape to a forest and find themselves among “their own Ukrainians”, the flowers do dance an *Ukrainian* national dance. This can be interpreted in a way that the “security police” had some difficulties to force their “informers” to render services after the “thaw”. It is sad that Symonenko, who died late in 1963, could not foresee the fortunes that would befall his contemporaries, he did not live to see the downfall of Khrushchev in 1964, Podgorny in 1977, and the violence that was gradually resumed against the writers and poets of the sixties and other young Ukrainian intellectuals until by the mid 1970s they were ruthlessly and totally crushed. Before his death he was seeing those (and he was one of them) who *dared* to raise their heads and speak without fear (and some overcoming fear) of the “soldiers in blue slacks” and their “helpers”.

What Symonenko could not foresee — he, often, could feel.  
The kids are in danger again:

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<sup>149</sup>) *Poezii*, pp. 173-174.

. . . Flowers call the kids to play  
 While they stand and just complain:  
 "There are soldiers in blue slacks  
 Reaching for us on pigs' backs.  
 These perfidious crow-bands  
 Want to hurt and twist our hands.  
 Aw! Aw! Aw! Where are our mothers,  
 What will happen here without them?"  
 Flowers turned from terror blue:  
 "Pigs will trample on us too!"  
 At this point jumped to fore  
 Old man, bushman Red Hawthorn:  
 "Do not scream and don't despair,  
 I shall now the glade surround,  
 Break pigs' habit to stump fair  
 Flowers down!"  
 The Sweet Briar and the Hawthorn  
 Noiselessly joined with wild Blackthorn  
 Had the glade at once surrounded,  
 Ruffled up their thorny points,  
 Fiercely pierced and deeply wounded,  
 Tearing pigs' backsides and joints.  
 And on soldiers they were shredding  
 Precious clothing and their flesh,  
 Down — were many wounded falling  
 And thick blood like rivers flushed.  
 Heaven knows, the soldiers tried,  
 Full of thorns and bleeding dry.  
 But they didn't have their way,  
 Barely living — ran away.  
 Dowashnot got really mad,  
 Their assault had failed like that.  
 So he did, forever cursed,  
 Sentries round the glade disperse  
 To catch impudents. He tried  
 Get them all, dead or alive!  
 So he said:  
 "Get children now,  
 Throw them into ink to drown!"

And the soldiers in blue slacks  
Everywhere sped on pigs' backs  
Seeing to it that no way  
Was for kids to get away . . .<sup>150</sup>

*Literal interpretation:* the soldiers forced the “pigs” to go on with the chase, to engage “Hawthorn, Sweet Briar and Blackthorn” in a battle, after they surrounded the glade and offered protection to the flowers and the children. After Dowashnot fails to get a decisive victory and his soldiers “fell wounded” or run away he orders to get the children at any cost, “dead or alive”, and to drown them in ink. Around the glade he places sentries so that the children are besieged.

*Allegorical interpretation:* the question arises, why did Symonenko have “Hawthorn, Sweet Briar, and Blackthorn” written with capital letters, as if they were proper names, or aliases of some kind? The Ukrainian word *kushch* (bush) used by Symonenko was also used by the Ukrainian underground to describe a clandestine para-military unit. “Hawthorn” is called by Symonenko *kushchevyk* (bushman, leader of the bush). Defending the flowers and the children they engage “soldiers in blue slacks and the pigs” in a battle, “many wounded fell down and blood flushed like rivers”. Here, again, we have an analogy with reality. Many documents and materials, published in the Soviet Ukraine and abroad, testify to that. The armed struggle of Ukrainian underground continued after World War Two and was not over until the early 50s. During and after this struggle there were open and closed trials, executions, long stretches in the forced labour camps taking place in the Soviet Ukraine that lasted until the late 1950s. Then came the “thaw” many prisoners were released, some dead were rehabilitated. It happened so, that this short period of “thaw” made a serious crack in the system of terror itself. Proven methods of intimidation began to *fail*, Ukrainian nationals, easily silenced by Stalinist terror before, now started to shake off *fear*. They began to say and write such things as before they didn’t even dare to think, they began to speak out for their rights guaranteed under the constitution, they often even voluntarily stood up during the trials and demanded justice. So, if the “children” together with the “flowers” (that dance

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150) *Poezii*, pp. 174-175.



*hopak*) and with “Hawthorn, Sweet Briar, and Blackthorn” allegorically represent the contemporary *Ukrainian environment* which can not be totally destroyed — then a strict order follows, to isolate this environment from the outside world and to “drown it in ink”. “Drown them in ink...” Could there really be educated people, anywhere in the world, that would know nothing about hundreds of thousands of devastating articles, directed against the Ukrainian intellectuals and Ukrainian culture, that appeared in the official Soviet press during the entire history of the Soviet Ukraine? It is possible that there are, for: “reality escapes us”, as Carlyle used to say back in the XIXth century.

The fairy-tale ends offering the following solution:

. . . Well, the children, the poor children,  
Had to pine away, to wither,  
Started getting rather tired,  
All to go back home aspired.  
And all four again were groaning:  
“How we suffer!  
How it’s bitter!”  
Suddenly “bang”, out of nowhere —  
Little bearded man appeared  
With his cunning eyes before them  
At the four, again, he peered.  
“Who would now return home gladly, —  
Said the owner of the beard, —  
Shut your eyes a moment, steadily,  
I’ll return him, like a bird . . .”  
Just as soon as all had done so —  
They were lifted by a wind blow,  
Whirled, tumbled in the mist,  
Roared and rumbled, and like this —  
O’er the steppes,  
And o’er the forests,  
Way — under the sky did twist!  
As they opened up their eyes,  
Gasp — their homes are standing by,  
All are met, and warm embracings  
On them grandmoms, mothers try . . .<sup>151</sup>

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151) *Poezii*, pp. 175-176.

*Literal interpretation:* At the beginning of the fairy-tale, after closing their eyes, the children were “flown” to the “country Upside-down”. Now, after they opened their eyes again — they found themselves back home. The “little bearded man with cunning eyes” led the children through a *didactic dream!* Though he had *lied* while enticing them to a land “where they can do as they please” (they were jailed instead) — “end justifies the means” (Lenin used to say).

*Allegorical interpretation:* persecuted Ukrainian intellectuals in the Soviet Ukraine often quote Lenin to support their struggle for basic constitutional rights, in their protests against enforced Russification, and against the neglect of Soviet laws by those who are in power. It was Lenin, who said:

... Under the circumstances it is only natural that the freedom “to leave the Union” will remain an useless piece of paper with no power to protect nationals other than Russians from the onslaught of that truly Russian person, the great-Russian chauvinist, in reality a scoundrel and a raper, which a typical Russian bureaucrat happens to be. No doubt, the miserly percentage of Soviet and Sovietized workers will be drowned in the sea of Russian rabble like a fly in the milk.

They say in defense of this problem that Peoples’ Commissariates were established and have a direct relation to national psychology and national education. But the question remains, if such Peoples Commissariates can function fully independently and did we truly apply means to protect other nationals from that, really Russian, ravisher? I don’t think we did, though we could have and should have done so...<sup>152</sup>

It is true that Lenin’s *sincerity* in dealing with “nationalities problems” is often questioned by Ukrainian intellectuals abroad (Kravtsiv, Lavrinenko, Koshelivets’), and that there is plenty of serious documentation to support such a claim. Nevertheless, Symonenko and his contemporaries turned, over and again, to the “little bearded man with cunning eyes” for assistance to climb out of the precipice into which he himself had driven them with a promise that proved to be a lie. At least the periodicity of the events encountered by the children in the fairy-tale consistently recalls the events that occurred in the Soviet Ukraine. Symonenko ends his fairy-tale with optimism, at least in the

<sup>152</sup> V. I. Lenin, “Do pytannya natsional’nosti abo pro avtonomizatsiyu”, *Materiyaly do vyvchennya ukrains’kot literatury*, Vol. V., Book I. Kiev: v-vo “Radyanns’ka shkola” — 1963), p. 31.

children's dream the "little bearded man with cunning eyes" helps them to break loose out of their "union" with the totalitarian "country Upside-down".

... And the travellers holler: "No,  
By a miracle one could not —  
Even with a nice baked donat! —  
Lure us back, for ages now,  
To the country Upside-down!"<sup>153</sup>

The very last line of the fairy tale is again represented by that meaningful combination: *U + krainu Navpaky*. Under the circumstances the literal translation is: "Even *ages* could not lure Ukraine upside-down again".

#### *Illations*

Both, literal and allegorical, interpretations of these two fairy-tales definitely point out that the plots involve two countries with *totalitarian* systems. Both systems are shown to be by Symonenko's narrator as *negative*, even if the rules of the mandatory "socialist-realism" methods were to be applied. The narrator sides with "uncle Titillator" in the first fairy-tale and with the "children" in the second. All are temporarily *jailed*, in one case for neglecting "bad laws" and in the other for "non-conformism". In both fairy-tales the regime is represented by the "Tsar".

It is relatively of little importance which one of the provided interpretations represents Symonenko's message in both fairy-tales. It is, however, of great importance that both plots can be consistently compared to the reality and *mode of life* in the Soviet Ukraine, where it was destined for Symonenko and his adherents to live and for some to perish in the forced labour camps. Important as well is the fact, that just as the author of this study could arrive at certain thoughts and conclusions with *allegorical* interpretations, so *could* other readers and researchers. Symonenko ridiculed and condemned the *totalitarian systsem* as such.

Symonenko, a writer with university education, could not have been ignorant of Lenin's writings on the nationalities problem. After all, he was not the only one to reach similar conclusions about the *status quo* of the Soviet Ukraine within the Soviet Union.

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<sup>153</sup>) *Poezii*, p. 176.



## THE POETRY OF COURAGE AND ANGER

### A. The Poets of the Sixties

No other literary phenomenon that took place in the Soviet Ukraine after the "fusillade" which destroyed the Ukrainian revival of the late 1920s and early 1930s appeared so suddenly, nor did anything bring about so much controversy, as the poets of the sixties. Perhaps their bold, spontaneous, and enthusiastic appearance (on the Soviet Ukrainian literary scene) was a reaction to Khrushchev's literary policies, which, after all, made possible at about the same time the appearance of one, Alexander Solzhenitsyn with his bold, disturbing, account about *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (on the Soviet Russian literary scene). Both literary phenomena, the Ukrainian poets of the sixties and Solzhenitsyn, sent a shock wave throughout the Soviet Union. However, because of the "unwritten" and, yet, very *clearly* understood Western political conceptions about what is *not* to be brought to the Western reader's attention of the events taking place in the Soviet Union (including literary productivity) — only Solzhenitsyn was allowed to make the international literary and *political* "Scenario", until his ruthless expulsion by the Soviet government, early in 1974. Ukrainian poets of the sixties never did manage to make the international "scenario". They were silenced, one-by-one, in one way or another, by direct intervention of the Soviet internal security forces. Now, in the mid-1970s, there is not a single one of them left, still enjoying his "freedom", who would dare to write or say what each one of them was so boldly writing and saying only fifteen years ago. All those who would still "dare" to write or say it now — are either dead, or imprisoned. Once again there prevails *almost* total darkness in the literary life of the Soviet Ukraine.

This entire period, covering the Ukrainian poets of the sixties, deserves a thorough, separate study; and if such a study *presented in an unemotional and objective manner*, is still not available by the end of this decade — then I do aim, God willing, to provide it.

Focusing the flashback upon the early 1960s one must immediately observe that after the initial shock and surprise had gradually subsided — the appearance of the Ukrainian poets of the sixties brought about heated debates. These debates lasted up to the time of the sudden downfall of Nikita Khrushchev and for a short time after. They enlivened the boring pages of Soviet Ukrainian periodicals and newspapers of the period. These heated debates were carried over to the Ukrainian literary and *political* periodicals and newspapers published by Ukrainian exiles abroad, and, as a result, soon there was no Ukrainian national who would be “unaware” of the phenomenon (both, in the Soviet Union, and abroad). At the same time one could not find a “neutral” Ukrainian national when touching upon the subject. Strange as it may seem, the Ukrainian periodicals and newspapers published abroad, some of them in particular, often showed *less* objectivity, or even understanding of the phenomenon, than Soviet Ukrainian periodicals and newspapers published during the period (some of *them* in particular). And while it is well understood that censorship severely limits anything that can be said about *any* phenomenon that takes place in the Soviet Ukraine, some of the statements made about the Ukrainian poets of the sixties in the Ukrainian periodicals and newspapers published abroad — will forever remain a puzzle. It must be quite pointedly underlined that almost all Ukrainian poets of the sixties, *including* Vasyl Symonenko, *did at one time or another, some did so repeatedly, voice their affiliation and/or support for the Communist party.* They maintained that their poems and public statements were not directed against the Communist party as such, but against those party officials who continuously abuse the sovereign and personal rights of the Ukrainian people, rights granted and fully guaranteed by the Soviet constitution. Their main effort was directed to expose the officially sanctioned Russification of the Soviet Ukraine. They all condemned the ever-growing Russian chauvinism, strove to broaden the limited possibilities that “socialist-realism”, as the only officially permitted style, offered to literature. Their boldness was demonstrated mainly by the fact that they were not *asking*, they were *demanding*. The very essence of their platform, if one could regard as a

platform the loose affiliation of the young Ukrainian literary adherents, was best presented in the study by one, Ivan Dzyuba, written at the dawn of the 1960s, later smuggled abroad, translated into English and published in London<sup>156</sup>. Dzyuba was arrested for writing this study, he was tried and convicted, humiliated and broken in prison, and, finally, "pardoned" and released in 1974. He now continues to write and publish laudatory articles about "prospering" Soviet Ukraine and is rumoured to be working on a long essay "retracting" the statements made in the above quoted study. Obviously, most of the others were "persuaded" to change their initial line as well (Symonenko died before the crucial blows could have fallen upon him, Lina Kostenko fell silent and continues to be silent, publishing nothing, some were arrested, like Dzyuba, and are now serving time, still others gave in and collaborate now with whatever the administrative demands might be. Regardless of their individual fate, it must be granted that the Ukrainian poets of the sixties conquered for themselves a significant space in literary movements on the universal level.

*Bibliografichnyi dovidnyk*<sup>157</sup> (Bibliographical Book of Reference), published in 1966, permits examination as to the state of the Ukrainian Writers' Union on 1 January 1966 in the Soviet Ukraine<sup>158</sup>.

On that date the Ukrainian Writers' Union embraced a membership of 748 writers. Out of that number 661 (88.2%) were males and only 87 (11.8%) were females. Out of the total 433 (57.9%) were Communist party members and 315 (42.1%) were non-party members. 589 (78.8%) were University graduates, 127 (16.9%) completed secondary education and 32 (4.3%) are listed as having primary education or without any reference to their education level. 107 members completed their graduate studies and held the title of a candidate or a doctor in their respective field. That indicates that 14.3% membership of the Ukrainian Writers' Union as of 1 January 1966 was employed at the

156) Ivan Dzyuba, *Internationalism or Russification? A Study in the Soviet Nationalities Problem* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson — 1968), pp. 240.

157) Oleksandr Petrovskiy, *Pys'mennyky Radyans'kot Ukrainy. Bibliografichnyi dovidnyk* (Kiev: v-v "Radyans'kyl pys'mennyk — 1966), 799. From now on this source will be quoted as *Bibl. dovidnyk*, with indication of the necessary page numbers.

158) The publisher's note states that the aim of this publication is to show the state of the Ukrainian Writers' Union for the 1 January 1966. See: *Bibl. dovidnyk*, p. 2. This approach makes it possible to establish the exact number of the Ukrainian poets of the sixties within the Union, as compared to the rest of the membership.

University level, or occupied scholarly positions at other institutions of higher learning. The information provided by this study includes careful annotations about the working language of the members. And so 522 (69.8%) writers used at the time only Ukrainian, 162 (21.7% — only Russian, 15 (2.0% — only Yiddish or Hebrew, and 49 (6.5%) — other languages.

The membership of the poets of the sixties listed in *Bibliografichnyi dovidnyk* (77) as compared to the *Dictionary* IV-V (17) increased miraculously by 60 writers within the one year that lapsed between the publication dates of these two sources. The number of them was far greater in 1966, *Bibliografichnyi dovidnyk*, as already mentioned, listed only the members of the Ukrainian Writers' Union. To mention only those who at the end of 1965 were already published either by appearing in the Soviet Ukrainian periodicals, or having had their debut by separate individual volumes, a careful research shows 42 such writers *not* listed in the *Bibliografichnyi dovidnyk* and, therefore, we must presume that they were *not* members of the Ukrainian Writers' Union on the 1 January 1966. They are: Vitali Berezyns'kyi (1937-), Ivan Boichak (1939-), Oleksii Bulyha (1938-), Mykola Vorobiov (1941-), Les' Herasymchuk (1944-), Vasyl Holoborod'ko (1942-), Valeri Honcharenko (1942-), Halyna Hordasevych (1935-), Oles' Dorichenko (1936-), Iryna Zhylenko (1941-), Svitlana Zholob (1947-) Volodymyr Zabashtans'kyi (1940-), Stanislav Zinchuk (1939-), Mykola Il'nyts'kyi (1934-), Ihor Kalynets' (1939-), Natalya Kashchuk (1937-), Hryhori Kyrychenko (1939-), Leonid Kovalenko (1941-), Vitali Kolodii (1939-), Victor Korzh (1938-), Volodymyr Kulykivs'kyi (1937-), Roman Lubkivs'kyi (1941-), Borys Mamaisur (1938-), Volodymyr Mordan' (1937-), Vanya Otroshchenko (1948-), Volodymyr Pidpalyi (1936-), Anatoli Polishchuk (1937-), Borys Riznychenko (1940-), Mykhailo Savchenko (1947-), Lyudmyla Skyrda (1945-), Bohdan Stel'makh (1943-), Yaroslav Stupak (?-), Vasyl Stus (1938-), Lesya Tyhlii (1947-), Vasyl Fol'varochnyi (1941-), Svitlana Khmil' (1949-), Mykola Kholodnyi (1940-), Oleksandr Sharvarok (1945-), Valeri Shevchuk (1940-), Yuri Shcherbak (?-), Volodymyr Yavorivs'kyi (1942-), and Svitlana Yovenko (1946-)<sup>159</sup>. At least two of the above

<sup>159</sup> I have carefully researched all available Soviet Ukrainian periodicals, as well as individual publications for 1960-1966, and found all these 42 young writers published, either several times in a periodical, or by their own books, before 1966.



named authors have been arrested and tried during the early 1970s and are now serving time. They are Ihor Kalynets' and Vasyl Stus. The others continue to publish, some of them are by now members of the Ukrainian Writers' Union, the fate of still others is not known.

The state of membership in the Ukrainian Writers' Union for 1 January 1966 is shown in Tables IX, X, XI and XII. Table IX shows the Communist party affiliation, Table X — the social origin, Table XI — the working language, and Table XII — territorial origin and the language used, considering the origin, of the Soviet Ukrainian writers listed in *Bibliohrafichnyi dovidnyk*.

Concentrating on these four Tables and comparing the data with those provided in the Tables based on the *Dictionary IV-V* (shown in the first chapter) — the large increase of young people entering literature during the first part of the 1960s is immediately felt. More so, if the 42 names of persons are considered, who *were not* listed as members of the Ukrainian Writers' Union by 1 January 1966, and yet they were all published writers by that date. According to the statutes of the Ukrainian Writers' Union *any* citizen of the Soviet Ukraine who has completed 18 years of age and authored *any published* work can become a member of this, *the only*, literary organization in the Soviet Ukraine, provided some members in good standing would recommend acceptance. It would be hard to believe that at least some of the 42 could not find and secure the needed support under normal circumstances. The fact is that most of the beginning writers, born during the 1930s and 1940s, who made their debut in literature during the first half of the 1960s were facing great administrative difficulties not only by trying to by-pass the mandatory censorship but by trying to earn professional standing by joining the Ukrainian Writers' Union as well.

TABLE IX.

Communist Party Affiliation of Soviet Ukrainian Writers  
on 1 January 1966

Generation	Total writers		Communist party	
	Total writers	%	Total members	%
Up to 1899	50	6.7%	11	22.0%
1900-1910	195	26.1%	108	55.3%
1911-1929	426	56.9%	283	66.4%
1930 and up	77	10.3%	31	40.3%
Totals:	748	100.0%	433	57.9%

TABLE X.

Social Origin of Soviet Ukrainian Writers  
on 1 January 1966

Generation	Peasants		Workers		Intelligenzia	
	Peasants	%	Workers	%	Intelligenzia	%
Up to 1899	19	38.0%	9	18.0%	22	44.0%
1900-1910	66	33.8%	55	28.2%	74	38.0%
1911-1929	200	47.0%	87	20.4%	139	32.6%
1930 and up	30	38.9%	15	19.5%	32	41.6%
Totals:	315	42.1%	166	22.2%	267	35.7%

TABLE XI.

Languages Used by Soviet Ukrainian Writers  
on 1 January 1966

Generation	Ukrainian		Russian		Yiddish or Hebrew		Other	
	Ukrainian	%	Russian	%	Yiddish or Hebrew	%	Other	%
Up to 1899	39	78.0%	6	12.0%	2	4.0%	3	6.0%
1900-1910	128	65.6%	41	21.0%	7	3.5%	19	9.9%
1911-1929	292	68.6%	102	23.9%	6	1.4%	26	6.1%
1930 and up	63	81.8%	13	16.9%	-	-	1	1.3%
Totals:	522	69.8%	162	21.7%	15	2.0%	49	6.5%

TABLE XI.

Territorial Origin and the Language Used by Ukrainian  
Writers on 1 January 1966

Province or State	Total writers	Language used			
		Ukr.	Russ.	Yidd. or Heb.	Other
Vinnys't'ka	37	32	3	-	2
Volyns'ka	5	5	-	-	-
Dnipropetrovs'ka	40	27	6	1	6
Donets'ka	27	11	16	-	-
Zhytomyrs'ka	37	27	1	7	2
Zaporiz'ka	16	15	-	1	-
Ivano-Frankivs'ka	6	6	-	-	-
Kiev (Capital city)	34	20	10	-	4
Kyivs'ka	57	48	5	2	2
Kirovohrads'ka	37	30	3	1	3
Kryms'ka	8	-	8	-	-
Luhans'ka	11	7	3	-	1
L'vivs'ka	10	10	-	-	-
Mykolaivs'ka	13	10	2	-	1
Odes'ka	25	12	10	-	3
Poltavs'ka	65	58	3	-	4
Rivens'ka	3	3	-	-	-
Sums'ka	20	18	2	-	-
Ternopils'ka	5	5	-	-	-
Transcarpaty	17	13	1	-	3
Kharkivs'ka	48	36	10	-	2
Khersons'ka	11	7	3	-	1
Khmel'nyts'ka	20	18	2	-	-
Cherkas'ka	40	37	1	-	2
Chernihivs'ka	38	33	1	1	3
Chernivets'ka	6	3	1	-	2
In Ukrainian S.S.R.	636	491	91	13	41

Province or State	Total writers	Language used			
		Ukr.	Russ.	Yidd. or Heb.	Other
Russian S.F.S.R.	79	19	57	-	3
All other Republics	21	5	11	2	3
Poland	9	7	1	-	1
All other States	3	-	2	-	1
Fr. outside U.S.S.R. (Soviet Ukraine)	112	31	71	2	8
Totals:	748	522	162	15	49

Further examination of the Tables suggests the following deductions:

1. The writers of the third generation (56.9%) composed more than a half of the total membership in the Ukrainian Writers' Union as of 1 January 1966. These writers lived their formative years during the reign of Stalin's "personality cult", most of them took part in the "Great Patriotic War" on the front line, in Red partisan units or as war correspondents. Researching the notes in *Bibliografichnyi dovidnyk I* I have counted 413 (55.2%) writers of the total membership *directly* participated in World War II. Out of them 249 (33.3%) were decorated, 319 (42.7%) were front line soldiers or officers, 33 (4.4%) fought in Red partisan units, and 61 (8.1%) served in supporting logistic units. During their formative years these writers were fully exposed only to "socialist-realism" type of literature and almost totally ignorant of the Western literary movements of the time. Nevertheless, the writers of this generation managed to complete higher education after the war, or at least attended institutions of higher learning, privileges they claim to have earned by their service during the hostilities. This group of writers continuously claims all sorts of "veteran privileges", both, in their literary works, and in their public appearances, as coming to them for having actively fought against the Nazi invaders. This generation had provided a number of accomplished writers, as well as a good number of literary drones, who were among the most severe critics of the innovative creativity demonstrated by the poets of the sixties. More than the traditional "generation gap" is responsible for having driven these two successive generations of Soviet Ukrainian writers completely apart.

2. Out of the fourth generation only 17 names were listed by the *Dictionary IV-V*, in 1965. *Bibliohrafichnyi dovidnyk* listed 77 (10.3%) members of that generation in 1966. The substantial increase cannot remain unobserved and is only underlined by the 42 names *not* listed. The anthology published at about the same time abroad listed even less, only 60 writers<sup>160</sup>, and is, perhaps, limited by its very title: *Shistdesyat poetiv shistdesyatykh rokiv* (Sixty Poets of the Sixties). This data, in spite of attempts to keep the movement downtrodden, shows a remarkable rise in the literary replenishment during the first half of the 1960s.

3. Using rather careful and by far incomplete remarks — 49 out of 245 writers of the first and second generations point out the repressive measures to which they were submitted during Stalin's "personality cult" that inspired years of terror. And so, within his autobiographical note, the renowned writer Borys Antonenko-Davydovych states, that he had "a prolonged interruption to his creative work that lasted until 1956"<sup>161</sup>, Viktor Leontievich Petrov'skyi duly states that he too managed to "devote many years to work far removed from literature"<sup>162</sup>, Yevhen Stepanovych Shabliov'skyi remarked, that he "was denied between 1937 and 1957 any possibility to conduct creative work"<sup>163</sup>. Most of the others did not even dare to make such innocent remarks within their notes, yet, as in the *Dictionary IV-V*, long gaps showing inactivity in publication testify as to the true nature of their experiences. *All of them* spent the respective periods as inmates of forced labour camps, were later "rehabilitated", and finally restored to their rights as members of the Ukrainian Writers' Union.

4. The working language used by the members points out some very interesting facts. For instance, the smallest number of writers using Ukrainian as their working language falls on the *second* and *the third* generations. Responsible for that, in my opinion, is the collective experience of those two generations. They were the silent, helpless, and inactive witnesses to the events of the 1930s during which a substantial number of their literary

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160) Bohdan Kravtsov (comp.), *op cit.*

161) *Bibl. dovidnyk*, p. 13.

162) *Bibl. dovidnyk*, p. 528.

163) *Ibid.*, p. 740.

colleagues were physically destroyed, or "put away" and vanished without trace. Some, who survived the purges, were questioned at the time, or put away for a while themselves and remember this period well, never to forget. It is also significant that among the writers of the third generation those imported out of the Russian S.F.S.R. predominate. Their working language was and still is Russian and their literary output is directed at the local Russian, or Russified Ukrainian, population. Autobiographical notes prepared by those writers indicate that they have settled in the Soviet Ukraine after World War II. Their arrival coincides with intensification of the administrative efforts to Russify the Ukrainian population of the Soviet Ukraine. And here, note the behaviour of the *fourth* generation, the poets of the sixties substantially raise the Ukrainian language as the working language for their generation of writers. Studying Table XII it is relatively easy to see "the centers" of the Russification processes as of 1 January 1966. They are: Donbas, Crimea, somewhat less strong — Odessa, Kharkiv, and Kiev (the Capital city). Unfortunately *Bibliohrafichnyi dovidnyk* does not provide data as to the place of the whereabouts and work of the Soviet Ukrainian writers it listed as of 1 January 1966, if such data were available it would be possible to determine the contemporary distribution of literary forces in the Soviet Ukraine.

5. Data about the social origin (always the most unreliable of all the Soviet given data) does not indicate any substantial changes for 1 January 1966. Most of the writers of rural origin are located within the third generation (47.0%), the percentages are lower for the poets of the sixties (38.9%). Data contained in the *Dictionary IV-V* indicated that most of the urban working class writers appeared with the processes of the Ukrainization (1924-1933) and that fact had an impact upon the second generation of writers, which even as of 1 January 1966 still contains 28.2% writers of the urban working class origin. Percentages of the intelligenzia, high for the writers of the first generation (44.0%), rises again for the writers of the fourth generation (41.6%).

6. Perhaps the most peculiar information is contained in Table XII, where the territorial origin of the writers is shown. First of all there are 112 (15.0%) writers who were born outside the

Soviet Ukraine. Noting the working language of those writers we see that the great majority (71) uses Russian. A good number of them had settled in Donbas and Crimea areas and there they have succeeded to Russify the local chapters of the Ukrainian Writers' Union to such an extent that almost all of the publications released by these local chapters are in Russian.

All of the former Western Ukrainian provinces (Volyns'ka, Ivano-Frankivs'ka, Lvivs'ka, Rivens'ka, Ternopil's'ka, and Transcarpaty) — are represented in the Ukrainian Writers' Union by only 52 members. That is less than provided by one Poltav'ska province. This would tend to indicate that the official influence of the Western Ukrainian provinces upon the processes taking place in the Soviet Ukrainian literature is at its minimal. The reason for such a low number of Western Ukrainian writers in the Ukrainian Writers' Union is clear: the writers of the first, second, and third generations left Western Ukrainian provinces during the World War II by large numbers to stay in exile and the cultivation of the new literary cadres was proceeding at a slow pace.

Out of all of the members using Russian as their working language it is possible to establish on the basis of their autobiographical notes that out of the total of 162 — 44 (27.2%) are Ukrainians, 89 (54.9%) are Russians, 12 (7.4%) are Jews, and 17 (10.5%) are of some other nationality. That proves that the processes of Russification in the Soviet Ukraine are supported by almost a half (45.1%) of writers with *non-Russian* nationality.

All these facts had a great influence upon the appearance of poets in the sixties. They were present there, in the Soviet Ukraine, where Russification and enforced migrations were taking place, they just had to have a say about all that. Their say they did have, indeed. This is how the poetry of courage and anger was born.

The literary movement referred to in my study as *the poets of the sixties* (the movement included also writers working in highly poetic prose and literary critics) had its start with the poetry of Lina Kostenko<sup>164</sup> (1930-), the poetess most "mature in art"<sup>165</sup> even before the 1960s. The first book of her poems was published

<sup>164</sup> *Dictionary IV*, pp. 771-772.

<sup>165</sup> Max Hayward and Edward L. Cowley (eds.), *Soviet Literature in the Sixties* (New York, London: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc — 1964), p. 113.

in 1957 under the title *Prominnyia zemli* (The Earth Sunbeams). Soon after two more books appeared: *Vitryla* (The Sails) in 1958 and *Mandrivky sertsya* (The Journeys of the Heart) in 1961. Ever since — new winds began to blow through Soviet Ukrainian poetry. These were excellent times for a new talent to blow innovative and bold spirit into stale air. The party apparatus in Moscow was still bewildered and confused after the XXth Party Congress wavering between the new liberal denunciations of the “personality cult” and the old conservative ways (do not confuse the terms “liberal” and “conservative” as applied to the situation in Soviet Union with their interpretation in the Western world). Even so Lina Kostenko almost at once was condemned by two important Soviet Ukrainian critics (Yuri Barabash and Viktor Ivanysenko) as being a *formalist* poet, and later, when the poetess refused to submit repenting declarations, during the IV Congress of the Soviet Ukrainian Writers, in March 1959, by Mykola Bazhan. At that time Bazhan was the Chairman of the Soviet Ukrainian Writers’ Union<sup>166</sup>.

Official rebuke forced Lina Kostenko to fall silent for a while. Her silence lasted for one whole year, throughout 1960. Yet, the poetess was not ready to resign herself to total silence at that time. When it seemed that the conservative party currents gained control of Soviet Ukrainian literature again — her voice was heard, and it sounded even stronger in 1961. It was not a voice of solitary despair any more. Other voices of young poets, writers, and literary critics joined hers in powerful unison. Thus, a new literary movement was born and quickly gained wide popularity and recognition. It was now supported even by some of those writers and literary critics who had previously opposed Lina Kostenko. The first poet to sound in unison was Vasyl Symonenko, whose poetry was widely circulating in manuscript copies even before his first book of poetry was published in 1962. Other names, like that of the poet, movie actor and director Mykola Vinhranovs’kyi<sup>167</sup> (1935-), the novelist and short story writer Yevhen Hutsalo<sup>168</sup> (1937-), the brilliant literary critic Ivan Dzyuba<sup>169</sup> (1931-), the imaginative poet Ivan

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<sup>166</sup> *Dictionary IV.*, p. 33.

<sup>167</sup> *Dictionary IV.*, pp. 197-198.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 379-380.

<sup>169</sup> Not listed in the *Dictionary IV.* See: *Bibl. dovidnyk*, p. 181.



Drach<sup>170</sup> (1936-), the reflexive poet and medical doctor Vitali Korotych<sup>171</sup> (1936-), the poet and literary critic Ivan Svitlychnyi<sup>172</sup> (1929-), and the very productive lyricist Mykola Synhivs'kyi<sup>173</sup> (1936-), either made their debut within or identified with the movement. I have listed above only those writers who had made important and lasting contributions to the Soviet Ukrainian literature during the 1960s, there were many more who were never allowed to develop. All of them, each one individually, and, nevertheless, united in their aims, started out to reach for common objectives: to achieve protection from administrative abuse of the constitutional rights granted to the Soviet Ukrainian people and to break ties with the official conventionalism in literature. Lina Kostenko openly spoke about the ills inherited by her contemporaries showing what kind of "relay batons" the poets of the sixties were trying to pass on:

. . . Oh, many souls became in our century  
such desperate and mutilated souls . . .  
Some got themselves to ail by being sea sick,  
go on and stumble on the world's deck.  
All shaky, devastated, weak forever,  
beware, if one into the Arts should sprout, —  
  
he'd search the forms that were discovered never,  
he'd search the forms not ever heard about.  
  
And here are they, who try to find a feeding,  
and all the chiselers, sceptics by a haul —  
the most contemporary form are seeking  
for all the content  
missing out of soul.

. . . . .

There're all kinds of relay batons.  
The poets do pass on to poets  
From soul to soul,  
Language — to language

170) *Dictionary IV.*, pp. 478-480.

171) *Ibid.*, pp. 760-762.

172) Not listed in the *Dictionary V.*, nor in the *Bibl. dovtdnyk*.

173) Not listed in the *Dictionary V.* in spite of the fact that he had already published 5 books of poems. See: *Bibl. dovtdnyk*, p. 605.

Freedom of spirit and words not weakened,  
Having not swapped them for baneful trifles,  
Nor for the comforts and love of glory . . .<sup>174</sup>

It took great courage to write and publish such lines, under the circumstances, when the poetess was already haunted by the official rebuke. The courage was set off by anger, it was set off to jolt her "sea sick" contemporaries, to shake up the literature beset by those, who try "to find a feeding, the chiselers, and the sceptics", those who, like Symonenko remarked in his diary, "lie to gain moral and material comfort".

While trying to expand the horizons of Soviet Ukrainian literature the poets of the sixties paid particular attention to the historical aspects of the long struggle against Russification. With all possible vigour they continued to maintain that the Soviet Ukraine had irrefutable rights to be equal *among* her neighbours and not *under* dominance of the strongest one. They had voiced concern for the future of the Soviet Ukraine if dominance was to continue and protested loudly against all forms of violence. In some respects their efforts coincided with former, more cautiously worded efforts, made by the writers of older generations. For instance, back in 1955, the renowned Soviet Ukrainian poet Maksym Ryl's'kyi carefully voiced his objections to the massive, enforced evictions of the Ukrainian youth to distant regions in Soviet Siberia and other Soviet Republics to work on the so called "voluntary work projects". The example provided below shows semantic signification placed on several words in this poetic allegorisation by Maksym Ryl's'kyi. The poet understood quite well, that being sent far away from their native land and environment, with little contact with their language, young people were facing denationalisation. In his poem "Porada" (Advice) he said:

A clever gardener once said to me:  
"If a young fir-tree you should be transplanting,  
Mark well the north and south sides of the tree  
And dibble likely: it shall grow well, heating.

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<sup>174</sup> These two excerpts, out of the two separate poems written by Lina Kostenko are quoted from the essay by Bohdan Kravtsov. See: Bohdan Kravtsov, "Velyka vedmedytsya i honchi psy", *Suchasnist'* (February, 1962), p. 28.

Make sure the same side to the south can peer,  
With the same eye, just like before you picked it;  
Against broad northern wind — the same should veer,  
The same should struggle — somber branches thicket.

One more thing: in a body do transplant;  
Alone, without the friends, it won't be growing . . ."  
. . . In life there are advices quite well meant  
And not the worse one out of them I'm showing.<sup>175</sup>

The words containing additional semantic signification in this poem are: "transplanting" (eviction), "young fir-tree" (young Ukrainian). The above significations are obvious. There is a possibility of semantic signification on the words "north" and "south" (south meaning native land and north — foreign soil). To point out very similar semantic signification in a poem by Lina Kostenko, with the same problem in mind, let us examine "Sadzhanets" (Seedling), written in 1958:

A young tree feathered oneself.  
Coverts are greenish,  
It quivered on jubilating branches.

In November — fell off . . .  
And the name of that tree was a maple.  
They have dug it all out,  
well, they tore it away from the earth.

Rode it on — rode it on  
over jolty Autumnal high-roads.  
To a far away land  
planted on unfamiliar grounds . . .

It did not waste away,  
for a nodule of powerful rooting  
on the journey it took,  
the most native, own mother earth.<sup>176</sup>

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175) Maksym Ryl's'kyl, *Troyandy i vynohrad* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'mennyk" — 1957), p. 3.

176) Lina Kostenko, *Vitryla* (Kiev: v-vo "Radyans'kyl pys'mennyk — 1958), p. 57.

Here the poetess had concentrated semantic signification on the words "planted" and "maple" in the very same way Ryl's'kyi did on the words "transplanting" and "young fir-tree". Unlike in the former, it is obviously clear in Kostenko's poem that by "the most native, own mother earth", the "unfamiliar grounds" and the way they "tore" the young tree "away from the earth" she meant *involuntary transplantation* designed to doom the "maple". In botany transplants are made to improve the condition of a plant, yet, in Kostenko's poem the only reason for the "seedling" not "wasting away" (her point being that it was *meant* to) is, that it took along some "native soil". In both poems there is one common denominator: *a tree being transplanted into foreign soil*. It is interesting to note that the first poem was written by the foremost poet belonging to the first generation and the second by the foremost poetess belonging to the fourth generation of Soviet Ukrainian writers. And when the poet of the first generation, well experienced in Soviet literary acrobatics performed in matter to survive, voices a cautions "worry" about the tree being transplanted, then the poetess of the fourth generation, less experienced and more straightforward, voices her deep belief and strong optimism concerning the same problem. Kostenko's "young maple" will survive because it has "the most native" of soil to back it up, while the "young fir-tree" of Ryl's'kyi *could* survive if . . . One thing is clear: *there could have been an understanding among some of the Soviet Ukrainian writers about additional semantic signification to be used on certain words in their creative works.*

Who can tell to what extent the movement would have developed, what spiritual and semantic ties the poets of the sixties would have established with other Soviet Ukrainian writers of *all* generations, what ties with all of the Ukrainian people. The fact is, that in 1963, all kinds of reactionary forces gathered over the poets of the sixties, and, as early as then, commenced their frontal attack. It was the beginning of the end for the movement. Less than ten years later the poets of the sixties were either jailed and sentenced, or otherwise silenced. The irony of it all is that the very Soviet leader whose literary policies in a way encouraged the appearance of dissidents on all-

Union level, and, in 1963 still almighty Khrushchev<sup>177</sup>, joined in the onslaught.

The onslaught, initially involving the Soviet Russian writers and artists, inevitably, had its final impact upon the Soviet Ukrainian intelligenzia. Khrushchev's forced heirs made certain of that. It is no secret that the principal "victims" of the 1963 attacks, the Soviet Russian poets Yevtushenko and Voznesensky continue to write and publish, in a similar manner as they did then, even today. Both enjoyed frequent visits abroad. Ehrenburg did as well, until his natural death. And the living Soviet Ukrainian poets of the sixties are, as mentioned before, either imprisoned or broken. None of the ones who still publish today write as they did then. This fact speaks for itself. It was and still is *the* Russian policy, before and after the Revolution of 1917, to show more tolerance toward their own dissidents than toward the dissidents belonging to all other nationalities that are being forced to be a part, first, of Imperial Russia, and now — of the Soviet Union. It could not be any other way. The fate of an Empire is at stake. It is not up to me to judge. Let the impartial reader pass a judgment.

Nevertheless, before the present victory was again on the side of the regime, a new courageous, pure, and unforgettable voice

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177) On 8 March 1963, during a meeting of the leaders of the party and the representatives of the all-Union writers and artists, held in Moscow, Khrushchev delivered a whole series of attacks in a speech entitled "High Ideology and Artistic Mastery is the Great Strength of the Soviet Literature and Art" The speech was translated from Russian and published by the *Literaturna Ukraina* (March 12 and 15, 1963). This obligatory speech was delivered in support of L. F. Il'ichev, then secretary of the Communist party, who spoke on 7 March 1963 "About the Responsibility of an Artist to the People".

Among other things, Khrushchev said: "... as it happens, some representatives of the Arts judge about the reality only by the smell of the latrines, portray people in deliberately distorted ways . . . . portray reality according to their own prejudices, twisted, subjective images about it, following excoigitated, meagre schemes prepared by themselves . . . . At the same time we regard it as indispensable to bring to the attention of all the creative workers some of the erroneous motives and tendencies that appear in works of separate authors. Wrong tendencies are mainly in one-sided attention devoted exclusively to facts of lawlessness, self-will, abuse of power . . . . It is also well known that Stalin aimed at destroying a large segment of the creative intelligenzia of the Soviet Ukraine . . . . If the Ukrainian bolsheviks would have given in to Stalin's moods at the time, then, indeed, Ukrainian intelligenzia would have suffered considerable losses (just as if Ukrainian intelligenzia did not suffer such "considerable losses" — I. Shankovsky), and, probably, a new "case" involving Ukrainian nationalists would have been created . . . It goes on and on in a similar manner.

Both speeches were directed mainly against the Soviet Russian writers Yevtushenko, Voznesensky, and Ehrenburg. Yet, as noted above, Khrushchev also touched upon the so-called "Ukrainian problem" and that gave reason enough to start vicious attacks directed against the poets of the sixties by every toady in the Soviet Ukrainian printed media. The downfall of Khrushchev, less than two years later, only intensified the attacks, followed by arrests, convictions, terror.

full of character — sounded on the side of the losers. It was the voice of a dying young man, the voice of Vasyl Symonenko.

## B. Symonenko's Poetics

It has already been pointed out in the previous chapters of this study that not only the inspired and bold phrases but every thought of this exciting young man were directed against any evil and abuse bestowed upon Ukrainian people by any one invader. Unable to separate himself from the social and moral issues of his time in his short stories, offering allegoric reference to the reality in his fairy-tales, the young poet excelled — all of it in his poems which can be described as outright *revolutionary*. The semantic signification of words in his verse is even more apparent. At the same time the analysis of his own diary shows that Symonenko regarded himself as an ardent searcher in the realm of *new thoughts* and was committed against any sort of toadyism in literature. It would have saddened Julien Benda, the author of the notoriously famous *La Trahison des clercs* (The Intellectuals' Betrayal), to see a poet as committed to his people as Symonenko, some thirty-five years after the initial printing of his apologia. For Symonenko placed his creativity in defence of national dignity and had courage to write and say what others feared even to think about. One of his contemporary adherers, the poet Mykola Som, wrote in the foreword to the posthumous volume of the departed colleague:

... Having entered literature, Vasyl Symonenko, gifted with generous talent and incorruptible intellect, loudly sang his hearty song. His first volume *Tysha i hrim* immediately caught on with the people, became a significant phenomenon in the Ukrainian poetry of last years.

Today Symonenko is with us no more. Yet his fiery song remains, and he himself remains forever young in life and in poetry...<sup>178</sup>

Singing "a hearty song" in a totalitarian State, especially on the Ukrainian soil, where a song was always favourably received, could not have lasted for long. After realising that Symonenko's poems contain truly exposing qualities, sensing hidden semantic signification over and above the normative meaning of many a word, having considered all the possibilities

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<sup>178</sup> Mykola Som, "Slovo pro Vasylya Symonenka", Vasyl Symonenko, *Zemne tyazhynny* (Kiev: v-vo "Molod'" — 1964), p. 3.

of allegorical interpretation — the Soviet censorship did apply its proven measures, that are: refusal to print, or, distortion of poems accepted for publication. The petulant ways and means of Soviet censorship are confirmed by Symonenko in his diary. It is also well known that Symonenko's poetry was circulated, in a clandestine manner and without regard for personal safety by those involved, widely in Soviet Ukraine even *before*<sup>179</sup> the volume *Tysha i hrim* was signed for publication in 1962.

To analyse Symonenko's poems is not an easy task. The analyst is faced at once with serious obstacles. Even now, some fourteen years after his death, one can not even dream about availability of his literary heritage, about free access to his manuscripts. His biography and primary bibliography of his works are for the present only solitary cadres on the film of a short life. More so, it is impossible to conduct serious analysis while having constantly to consider *which poem has been* and *which poem has not been* abused by censors. Especially, when after years have elapsed from the day of the poet's passing away, some Soviet "friends" keep on "bringing to public attention" and publishing in Soviet Ukrainian periodicals "newly discovered" (sic!) poems, where Symonenko, supposedly, exults in praise of Russia and Communism. A question arises, why were such poems not "discovered" while the poet was still alive? Obviously, if there indeed were such poems written by Symonenko, no censorship would ever have been needed. One thing that Symonenko was *not*, is a scoundrel. Nor did he ever, to judge on the basis of all available works, contradict himself. In one of his poems he urges Russia to *shut up*, while he converses with Ukraine, so, where do the "dithyrambes" in praise of Russia come from, several years after his death? Such falsifications complicate and at times make it impossible to arrive even at a suggestive appraisal of any poem written by Symonenko and *published* in Soviet Ukraine. For that reason I have selected to analyse and make inferences about semantic signification on the basis of the poems smuggled abroad and published in the volume *Bereh chekan'* (The Shore of Expectations) *only*. Two chapters are being considered: "From the Poetry Abused by the Soviet Censorship", and "Poetry Forbidden in the U.S.S.R.". Both

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<sup>179</sup> Editorial, "Ukrainian Poet and Rebel: Vasyl Symonenko", *The Ukrainian Bulletin* (October, 1965), p. 87.

chapters contain only eighteen poems, a minimal percentage, if compared to the entire heritage of literary works left behind by Symonenko, but, indeed, more reliable than the works exposed to Soviet censorship. This fact was admitted and confirmed by the Soviet Ukrainian critic Ivan Svitlychnyi, who at the time was already being persecuted, yet, apparently, forced to contribute the article quoted below to *Visti z Ukrainy* (The News from Ukraine), a Soviet propaganda sheetlet written and distributed exclusively for the consumption of Ukrainians living in exile. Here is what Svitlychnyi wrote:

... The textological history of many poems by V. Symonenko as of this moment is not ascertained and it is difficult to say, in each and every case, what was changed by the author himself, and what — by the editors. There was this, and there was that. And there are such changes that, indeed, improve the work, but there also are such, that do not bestow honour on those, who made them...<sup>180</sup>

It is not as important that Svitlychnyi, a persecuted adherent of Vasyl Symonenko, who is now serving a jail sentence for his convictions, admitted and confirmed that editorial or other “changes” took place. More important by far is the underlining of such admission and confirmation by those who publish the propaganda sheetlet by permitting this confession to be printed. Whatever the reasons, oversight, or repentance (there are such Western intellectuals who never doubt any statement made in Soviet propaganda leaflets), the statement stands. Nevertheless, I am only speculating when I say that Svitlychnyi was “forced” to contribute this article, for it is strange to see what he goes on to state there. First of all he attempts to “disarm” the method selected by the editor I. Koshelivets’ in naming the chapters in the volume printed in exile:

... That way, from the entire chapter “Poetry Forbidden in the U.S.S.R.,” practically remain only three poems: “Brama” (The Gate), “Zlodij” (The Thief), and “Nekroloh kukurudzyanomu kachanovi (A Necrology for a Corn-cob). Poems you can say, edged. So was V. Symonenko, uncompromising, sharp, merciless. But even these poems, in spite of all their edginess, are not anti-Soviet: to criticize selected events of collective farm life does not mean to negate the collective farm system in general. And they are no more edgy than the published poem “The Prophecy of 1917”...<sup>181</sup>

<sup>180</sup> I. Svitlychnyi, “Vasyl Symonenko — poet anzhazhovanyi narodom”, *Visti z Ukrainy* No. 35/421 (August, 1966), p. 4. *Italics* by the author of this study.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*



A few sentences later, as shall be proven after the next quotation, Svitlychnyi exaggerated, trying, probably, to "please" the editors and censors in *Visti z Ukrainy*. He attempted to deny the fact that Symonenko was ever preparing a volume entitled *Bereh chekan'*:

... And so, his conception about an *imaginary* volume, which V. Symonenko supposedly created, yet, "it was rejected by the Soviet publishers" I. Koshelivets' builds only upon several poems. What kind of a volume can be made out of several poems? All that, naturally, is not enough to make up an entire *legend* about two Symonenkos, and *such a legend can appear verisimilar only to those, who are not in the position to verify the factual under warp of the legend*...<sup>182</sup>

In this passage Svitlychnyi questions the validity of a statement made by the editor of the volume published in exile, where the latter maintained in his foreword that there were two Symonenkos. One, whose poetry was abused and then officially published in twisted appearance, and the other one, whose poetry circulated in clandestine manuscripts. Svitlychnyi also dismisses the conception that a volume of poetry, entitled *Bereh chekan'*, ever existed as "imaginary". What is true, then, in point of fact? — Exactly the opposite to what Svitlychnyi states here. The "factual under warp of the legend" *can be verified*. Svitlychnyi, or those, who presented the above quoted essay for his signature, did not take into account the fact, that the Soviet press (unlike the Western press in the Soviet Union) is readily available abroad to anyone for the asking. He, or they, apparently forgot, that yearly volumes of any Soviet newspaper or periodical can be kept legally by any private person for any period of time, not only for the maximum of three years as it is practiced in the Soviet Union. I, for example, keep all of the issues of the *Literaturna hazeta (Ukraina)* since 1956. There, in the volume for 1962, the following item appeared as a part of an editorial presentation, under the title "Let's get acquainted":

Vasyl Symonenko — a poet. Born 1935, in Poltava province. Member of the Communist Party. Graduated out of the Kievan State University named after T. H. Shevchenko. From 1960 works on the staff of the newspaper *Molod' Cherkashchyny*. A volume of

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182) I. Svitlychnyi, *op. cit.*, p. 4. *Italics* continued by me.

his poetry *Tysha i hrim* was published by the State Literary Publishers of the Soviet Ukraine. Now the poet completed his second volume, entitled *Bereh chekan'* (The Shore of Expectations).<sup>183</sup>

At this point it looks as if there is not much more to say about the entire matter. Certainly, even the *Visti z Ukrainy* will not try to convince anybody that I. Koshelivets', who lives and works in Munich, West Germany, was at the time editing *Literaturna Ukraina* in Kiev to make up his "legend" there. Nevertheless, one is tempted to ask: *who are the ones that make up legends*, and what happened to the rest of the poems included by Symonenko in his *completed* volume *Bereh chekan'* (for I do agree with I. Svitlychnyi's statement that no volume can be made "out of several poems")?! Why exactly these, the missing poems, were not published in the Soviet Ukraine? Why do most of the newspaper items printed about Symonenko, as mentioned in the first chapter of this study, name V. Symonenko as a member of the Communist party, while the *Dictionary*, published in 1965 and very carefully listing all other writers who ever were members of the Communist party, *does not* name him as a party member? Is it true, as stated by the Polish emigré poet Josef Lobodowski in the respected monthly *Kultura* (The Culture), that Symonenko was posthumously tried in a secret trial involving the very same I. Svitlychnyi and the critic I. Dzyuba, that it was decided during that trial to expel Symonenko (again posthumously) from the party and that only some time later he was restored to the party ranks under pressure of those party members who refused to have anything to do with this insanity?

None of these questions shall ever be answered by Soviet authorities under the present circumstances, and it is fair to assume — under any circumstances. The Soviet regime will not be able to appropriate Symonenko to its cause, no matter how expertly his poems should be falsified in the future, no matter how many monuments should be erected to his memory. No measures undertaken by the authorities there could possibly deceive anybody, neither at home, nor abroad.

Thus, out of the volume of poetry that seems to have disappeared, or, perhaps, by a chance of fortune, is kept hidden for a time being by one or more of the numerous adherents of

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<sup>183</sup> "Bud'mo znalomi", *Literaturna Ukraina* (December 14, 1962), p. 1. The editorial item presented also other writers there.

Symonenko, the analysis must be confined to the eighteen poems available out of that volume now. Two out of the eighteen were included in the quoted *second* posthumous volume printed in the Soviet Ukraine. They are: "Samotnist" (this poem was already compared to the entry Symonenko had made in his diary), and "Ya" (I).<sup>184</sup> Two more poems from the chapter "Poetry Forbidden in the U.S.S.R." were printed some three years later in the Kievan youth magazine, squeezed in between already known short topical poems that appeared in the *first* quoted posthumous volume printed in the Soviet Ukraine. They were presented under a (very revealing!) title: "Parodies, Jokes, and Fairy Tales". They were "Balada pro zaishloho cholovika" (Balad About a Stranger), and "Sud" (The Trial).<sup>185</sup> Above this selection, in a short introduction entitled "Zhyvi slova" (Living Words) a Candidate in Philology, one Vasyl Lysenko, maintains that still another volume, one that contains Symonenko's satirical poems, is ready for publication and will be released soon. The introduction is so short that it can be provided here in its entire form:

#### LIVING WORDS...

... Not so long ago, it seems, he was still among us — given to reverie, pensive, smiling. And yet, the literary community of Ukraine marked already the fifth anniversary from the day of his premature, tragic death — one of the most severe losses suffered during the last several years by our young poetry.

Nevertheless, the thundering sound of his powerful poetic engines is still coming to us from beyond the skyline, out of these high orbits that were destined for him by the fate forever.

Today we offer a new selection of the unpublished poems by Vasyl Symonenko. There are quite a few of them left in the poet's archive, according to previous counts almost 2000 lines. These are mostly poems of the early period, written during school days, variants, and so on. But, there are also *some of the later works that for various reasons did not make the pages in his published volumes: quite often they were rejected by the poet, who was mercilessly exacting from himself.*

The selection proposed here is composed out of the unknown fairy-tales, fables, and parodies by V. Symonenko, who during the last years of his life took interest in weapons used by our satirists and humorists, contributed to *Perets'* (The Pepper) magazine, planned to publish a small volume in the series "fellow-penmen" (in the

<sup>184</sup> Poezii, pp. 183 and 189.

<sup>185</sup> Vasyl Symonenko, "Parodii, zharty, balky", Dnipro (March, 1969), pp. 123-125.

*near future this dream, not realized during the lifetime of the poet-satirist and humorist, shall be realized).*

It is not difficult to notice that even in this *g nre* the poet had time to utter his ponderable, full-blooded, living word, saturated in the passion of his thoughts and desires, with high civic strivings: from the traditional beginners' fables on indifferent, animalistic topics he was passing to broader, socially important and society-significant themes. He succeeded even in this, by producing a whole series of lasting achievements, which determine his place in Soviet Ukrainian poetry for history.<sup>186</sup>

Needless to say, the volume referred to in the above introduction never was published in the Soviet Ukraine as of this writing, some eight years after the promise was made. Some of the poems presented as "unknown" had been published before, as mentioned, in the first posthumous volume, but V. Lysenko could have made an oversight.

A few words now to clarify my own position in relation to existing critical schools before undertaking this final analysis. In the most recent years a number of prominent scholars and literary critics have voiced their discontent with the prevailing traditions in approach to literary study. On one hand, there is the deadbeat Western formalist approach by the so called "aesthetic purists", who have succeeded in reducing literary study to obscurantism. For some decades now, instead of examining *what* a literary work really is and what purpose does it serve, the "aesthetic purists" tried to squeeze anything analysed into a narrow framework by force, a framework made up by themselves in the first place, even if it meant breaking off arms and legs. On the other hand, there is the notorious Marxist literary teraph, which assaults literature from the trenches of dialectical ambiguity while tending to use historical structuralism for camouflage. Both are totalitarian in their very nature and intolerant to the point of narcissism. The discontent continues to be voiced and is growing. Such outstanding scholars and/or literary critics as John W. Aldridge, Bernard Bergonzi, Wayne Booth, Northrop Frye, Marie-Beatrice Mesnet, Philip Thody, Geoffrey Wagner (in the Western world), and Ivan Dzyuba, Margaryta Malynov's'ka, Ivan Svitlychnyi (in Soviet Ukraine), to name only a few, wrote and commented on the

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<sup>186</sup> Vasyl Lysenko, "Zhyvi slova . . .", *Dnipro* (March, 1969), p. 123. *Italics* by the author of this study.

urgent need to reevaluate the theories that make up the bodies of the New Criticism and the Marxist schools, or, perhaps, retire both to the anthologies. I could not agree more, leaning toward the latter proposition.

Rejecting both, the formalist and the Marxist theories in their traditional concept, I feel the need to expand the criteria of the conventional terminology as well. For the sake of some fresh air, I propose, conditionally, the following newly combined terms and divide the eighteen analysed poems into three groups: a) poetry of anger; b) psychological, deductive poetry; c) self-determinating lyrics. The last category needs some additional explanation. Symonenko shows in his lyrical poems not only his intimate world of personal experiences, he also points out his attitude towards the reality surrounding him, in other words, the poet self-determines the relationship of his own "I" to the surrounding reality. At the same time, after conditionally agreeing to accept such sub-division, it must be denoted, that some of the analysed poems contain the elements of all three groups and some others contain the characteristics of more than one.

As an example for "poetry of anger" let us consider the poem "Granitni obelisky..." (The Granite Obelisks...) marked by Symonenko only by three asterisks and first among those printed in the chapter "From the Poetry Abused by the Soviet Censorship":

\*

The granite obelisks, just like medusae —  
Crawled on and on, themselves of strength bereaved.  
Here, on the graveyard of *shot down illusions*,  
There isn't any space left for the graves.

*Few billion faiths* — into black soil buried,  
*Few billion fortunes* — really blown to bits . . .  
*The soul in flames, the angry mind is burning,*  
*And hatred guffaws screaming in the winds.*

If, suddenly, *their sight regained the cheated*  
If all the slaughtered could to life recur,  
Then — heaven, by the curses all gray-smitten,  
From shame and outrage would crack down for sure.

*Oh, tremble, killers; meditate, you toadies,  
For life refuses to accept your ways.  
You hear? Here, on the graveyard of illusions,  
There isn't any space left for the graves.*

*One solid gash — the nation is already,  
The soil carnivores from all the blood,  
For every headsman, every tyrant — ready —  
A twisted noose for hanging is begot.*

*All torn apart, the hounded and the slaughtered  
Arise and go, arrive to judge in grim.  
And their loud curses, frenzied with anger,  
Upon fed, mouldy souls shall fall to smother,  
And on their dandling arms the trees shall gather  
All the apostles of deceit and crime.<sup>187</sup>*

The poem is a typical iambic pentameter, the first five stanzas are composed of four lines each and rhyme in a-b-a-b order alternating feminine and masculine rhymes; the last, sixth, stanza is composed of six lines and rhymes in a-b-a-a-a-b order.<sup>188</sup> An expressionist hyperbole is used in the second stanza ("few billion faiths", "few billion fortunes") to sharpen the acuteness of the portrayed discourse and is repeated in the fifth stanza ("nation — one solid gash", "soil carnivores from blood"). The poem ends with a figure of speech often used by Symonenko: an *oxymoron* (the apostles of deceit and crime").

Let me point out the individual words and phrases which contain in my opinion semantic signification and/or a key to recognition of the additional meaning provided by Symonenko himself within the context of the above poem. "The nation" equals "one solid gash". "Ready-made, twisted noose" equals "the verdict". "The apostles" (as in the case of "the Jesuits" and "the Roman and Greek priests" from the poem "Roses in Mourning") equal "the leaders representing the regime". The *anger* is voiced by such metaphors and comparisons as "the graveyard of shot down illusions", "soul in flames", "angry

<sup>187</sup> Vasyl Symonenko, *Bereh chekan'* (Munich: Prolog — 1965), pp. 137-138. From this point on this source will be quoted as *Bereh chekan'*, with indication of the appropriate page number.

<sup>188</sup> In all of the translations made by the author of this study a rigid attempt to preserve the forms of originals is maintained.

mind", "heaven gray-smitten by curses". Symonenko exclaims, that "a noose" is already awaiting *every* "headsman" and "tyrant" for their crimes against "the nation" which is "one solid gash". There can be no doubt that under "the nation" the poet had in mind the Ukrainian people and this contention was understood well by the Soviet censorship. So, in matter to dim the semantics of this poem, a title was added to the version printed in the Soviet Ukraine: "The Prophecy of 1917" (any suspicion that Symonenko might have named the poem himself is refuted by the documents presented in the volume *Bereh chekan'*), while some veteran censor wrote two additional lines to the poem:

... So truth and love shall win the world over,  
To guard the truth — the labour shall arise.<sup>189</sup>

For the critic Ivan Svitlychnyi, or for those who ordered him to maintain the probability of the added title and the two extra lines (there was such an attempt made in the discussed article by I. Svitlychnyi in *Visti z Ukrainy*), it will be difficult to convince the reader that there were "two different variants of this poem" in Symonenko's files. If there were — they surely did not resemble the one prepared by the Soviet censorship. The poet, who exclaimed so much anger while portraying the realities the collective farmers and workers had to face in the Soviet Ukraine, who in his diary compared Marxism to religion, could not have written, under the circumstances, that "labour" shall "arise to guard the truth", having selected for the "prophecy" a year some eighteen years prior to his own birth. Symonenko was a contemporary poet and wrote about contemporary outrages committed against his people. The consistent contemporaneity of his topics is admitted and often even underlined by Soviet Ukrainian critics. A German analyst goes even further, he comments:

... A passionate, well — simply revolutionary, hate blazes out of every Symonenko's poem, he whips by them, with curse and irony, the exploitation and debasement bestowed by the Bolshevik regime ...<sup>190</sup>

189) Vasyl Symonenko, *Zemne tyazhtynnya* (Kiev: v-vo "Molod' — 1964), p. 15.

190) Wolfgang Strauss, "Der Fall Symonenko 1935-1936", *Ukraine in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* No. 32 (1965), p. 107. Reprint from *Rheinischer Merkur* No. 20 (15 May 1965).

Another example for poetry of anger is "Zlodii" (The Thief), first in the chapter "Poetry Forbidden in the U.S.S.R.":

### THE THIEF

Caught was an oldster, he, somehow was nailed flat,  
They brought that oldster to *village Soviet*,  
They chid and lectured to him so about it:  
— Won't you, oldster, ashamed now feel?  
Out of the fields your own crops to steal?  
Who did you steal from? Your own you pilfered.  
Shame on you, stealing your toil, you! —  
Oldster his sinciput shyly carded  
And on a stipe he chewed.  
Oldster's eyelids were swollen, shivering.  
So hard to stare into eyes of shame,  
Hard for him, with plain domestic day-dreaming,  
All, of this age, paradoxes to tame.  
— That's so, into his fist he kept on coughing —  
Stealing is bad . . . What could be worse. —  
— Tear yourself loose from my throat fly screaming,  
My disobedient verse!  
Why is he a thief? What is the matter?  
Why did he go to steal his own sweat?  
A bundle like that would fit my back better —  
Feelings of guilt into my heart spat . . .  
Now I should kill him with scorn, for the merits.  
Yet, in my chest grows a violent tide:  
Who robbed him, who plucked off this oldster's spirit?  
Who had the hands of his keen conscience tied?  
Where are they all — *the dull, the fat-living,*  
*The tongue-tied demagogues and liars, where,*  
Who bent the backbone of oldster's believing,  
While *climbing to power and to high chairs?*  
*They should be tried, and judged, and imprisoned,*  
*Them to the dungeon for the brigandage!*  
Not enough evidence? Evidence is here,  
Bundles of robbed *expectations and faiths.*<sup>191</sup>

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191) *Bereh chekan'*, pp. 151-152.



Again Symonenko calls for a trial against the "all-mighty", who climbed up to "power and high chairs". Who are they and how did they do it? They are "the dull", the fat-living", "the tongue-tied demagogues and liars" and they bear a remarkable likeness to "the apostles" of the previous poem. They did it by "robbing the oldster's faith" in a better tomorrow by giving it to themselves today, while the oldster must go on stealing his, supposedly, own crops; in order to survive. These are angry words. Symonenko even seems to be annoyed by his own disenchantment with the Soviet version of Communist ideology. This is *not* what Svitlychnyi describes as "to criticise selected events of collective farm life". In the previous poem "billions of faiths were buried in black soil"; here — "bundles of expectations and faiths were robbed". To lose *faith* a given person first of all must have *believed* at one time or another. When such a person loses faith through somebody else's fault — he, or she, gets angry. If that person happens to be a poet — *poetry of anger* is born.

It is an accepted notion and not only in humanities, that poets get ahead of exact sciences as far as discovery is concerned. When the semantic value of a well selected word and rhythmic dynamics of the verse allow to sense what the poet is trying to portray, then, the picturesqueness, the inventive spirit in ways of expression, the metaphoric insight of the poet allow not only to sense but also to react to a felicitous poetical phrase more appropriately. At the same time, the poet is facing a much more difficult assignment when he tries to evoke aesthetic feelings by means of semantic signification rather than using conventional speech and the technical tricks or the so-called *otstranenie* (estrangement) method. This point is well taken by the Soviet Russian Member of the Academy V. V. Vinogradov, who in his deliberation about the individuality of style says:

... This is a very important problem, but interpreted and solved in different ways by the Marxist and by the idealistic aestheticians. In reality, here arises the problem of all the accordances, co-relations, and differences in the author's biography, in his literary individuality, socio-historical individuality, and — "the portrait of the author" within the system of his creative literary works. The whole row of topics and questions arising within this cycle calls for philosophical, cultural-historical, and aesthetic-stylistic in-depth research ...

... Anti-historism in approaching the category of individual style and the tendencies of its historical development leads to a narrow, very limited evaluation of the possibilities offered by the research within the realm of style as of a unique, intrinsically joined, individually integral system of means and properties of the oral-artistic expression and portrayal. "The fact, that a given literary work is valued by its own merits and not as a part of a whole, and only as an example of its intrinsic characteristics, and only by necessity inserted within the row of all other literary works by a given author, is, indeed, the substance in research of the individual style" ...<sup>192</sup>

Such contentions, made by the leading Soviet Russian linguist and literary theoretician, support my own observation made initially in the first chapter of this study, that Symonenko was aware of the experience accumulated by his literary predecessors throughout the modern history of Ukraine. It was exactly on the basis of a cultural-historical background (rather tragic experience for the Ukrainian people) that Symonenko did develop his conceptions of life. Poetry of anger has to depend upon reality, else the anger might seem to be groundless and therefore irrational.

How deep Symonenko's love for his native land really is can be seen from the following poem, where anger is interwoven with self-determinating lyrics:

\*            \*  
                 \*  
                 \*

Lost in contemplation, I'm inspired —  
By your *blue and anxious orbs*, like dawn.  
Out of them red *thunderbolts* strike fire —  
*Revolutions, riots, risings* — down.

Oh, Ukraine! *My paragon of wonder!*  
As the years continue to expire,  
I shall always, *mother*, proud and tender,  
You, oh, my miraculous, admire.

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<sup>192</sup> V. V. Vinogradov, *Problema avtorstva i teorii stiliei* (Moscow: izd. "Khudozhestvennaya literatura" — 1961), p. 195. The final thought in the above passage is quoted by Vinogradov from: W. Kayser, *Das sprachliche Kunstwerk* (Bern — 1956), p. 283.

For your sake — *the pearls in souls I drill* and  
For your sake I *think, create* anew.  
*Russias and Americas — be quiet,*  
*For the time that I converse with you.*

Disappear, you all unfriendly, wily!  
Wait for me, my friends, I'll come along!  
Sacred filial rights I have: a while —  
To be left with mother all alone.

Seldom, mother, I remember even  
You, the days are all too short and square.  
Not all devils live by now in heaven,  
Plenty of them trot here on the earth.

See, I'm *fighting with them every hour,*  
Hear — the battle's everlasting roar!  
How can I without my true friends flower,  
All their minds, eyes, hands — with me no more?

Oh, Ukraine, *you are my very prayer,*  
*And you are eternal my despair . . .*  
*Roars over the world like mad fire*  
*Struggle for your rights, your life to spare.*

Let the purple clouds continue burning,  
Let the insults hiss, regardless, all —  
Into *droplet* of my own blood turning  
On your *sacred* banner I shall fall.<sup>193</sup>

This poem is composed with a trochee pentameter preserved throughout all eight stanzas. Rhymes in a-b-a-b order. Semantic signification is concentrated primarily upon two concepts: *Ukraine* and *history*. The first concept is evident in the following words and phrases: “paragon of wonder”, “mother”, “prayer”, “eternal despair”. The latter is mirrored in: “orbs” (out of which red thunderbolts of revolutions, riots, and risings strike fire, for *such* is the *history* of Ukraine), “dawn” (the “orbs” are like a “dawn”, pointing out that Ukrainian history is relatively young), “struggle” and “battle” (for the same reason that “orbs”). Symonenko orders Russia and America to “be quiet” while he talks

193) *Bereh chekan'* pp. 146-147.

to Ukraine. In the first line of the following stanza he provides the reason why, by identifying both as “unfriendly and wily” and, again, orders both to “disappear”. By doing so Symonenko self-determines his relationship to both superpowers.

In the version of this poem printed in the Soviet Ukraine the third, fifth, sixth, and seventh stanzas were omitted altogether, for obvious reasons. It does not really matter how many versions there were in Symonenko’s file, I. Svitlychnyi had admitted that the one provided above did exist, and that *does* matter, for it is exactly how it appeared in the chapter “From the Poetry Abused by the Soviet Censorship”. This poem is perhaps one of the most intensely charged with Symonenko’s love to his native land. For the sake of Ukraine the poet “drills pearls in souls, thinks and creates”, even “fights devils every hour”, that is, takes part in the “struggle for her rights and her very life”. This lyrical self-determination is so sacred for Symonenko that he is ready to fall with his own “droplet of blood” upon her “sacred banner”. To write like this one really has to love and cherish his native land. The poet’s feelings are passed to, excite, and involve, even an indifferent reader and that can only happen when the feelings are sincere.

A laboratory analyst would be helpless in trying to find meaning in the case stated above; he would simply reject the issues as irrelevant. Being a victim of his trade, he would choose to involve himself with the mechanical task of establishing the way by which the poet said all that he had to say — he would disregard the question: *what did the poet say?* Moral, political, personal, generally humane views of the poet, conditions under which the literary work was written — do not matter. A laboratory analyst does not really care what it is that he analyses. It could be a dog, a guinea pig, or a literary text; he is concerned with classification and not with revelation of his subject matter.

Symonenko does not classify his subject matter, he simply unveils events by charging ordinary words with semantic signification to the point that they become symbols. In his poem “Brama” (The Gate) he shows the historical perspective of the oppression:

## THE GATE

Sombre gate, in wild, unknown forestalling,  
Muses in delirious unease,  
There just scoops and scoops protective railing  
And the *warders* jingle with their keys.

Armed with *bloody swords* the *apparitions*,  
In their cloaks as bleak as starless night,  
Play a game with odd-shaped balls of tissue,  
Heads, heads off the shoulders slashed, all right.

Blood keeps flowing to flegmatic walls, where  
All the wails freeze on the lips in turn,  
*A few hundred years of shame and torture*  
All the dead in graves do overturn.

Yet, the city doesn't see in night's gloom  
How the *guards, without the swords these days*,  
To the walls throw down *another victim*  
With a dirty rag across his eyes.<sup>194</sup>

How many hag-ridden reminiscences such lines must evoke in all the surviving political convicts and/or in the families of those, who never came back from Soviet jails and concentration camps, what horrification in the unexperienced. The use of trochee pentameter here is also very much to the point and creates almost neo-classic severity. Semantic signification is concentrated upon the term "storozha" (translated in the first stanza as "warders" and in the fourth stanza as "guards"). The term is broadened to indicate a "few hundred years" of Muscovite "shame and torture" bestowed upon Ukraine. The expression "without the swords these days" suggests that the historical "warders" (now "apparitions"), who used to wear swords, are, perhaps coming back to live again wearing more modern weapons, for there goes "another victim" thrown down to the walls with "a dirty rag across his eyes". This is why this poem still is and shall continue to be banned in the Soviet Ukraine, to re-name it with something like "The Prophecy of 1917" becomes impossible namely because of the last stanza.

Symonenko kept on expanding the poetry of anger until it

<sup>194</sup>) *Bereh chekan'*, p. 156.

was anger reaching revolutionary proportions. In the poem "Kurds'komu bratovi" (To my Kurd Brother) he sounds like Prometheus who is about to break his chains:

### TO MY KURD BROTHER

Struggle — you shall win!  
T. Shevchenko

Blood covered mountains crying out by calling,  
In downfall — injured stars the distance cross,  
Into rich valleys, wounded and appalled,  
The *chauvinism* strikes down its hungry claws.

Oh, Kurd, guard carefully your deadly bullets,  
But lives of killers — do not spare at all!  
Upon high-handed, brigandaging *bullies*  
With bloody wind-spout, striking storm, do fall!

With *bullets* talk to them for your advantage,  
They didn't only come to steal your goods:  
*They came to take away your name and language,*  
To make *your son a bastard without roots.*

You can't live with oppressor in compliance:  
His aim — to rule; for you — to pull the cart!  
Got fat on blood of peoples, hurt and pliant,  
The *chauvinism*, worst foe right from the start.

He wed the treachery to base dishonor,  
He shall do all so that you yield, to win . . .  
Oh, Kurd, do guard your every bullet on, or —  
Without that you shall not preserve your kin.

Do not rock down to sleep your hatred's power.  
You'll add then cordiality to your list  
When *gaping grave* forever does devour  
The last, upon this planet, *chauvinist*.<sup>195</sup>

No other contemporary could split a word into atoms like Symonenko. "Chauvinists" for him are "baistryuky" (bastards, translated as "bullies" in the second stanza of this iambic

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<sup>195</sup>) *Bereh chekan'*, pp. 159-160.

pentameter), at the same time "baistryuk" (bastard) would become a "son" conceived from a relationship with a "chauvinist". The relation of the term "bastard", as applied to "chauvinist" and "son" at the same time, implies that the "son" would thus become a *traitor*. "Nation" — means "kin"; "gaping" means "ready-made"; "talking" — means "shooting". Fortunately, the poet does not try very much to hide his ideas and my own interests in a literary work are in direct opposition to those of the laboratory analyst. It does matter to me *what* a poet is trying to say; in the above poem he calls for armed resistance to *chauvinism* and since Russian chauvinism has taken *massive* proportions in the Soviet Ukraine there can be no question as to what, while addressing his brother Kurd, the poet is actually saying. It was already pointed out during the analysis of the first fairy-tale that the citation from T. Shevchenko's poem "Kavkaz" (The Caucasus) provides a sort of guiding light. There is also a common motive between that fairy-tale and the poem. In the fairy-tale "tsar Lachrymal" weds his daughter "lady Languor" to his subordinate, the "insidious snake, captain Macaco", while in the poem *worst foe* "chauvinism" weds "treachery" to "dishonour". Without armed resistance no "kin", "name", or "language" can be preserved. The most recent "solution" to the "Kurds' question" points out that Symonenko was right on the target. The analogy he drew between the Kurds and the fate of his own people, now that intensified Russification in the Soviet Ukraine is at its peak, is valid even more today.

Symonenko was a realist without any conjectures or disfigurements. Desire to grasp the truth was forever haunting him. His youth, saturated with exceptional wisdom, urged him to reject human weakness, he fought against it until he breathed his last. His was an amazing courage, considering that he knew about his incurable disease. Quite often he would address himself with a whole chain of rethorical questions, answer himself, air his doubts and confirm again and again his own position. For example let's take the following poem:

\*                    \*  
\*  
.....

By thousands run the roads, a million pathways run in,  
By thousands lie the fields, but *only one is mine*.  
And what am I to do, when only minor reaping  
Was destined for me on my non-abundant plain?

My sickle I should dump, go on to be a fritter,  
Or should I curse my fate that harvest failed to bunch  
*And hire myself out to neighbours in a jitter*  
*To get a pair of sandals, a crackling for my lunch?*

If I could just forget about my squalid parcel,  
*For this poor plot of land I could get everything . . .*  
*Indeed, they say of those, who toady's sandals fit well,*  
*Who put them on — the stubble doesn't sting.*

Yet, now I must go on to native plot barefooted,  
Keep torturing myself, with lazy sickle fight,  
And from exhaustion fall down to the crops uprooted,  
And sleep embracing my own sheaf all night.

*Because this land is mine!* Here I shall harvest always,  
*Because no better crops are anywhere to find,*  
Because all thousand roads and million narrow pathways  
To me *paternal land* return and bind.<sup>196</sup>

This time the poem is composed, somewhat amiss, by an iambic hexameter (last lines in the three final stanzas are iambic pentameter), rhyming a-b-a-b. Here, Symonenko arrives at self-determination through psychological deduction. By asking and answering himself rethorical questions he comes to a conclusion that "his paternal plot of land", no matter how poor, is best for him and that he is to stay there. "Toady's sandals" Symonenko refuses to put on, even when "the stubble does not sting" those who wear them. The psychological deduction is simple: all the roads do not lead to Rome, be it even the "third Rome", they always bring you home. In other words, do not sell out your native land, for nothing can replace it. Simple, but truly great poetry can only be achieved by the greatest simplicity.

This poem, censored, was first printed in *Zmina* (August, 1964) and later, distorted as well (the third stanza was completely

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<sup>196</sup>) *Bereh chekan'*, p. 148.



omitted), in the second posthumous volume *Poezii*. In both publications the omitted stanza was indicated by a single line of dots.

Similar devotion and attachement to his native land can be felt in the poem which takes Symonenko into a nostalgic refuge of his by-gone childhood:

Carry me, my happy feelings, on your speedy wings,  
Where the sunny rill is beaming by the hills and things.  
Where the houses stand in dresses, white and newly clad,  
Native houses, clear and clean, that hops by windows had.  
Where young girls, who muse on happy, walk to cooling wells,  
Where, like silk, green pastures flourish, by a corn-field swell.  
Where myself, a pinkish wonder, with a twig in hand,  
Grabs a mad and hollow gander, grabs me where I stand.  
Bless me, here, my good old fortune, stubborn, squeamish-

[louder —  
*On this land to live my life and also die around here.*<sup>197</sup>

This trochee heptameter rhymes with masculine endings made by an aa-bb-cc-dd-ee pattern.

To end this presentation of Symonenko's poems in translation, as well as my analysis, I have selected a poem representing what was earlier conditionally described as his psychological, deductive poetry. The poem carries a deliberately long title "Nokroloh kukurudzianomu kachanovi, shcho zhynuv na zahotpunkti" (see the title in translation). In it, by the means of personification and expressionist hyperbole (note, that the importance devoted to a corn-cob alone is expressionist), Symonenko creates a symbol:

#### NECROLOGY FOR A CORN-COB WHICH DIED AT THE PROVISIONARY STOCK CENTER

No moaning can be heard. The orchestras are rusting.  
Orators from their screams — all hoarse and worn.  
It is no leader, nor *maestro* resting —  
Here, in a casket, lies a cob of corn.

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<sup>197</sup>) *Bereh chekan'*, p. 163.

*A casket made of crassitude, in want of talent*  
Upholstered, followed by my trend of thoughts:  
Whom to bewail? Whom should I bring to trial?  
Out of whose heart should I knock off the bolts?

Whom should I shake by buttonholes and spirit?  
Whom should I curse for this incongruous death?  
The corn-cob died and I must scream and bear it,  
Filled up with sorrow and despite to fret.

Oh, my corn-cob, why was by rot your dying?  
Oh, my corn-cob, what sin did you commit?  
Oh, my corn-cob, now in your grave are lying  
The *human labour, bounties of the seeds.*

*The sleepless nights, the days forever restless,*  
*Sweat, calluses, the fiery thoughts in vain —*  
*They all lay down beside you in the casket*  
And go on rotting under swollen rain . . .

*Be cursed forever, you, deceiving plotters,*  
*No matter what darn titles you have worn!*  
You go on bringing *human hopes* to slaughter  
Just like you killed a simple cob of corn.<sup>198</sup>

Written in iambic pentameters (this time first lines in the initial two stanzas are amiss, they represent iambic hexameters) this poem rhymes in a-b-a-b pattern, as usual. If one would take only the literal, even grotesque, interpretation, then, there would be no need for this poem to remain on the “forbidden” list in the U.S.S.R. The fact, that this poem continues to be blacklisted, indicates that the “corn-cob” represents something much greater than its literal meaning. Let us take into consideration, exactly *what* was it that died and lies next to the “corn-cob” in the casket? Lying there are: “sleepless nights”, “calluses”, “restless days”, “sweat”, “fiery thoughts”, “human labour”, “bounties of the seeds”. Such, vast, hyperbolic overcrowding in the casket is rather far removed from interpreting “death of the corn-cob” as being grotesque; nothing *funny* can

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198) *Bereh chekan'*, pp. 153-154.

be found in any of the conceptions placed along with the corn-cob into the casket.

A moment's thought, while examining the reasons responsible for such an odd and bewildering predicament, brings forward a deduction that *all* of these conceptions, semantically, have some sort of a connection either to *human labour* (already in the casket): "sweat", "calluses", "restless days"; and/or to *human hope* (still outside the casket): "sleepless nights", "fiery thoughts", "bounties of the seeds". In the last stanza there is a direct statement, that "human hopes" are soon to join all these other conceptions in the casket for they are "being brought to slaughter". Who had "human labour" laid to rest and is now trying to do the same with "human hopes"? Symonenko provides an answer to his own rhetorical questions about that: receiving plotters, who are wearing titles", he cursed them. And who, may I ask, is there or ever was in the U.S.S.R., "wearing titles"? I leave the answer to that entirely with the reader.

This psychological deduction was deliberately made easy to figure out, especially for those who are being cursed out in anger and despair by the narrator, this is exactly why this poem was and still is on the blacklist. Symonenko, a thoughtful poet, could not have applied grotesque meaning (it may seem that he did, if the poem is taken literally) to tears, labour, calluses, sweat, and hopes — they all are serious conceptions — to make fun of these entities one would have to be a loathsome scoundrel. I must remind the reader at this point that Symonenko came out of the countryside, and in Ukraine, at least in the rural areas, such conceptions as "labour" and "hope" were always held to be sacred. Thus, all these, seemingly strange gravefellows, lying and rotting next to the corn-cob, are there to symbolize failure of the Soviet agricultural system. "Rusting orchestras" and "hoarse, worn orators" only underline the failure (they are instantly present on any Soviet public scenario). The convicted Ukrainian dissident Mykhailo Horyn', addressing the closed court session of the Lviv Regional Court on April 16, 1966 with his last word, where he had categorically denied the charges of "Ukrainian nationalism" stating that, among others, he was "brought up on the works of Dobrolyubov, Herzen, and Ogarev", had, nevertheless, this to say about the Soviet agricultural system:

... Yes, I considered that the solution of the economic and legal problems of the *kolkhoz* (collective farm) peasantry is being delayed. The press made a lot of noise about the prosperity of *kholkhoz* members while they were receiving only grains and kopecks for a working day. That became the reason for mass pilfering in the villages. The situation was still further complicated by the fact that a *kholkhoz* member was not allowed to leave the *kholkhoz* without a certificate from the chairman of the village Soviet and from the *kholkhoz* chairman. Having no passport, being dependent on the village administration, the peasant was morally depressed. All declarations about substantial changes in agriculture remained only statements...<sup>199</sup>

Having evaluated the contexts of all eighteen poems making up the two aforementioned chapters in *Bereh chekan'* I must arrive at the following conclusion: a) Symonenko's poetry is dedicated to Ukraine and to her people; b) Symonenko's poetry represents a bold, loud protest against the infringements upon legality, constitutionally guaranteed rights, and upon the very socialist mode of life (all directed and supervised from Moscow) in the Soviet Ukraine.

Ukrainian people felt deeply, understood, and absorbed the words of Vasyl Symonenko. Under the pressure of his followers the Publishers "Molod'" (The Youth) proposed his works (volumes *Tysha i hrim*, *Zemne tyazhinnya*, and fairy-tale *Podorozh v krainu Navpaky*) for the T. H. Shevchenko literary prize, in January 1965. The posthumous candidacy of the poet was supported by the Ukrainian *komsomol* (Communist Youth), the Ukrainian Writers Union, and by the editors of *Zmina* magazine. The announcement was printed in *Literaturna Ukraina* (8 January 1965) on page one. Many readers responded with approval, here are the voices of some:

... Vasyl Symonenko — one of the candidates for the Shevchenko prize. He is one of the most worthy among candidates because his short but constructive life, his small, yet significant contribution, continued and developed within contemporary Ukrainian poetry its best humanist traditions. The poet managed to give all his strength, all his talent, and all his vigor, every drop of it, to his native people...<sup>200</sup>

... the fairy-tale by Vasyl Symonenko "Podorozh v krainu

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<sup>199</sup> Vyacheslav Chornovil, *The Chornovil Papers* (Toronto: McGraw — Hill — 1968), p. 107.

<sup>200</sup> Leonid Koronevych, "Holosom Tarasa", *Molod' Ukrainy* (21 February 1965), p. 1.

Navpaky", as well as his volumes *Tysha i hrim* and *Zemne tyazhinnya* are proposed for the T. H. Shevchenko prize in 1965. It seems to us that the fairy-tale deserves this high distinction. And so do the volumes *Tysha i hrim* and *Zemne tyazhinnya* . . .<sup>201</sup>

... Many feelings and thoughts brings out this small volume. You have closed it. You see a familiar name: Vasyl Symonenko . . . And you continue with his thought:

"No, not enough, yourself great to imagine,  
Great in life you be".

He did not imagine himself great. He became a wonderful poet of our age, this modest young man, who would have been only thirty years old this year . . .<sup>202</sup>

... Not a small treasure was passed on to his contemporary by Vasyl Symonenko. His book is saturated with philosophical penetration of life, freshness of thematics . . .<sup>203</sup>

... I am looking at the portrait of Vasyl Symonenko, which was published in his poetical volume *Zemne tyazhinnya*. Familiar outlines of the face. Musing eyes . . . Half-opened lips . . . It seems, any moment he will begin to speak, speak to him, to you, to me — his adherer, friend, contemporary contryman:

Today — everything is for you —  
The lakes, the forests, the steppes.  
And speed with your life is needed,  
And rush to your love is needed—  
Do not fall asleep ! . . .<sup>204</sup>

Symonenko's followers did not succeed in their efforts and support. The T. H. Shevchenko literary prize for 1965 was granted to Mykola Bazhan for his long poem *Polit kriz' buryu*<sup>205</sup> (Flight Through a Storm).

There is not much more to say, at this time, about Vasyl Symonenko and his work. Time will come and, perhaps, the entire archive (holding the whole complicated and guarded "case" of his life, encounters, and his unknown and/or forbidden works in their entirety) shall become available for in-depth studies.

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201) Vadym Skomorovs'kyl, "Nadzvychna mandrivka", *Literaturna Ukraina* (5 February 1965), p. 3.

202) Mykhailo Tarnavs'kyl, "Treba velykomu but' ", *Literaturna Ukraina* (2 March 1965), p. 2.

203) Leonid Khodzits'kyl, "Samobutna poeziya", *Literaturna Ukraina* (2 March 1965), p. 2.

204) Stanislav Shumyts'kyl, "Ostrov", *Literaturna Ukraina* (23 February 1965), p. 3.

205) "Povidomiennya", *Literaturna Ukraina* (9 March 1965), p. 1.

Within this, limited, study I have tried first of all to keep up with the subject matter. Wherever any controversy appeared — I have always stated my own rights for subjective opinion, while, at the same time, pointing out and underlining *other* possibilities for interpreting the analysed text. The very term *semantics* is already *subjective* by its very nature; people do understand and interpret any matter according to their particular environment and conceptions of life. For example, let us take the term *labour* (so often handled by Symonenko) and it will become apparent at once what a different description and explanation for the term would be offered by a *carpenter* and a *butcher*. It happens to be like that with every other term (with some terms and conceptions the difference is less obvious); all depends upon *who* is receiving and interpreting. I am making this comments because this simple and obvious fact often escapes us.

It is obvious then, that the possibility of multiple views and interpretations of semantic values in Symonenko's poetry and prose proves the fact, that words and phrases there often are charged with additional meaning.

To prove exactly that was the main purpose of this study.

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## INDEX

- Adamchuk, S. — 78.  
 Adel'heim, Ye. — 32.  
 Aisenshtok, Ye. — 32.  
 Alchevs'ka, Kh. — 24.  
 Aldridge, J. W. — 134.  
 Alexandrova, V. — 20.  
 Amalrik, A. — 46.  
 Antonenko-Davydovych, B. — 36,  
 72, 119.  
 Atamanyuk, V. — 27.  
  
 Babyshkin, O. — 24.  
 Bahryanyi, I. — 27.  
 Bandurak, V. Yu. — 81.  
 Barabash, Yu. — 122.  
 Barka, V. — 27.  
 Bash, Ya. — 34.  
 Bazhan, M. — 122.  
 Benda, J. — 128.  
 Bergonzi, B. — 134.  
 Berezyns'kyi, V. — 114.  
 Bernstein, M. D. — 13, 32.  
 Bilets'kyi, M. — 74.  
 Bilets'kyi, O. I. — 10.  
 Bilychenko, Zh. — 61.  
 Bilylovs'kyi, K. — 24.  
 Bobyns'kyi, V. — 10.  
 Boichak, I. — 29, 114.  
 Boiko, V. — 27.  
 Booth, W. — 134.  
 Boyko, Yu. — 12-13.  
 Breál, M. — 38.  
 Brezhnev, L. I. — 43.  
 Bulyha, O. — 114.  
 Burevii, K. (Edward Strikha) — 26.  
 Burghardt, O. (Yuri Klen) — 27.  
 Burke, K. — 68.  
 Burmeister, A. — 21.  
 Buryak, B. S. — 9, 17-18, 20.  
 Buryakivets', Yu. — 27.  
  
 Carroll, J. B. — 38.  
 Chaplenko, V. — 27.  
 Chekhov, A. — 72.  
 Cheremshyna, M. — 70.  
 Chernyavs'kyi, M. — 14, 24.  
 Chornovil, V. — 150.  
 Chuprynka, H. — 16, 26.  
 Cowley, E. L. — 121.  
 Cust, H., Mrs. — 38.  
  
 Dmyterko, L. — 52.  
 Dmytryshyn, B. — 19.  
 Dniprov's'kyi, I. — 36.  
 Dorichenko, O. — 114.  
 Doroshenko, I. — 78.  
 Drach, I. — 49-50, 123.  
 Drozd, V. — 29.  
 Dyadychenko, V. A. — 16.  
 Dziuba, I. — 28, 36, 113, 132, 134.  
  
 Ehrenburg, I. — 20, 127.  
 Ellan-Blakytyni, V. — 16.  
 Enkvist, N. L. — 38.  
  
 Fal'kivs'kyi, Dm. — 36.  
 Fashchenko, V. — 68.  
 Fields, S. — 68.  
 Fisher, N. (Natan Rybak) — 32.  
 Fol'varochnyi, V. — 114.  
 Franko, I. — 14, 42, 52.  
 Frye, N. — 38, 134.  
  
 Garvin, P. L. — 38.  
 Gordon, C. — 68.  
 Gregory, M. J. — 38.  
 Guturov, L. V. — 68.  
 Gzhyts'kyi, V. — 36.  
  
 Havranek, B. — 38.  
 Hayward, M. — 121.  
 Harasymenko, V. Ya. — 13.  
 Herostrates — 48.  
 Hibbard, A. — 68.  
 Holman, H. C. — 68.  
 Holoborod'ko, V. — 29, 114.  
 Holovanivs'kyi, S. — 32.  
 Holovko, A. — 16.  
 Holovko, Dm. — 57-58.  
 Honcharenko, V. — 114.  
 Horyn', M. 149-150.  
 Hryn'ko, H. — 16.  
 Hrytsai, I. — 77.  
 Hrytsyuta, M. S. — 13-14.  
 Humenna, D. — 27.  
 Hutsalo, Ye. — 122.  
  
 Il'nyts'kyi, M. — 114.  
 Inhul's'kyi, P. — 34.  
 Ivakin, Yu. — 61.  
 Ivanysenko, V. — 29, 122.  
 Ivchenko, M. — 26.

- Kaganovich, L. M. — 20.  
 Kalynets', I. — 114-115.  
 Kalynychenko, N. L. — 13.  
 Kanivets', V. V. — 81.  
 Karamans'kyi, P. — 26.  
 Karpenko-Krynytsya, P. — 27.  
 Kashchuk, N. — 114.  
 Katkov, M. N. — 13.  
 Kazka, A. — 27.  
 Khazan, M. — 34.  
 Khinkulov, L. — 25.  
 Khmil', S. — 114.  
 Khodzits'kyi, L. — 151.  
 Kholodnyi, M. — 114.  
 Khrushchev, N. S. — 6, 19, 21, 43,  
 46-50, 84, 89, 104, 111-113, 127.  
 Khvyl'ovyi, M. — 16, 26, 99.  
 Khvylya, A. — 27.  
 Kolesnyk, P. I. — 13.  
 Kolodii, V. — 114.  
 Kolomiyets', T. — 29.  
 Kopstein, A. — 32.  
 Kornichuk, O. — 20, 22.  
 Koronevych, L. — 150.  
 Korotych, V. — 123.  
 Korzh, V. — 114.  
 Kosach, Yu. A. — 9, 81.  
 Kosach-Drahomanova, O. (Olena  
 Pchilka) — 24.  
 Koshelivets', I. — 39, 41, 99, 108,  
 130-132.  
 Kostenko, L. — 21, 50, 113, 121-126.  
 Kostetsky, E. — 27.  
 Kosynka, H. — 16.  
 Kosygin, A. N. — 43.  
 Kotsyubyns'kyi M. — 14, 79.  
 Kovalenko, L. — 29, 114.  
 Kozachenko, V. — 39.  
 Kravtsiv, B. — 10-11, 15-16, 108, 119.  
 Krushel'nyts'kyi, A. — 11, 26.  
 Krushel'nyts'kyi, I. — 10.  
 Krutikova, N. Ye. — 13.  
 Kryms'kyi, A. — 24.  
 Kryzhaniv'skyi, S. — 10, 20, 25, 30.  
 Kubiovyč, V. — 31.  
 Kulykiv'skyi, V. — 114.  
 Kupyans'kyi, Io. — 15.  
 Kvyatkovsky, A. — 81.  
 Kylymnyk, O. V. — 25-26.  
 Kyrychenko, H. — 29, 114.  
 Kyrylyuk, Ye. P. — 10, 13.  
 Kysel'ov, I. — 32.  
 Laqueur, W. Z. — 20.  
 Lavrinenko, Yu. — 14, 17, 20, 27.  
 Lebedynets', M. — 27.  
 Lebid', A. — 26.  
 Lebid', M. 26.  
 Leites, A. — 25.  
 Lenin, V. I. — 91, 99, 102, 108-109.  
 Lesyn, V. M. — 81.  
 Letyuk, Ye. — 49-50.  
 Lewytzkyj, B. — 34..  
 Lobodowski, J. — 39, 132.  
 London, J. — 68.  
 Los', F. Ye. — 16.  
 Lubkiv's'kyi, R. — 114.  
 Luckyj, G. S. N. — 16.  
 Lysenko, V. — 133-134.  
 Lyubchenko, A. — 27.  
 Makarushenko, P. I. — 81.  
 Malynov's'ka, M. — 29.  
 Malyshko, A. — 21.  
 Mamaisur, B. — 114.  
 Manylo, I. — 27.  
 Matsenko, I. — 77-78.  
 Mayakovsky, V. — 7.  
 Mesnet, M. — B. — 134.  
 Mohylyans'kyi, M. — 26.  
 Mordan', V. — 114.  
 Nehoda, M. — 39, 64, 66.  
 Nekrasov, V. — 32.  
 Novychenko, L. M. — 10.  
 Oles', O. — 15.  
 Oliinyk, B. — 110.  
 Os'machka, T. — 27.  
 Otroshchenko, V. — 114.  
 Panch, P. — 39.  
 Passim, H. — 21.  
 Pelenski, J. — 22.  
 Pervomais'kyi, L. — 32.  
 Petrov, F. B. — 81.  
 Petrov, V. — 10, 18-19, 22, 24.  
 Petrov's'kyi, V. L. — 113, 119.  
 Pidpalyi, V. — 114.  
 Plontek, L. — 10.  
 Plevako, M. — 26.  
 Pluzhnyk, Ye. — 36.  
 Podgornyi, N. V. — 43, 46, 104.  
 Pohrebnyk, F. P. — 13.  
 Polishchuk, A. — 114.  
 Polishchuk, K. — 26.  
 Poloz, M. — 16.



Pryhara, M. A. — 82.  
Prykhod'ko, N. — 29.  
Pulynets', O. S. — 81.  
Pushkin, A. — 41.

Richyts'kyi, A. — 26.  
Riznychenko, B. — 29, 114.  
Romanchenko, T. — 24.  
Rudans'kyi, S. — 80.  
Ryl's'kyi, M. — 20, 55-57, 124-125.

Samchuk, U. — 27.  
Samiilenko, V. — 15, 24.  
Savchenko, Ya. — 72.  
Semenko, M. — 7.  
Shablenko, A. — 24.  
Shabliovs'kyi, Ye. S. — 119.  
Shaff, A. — 38.  
Shamrai, A. — 36.  
Sharvarok, D. — 114.  
Shcherbak, Yu. — 114.  
Shchupak, S. — 27.  
Shevchenko, R. — 26.  
Shevchenko, T. — 12-13, 41-42,  
52-53, 63, 86, 90, 144.  
Shevchuk, V. — 29, 114.  
Shifrin, A. — 21.  
Shkrumelyak, Yu. — 10.  
Shpyts'kyi, V. Ye. — 16.  
Shums'kyi, O. — 16.  
Shumylo, M. — 21.  
Shumyts'kyi, S. — 151.  
Shvets', V. — 21.  
Shyyan, A. — 34.  
Skazhyns'kyi, M. — 29, 123.  
Skomorovs'kyi, V. — 151.  
Skrypnyk, M. — 99.  
Skyrda, L. — 114.  
Slonim, M. — 13.  
Solzhenitsyn, A. — 49, 111.  
Som, M. — 19, 31, 128.  
Sosyura, V. — 20.  
Spencer, J. — 38.  
Stalin, J. V. — 19-20, 42-43, 48, 91,  
101-102, 119.  
Staryts'ka-Chernyakhivs'ka, L. — 26.  
Stavyts'kyi, O. F. — 13.  
Stefanyk, V. — 70.  
Stel'makh, B. — 114.  
Stolypin, P. A. — 13.  
Storchak, K. M. — 38.  
Strauss, W. — 137.  
Stupak, Ya. — 114.

Stus, V. — 114-115.  
Svidzins'kyi, V. — 36.  
Svitlychnyi, I. — 28, 123, 130-132,  
134, 137.  
Sydorenko, H. K. — 68.  
Symonenko, V. — 5-6, 8, 11, 19, 23,  
28, 30-31, 36-37, 39-54, 57-58, 60-70,  
72, 74-82, 87, 89, 91-92, 97, 99, 104,  
106, 108-110, 122, 128-152.  
Synhaisv'skyi, M. — 29, 128.

Tarnavs'kyi, M. — 9.  
Tarnavs'kyi, M. — 151.  
Thody, P. — 134.  
Thrall, W. F. — 68.  
Timofeev, L. I. — 68.  
Tsvirkunov, V. — 68.  
Tychyna, P. — 14, 20.  
Tyhlii, L. — 114.

Valuev, P. O. — 13.  
Vasylichenko, S. — 24.  
Vasylevs'ka, L. (Dniprova Chaika)  
— 24.  
Veretenchenko, O. — 27.  
Vinhranovs'kyi, M. — 43, 49-50, 122.  
Vinogradov, V. V. — 139-140.  
Vlyz'ko, O. — 36.  
Volyns'kyi, P. K. — 10, 67.  
von Briessen, F. — 21.  
Voron'ko, P. — 34.  
Voronyi, M. — 15.  
Voskresens'ka, Z. I. — 81.  
Vovk, V. — 9.  
Voznesensky, A. — 127.  
Vyacheslavsky, L. — 32.  
Vynnychenko, V. — 9.  
Vyshnya, O. — 35-36.

Wagner, G. — 134.  
Warren, A. — 39-40, 43.  
Waterman, J. T. — 38.  
Watson-Seton, H. — 13.  
Wellek, R. — 39-40, 43, 68.  
Wojtasiewicz, O. 38.

Yanovs'ka, L. — 24.  
Yanovs'kyi, Yu. — 16.  
Yashek, M. — 25.  
Yavoriv'skyi, V. — 114.  
Yefremov, S. — 26.  
Yevtushenko, E. — 127.  
Yovenko, S. — 29, 114.  
Yurynets. V. — 26.

Zabashans'kyi, V. — 114.  
Zbanats'kyi, Yu. — 34.  
Zemlyak, V. — 34.  
Zerov, M. (Mykhailo Orest) — 27.  
Zharko, Ya. — 24.  
Zhdanov, A. A. — 20.

Zholob, S. — 114.  
Zhylenko, I. — 114.  
Zinchuk, S. — 114.  
Zub, I. — 29.  
Zujewskyj, O. — 27.

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## APPENDIX

\*

Original texts presented within this appendix are mainly for the benefit of those researchers and readers, who have a working knowledge of the Ukrainian language. Two quotations from the German and Russian languages are also included for the sake of completeness. In this way, a polyglot can easily verify the accuracy as well as quality of the translations from all three languages. Most of the scholarly publications do provide original texts, where translations are involved, or quote in original foreign language, and rightly so, for availability of the original text is extremely important, especially when poetry is being presented in translated form.

All translations within this study were made by I. Shankovsky, as mentioned already; where poetry by quoted poets and Symonenko's versed fairy-tales are concerned — a strict adherence to original form, rythm and rhyming patterns was attempted. How this difficult undertaking was accomplished can also be verified, by comparing each and every translation to the originals available in this appendix.

A few words about how this appendix was organized:

**POETRY** — Poems are presented in the same order as their translations appear within the study, with the exception that V. Symonenko's poetry is listed first and is then followed by all other quoted poets. All names, as well as page numbers where the translations can be located within the study, are given at the beginning of each entry.

**FAIRY-TALES** — Original texts of both fairy-tales are presented side-by-side with indication of pages, where translations can be located.

**SHORT STORIES** — The entire text of "A Black Horseshoe" is included, as well as excerpts of all translated passages, with pages indicated.

**THE DIARY** — All entries and excerpts translated are presented in their original form, pages (where translations can be found) indicated.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE — entire original included, as printed in the quoted source, pages indicated.

QUOTATIONS — The originals of all translated quotations are presented in chronological order and in their original language, as written. For the author, or authors, of the quotation — see footnotes on the pages, where translations are available (indicated above each original quotation).

## POETRY

### ВАСИЛЬ СИМОНЕНКО

See p. 5.

Вона даремно присягала слізно,  
Що не чинила і не чинить зла . . .  
Була у суддів логіка залізна:  
Вона ні в які рамочки не лізла,  
Вона — новою думкою була.

\*

See p. 44.

### ТРОЯНДИ В ТРАУРІ

(Уривки з поеми)

### МОНОЛОГ ПЕРЕД ІКОНАМИ

Якби, святі, ви не були рахіти.  
Якби, святі, ви не були сліпі,  
Я вас повів би по новому світу  
Без езуїтів, ксьондзів і попів.

Що знали ви? Вам кланялися сохи,  
Молилися мотиґа і сапа  
Ви чорні ідоли жорстокої епохи,  
Прислужники лукавого попа.

На покуті недовго вам стояти,  
Безсилі ви, холодні і німі.  
Ви обіцяли рай нам дарувати —  
Красенько дякуєм, живіть у нім самі!

А нам і на землі живеться, слава богу!  
А нам і на землі роботи вистача!  
І стеле день ясний мені ясну дорогу,  
Піднявши темряву на огняних мечах.

\*

See pp. 58-59.  
In *Ukraine*:

### ЗЕМНЕ ТЯЖІННЯ

Світе мій гучний, мільйоноокий,  
Нижний, і ласкавий, і жорстокий —  
Пристрасний, збурунений, німий,  
Дай мені свій простір і неспокій,  
Сонцем душу жадібну налий!

Дай мені у думку динаміту,  
Дай мені любові, дай добра,  
Гуркоти у долку мою, світе,  
Хвилями прадавнього Дніпра.

Не шкодуй добра мені, людині,  
Щастя не жалій моїм літам —  
Все одно ті скарби по краплині  
Я тобі закохано віддам.

\*

\* \* \*

Рідна земле! Мозок мій світліє,  
І душа ніжнішою стає,  
Як твої сподіванки і мрії  
У життя вриваються моє.

Я живу тобою і для тебе,  
Вийшов з тебе, в тебе перейду,

Під твоїм високочолим небом  
Гартував я силу молоду.

Хто тебе любов'ю обіграде,  
Хто твої турботи обмине —  
Хай того земне тяжіння зрадить  
І з прокляттям безвість проковтне!

\*

See pp. 59-60.  
In posthumous book *Zemne tyazhinnya*:

Світ який — мереживо казкове!  
Світ який — ні краю ні кінця!  
Зорі й трави, мрево світанкове,  
Магія коханого лиця.  
Світе мій гучний, мільйоноокий,  
Пристрасний, збурунений, німий,  
Нижний, і ласкавий, і жорстокий,  
Дай мені свій простір і неспокій,  
Сонцем душу жадібну налий!  
Дай мені у думку динаміту,  
Дай мені любові, дай добра,  
Гуркочи у долю мою, світе,  
Хвилями прадавнього Дніпра.  
Не шкодуй добра мені, людині,  
Щастя не жалій моїм літам —  
Все одно ті скарби по краплині  
Я тобі закохано віддам.

\*

\* \* \*

Земле рідна! Мозок мій світліє  
І душа ніжнішою стає,  
Як твої сподіванки і мрії  
У життя вливаються моє.

Я живу тобою і для тебе,  
Вийшов з тебе ,в тебе перейду,

Під твоїм високочолом небом  
Гартував я душу молоду.

Хто тебе любов'ю обікраде,  
Хто твої турботи обмине,  
Хай того земне тяжіння зрадить  
І з прокляттям безвість проковтне!

\*

See pp. 61-62.

\* \* \*

Впало сонце в вечірню куряву.  
Тиша виповзла за село  
Нашорошилось небо буряно  
І погрозами загуло.

Ніч підходила з гуркотіннями,  
Ніч несла божевілля й жах,  
Плазувала потворними тінями  
У нервово пружних кущах.

Ніч кричала мені, розтерзана,  
Оперезана громом навхрест.  
І у зойках її березових  
Закипівся гучний протест.

Хмари дибились волохато,  
Місяць в небі петляв, мов кіт,  
Вихор всівся на сіру хату  
І закручував стріху в zenіт.

... Та встає перламутовий ранок  
Крізь холодний і злобний рев,  
І проміння зализує рани  
З закатованих ніччю дерев.

Безпорадні агонії злості,  
Злість агонії не прорве!  
Сонце ходить до нас не в гості —  
Сонце з нами живе!

Вирина воно ранками з куряви,  
На потрав'я витрушує пил,  
І пливе, й ховрахів обурює,  
Повне ніжності й повне сил.

\*

See p. 65.

### САМОТНІСТЬ

Часто я самотній, ніби Крузо  
Виглядаю з-за обріїв кораблів.  
І думка безпорадно грузне  
В клейкім баговинні слів.

На своєму дикому острові  
В шкіряниці з убитих надій,  
Штрикаю небо очима гострими:  
— Де ти, П'ятнице мій?

Залпи відчаю рвуться із горла,  
Гуркотять в байдужу даль:  
Пошли мені, Боже, хоч ворога,  
Коли друга послати жаль!

\*

See pp. 135-136.

\* \* \*

Гранітні обеліски, як медузи,  
Повзли, повзли і вибивались з сил.  
На цвинтарі розстріляних ілюзій  
Уже немає місця для могил.

Мільярди вір — зариті у чорнозем,  
Мільярди щастя — розвіяні у прах . . .  
Душа горить, палає лютий розум,  
І ненависть регоче на вітрах.

Коли б усі одурені прозріли,  
Коли б усі убиті ожили,



То небо, від прокльонів посіріле,  
Напевно б репнуло від сорому й хули.

Тремтїть, убивці, думайте, лакузи,  
Життя не наліза на ваш копил.  
Ви чуєте? На цвинтарі ілюзій  
Уже немає місця для могил.

Уже народ — одна суцільна рана,  
Уже від крові хижіє земля,  
І кожного катюгу і тирана  
Уже чекає зсукана петля.

Розтерзані, зацьковані, убиті  
Підводяться і йдуть чинити суд.  
І їх прокльони, злі й несамовиті,  
Впадуть на душі плісняві і ситі,  
І загойдають дерева на вітті  
Апостолів злочинства і облуд.

\*

See p. 138.

## ЗЛОДІЙ

Дядька затримали чи впіймали,  
Дядька в сільраду ескортували,  
Дядька повчали і докоряли:  
— Як вам, дядьку, не ай-я-яй?  
Красти на полі свій урожай?  
У кого ви крали? Ви крали в себе.  
Це ж просто сором красти свій труд! —  
Дядько понуро тім'я теребив  
І смакував махру.  
Дядько кліпав товстими віями.  
Важко дивитися в очі ганьби,  
Важко йому із домашніми мріями  
Враз осягнуть парадокси доби.  
— Та воно так, — у кулак кахикав, —  
Красти погано . . . Куди вже гірш. —

Рвися з горлянки свавільним криком,  
Мій неслухняний вірш!  
Чому він злодій? З якої речі?  
Чому він красти пішов своє?  
Дали б той клунок мені на плечі —  
Сором у серце мені плює . . .  
Дядька я вбити зневагою мушу,  
Тільки ж у грудях клекоче гроза:  
Хто обікрав і обскуб його душу?  
Хто його совісти руки зв'язав?  
Де вони, ті — відгодовані, сірі,  
Недорікуваті демагоги і брехуни,  
Що в'язи скрутили дядьковій вірі,  
Пробиваючись в крісла й чини?  
Їх би за ґрати, їх би до суду,  
Їх би до карцеру за розбій!  
Доказів мало? Доказом будуть  
Лантухи вкрадених вір і надій.

\*

See pp. 140-141.

\* \* \*

Задивляюсь у твої зіниці,  
Голубі, тривожні, ніби рань.  
Крешуть з них червоні блискавиці  
Револуцій, бунтів і повстань.

Україно! Ти для мене диво!  
І нехай пливе за роком рік,  
Буду, мамо, горда і вродлива,  
З тебе чудуватися повік.

Ради тебе перли в душі сію,  
Ради тебе мислю і творю.  
Хай мовчать Америки й Росії,  
Коли я з тобою говорю.

Одійдіте, недруги лукаві!  
Друзі, зачекайте на путі!

Маю я святе синівське право  
З матір'ю побудь насамоті.

Рідко, нене, згадую про тебе,  
Дні занадто куці та малі.  
Ще не всі чорти живуть на небі,  
Ходить їх добіса по землі.

Бачиш, з ними щогодини б'юся,  
Чуєш — битви споконвічний грук!  
Як же я без друзів обійдуся,  
Без лобів їх, без очей і рук?

Україно, ти моя молитва,  
Ти моя розпука вікова . . .  
Громотить над світом люта битва  
За твоє життя, твої права.

Хай палають хмари бурякові,  
Хай сичать образи — все одно  
Я проллюся крапелькою крові  
На твоє священне знамено!

\*

See p. 143.

## БРАМА

Дикими, незнаними речами  
Марить брама у тривожнім сні,  
Де сторожа брязкає ключами  
І скриплять ворота захисні.

Привиди з кривавими мечами,  
У накидках чорних, ніби ніч,  
Граються безформними м'ячами —  
Головами, знесеними з пліч.

Кров стіка під флегматичні мури,  
Зойки захолили на губах,  
Сотні літ наруги і тортури  
Мертвих повертають у гробах.

Та не бачить місто в ніч похмуру,  
Як сторожа, вже не при мечах,  
Нову жертву кидає під мури  
З тряпкою брудною на очах.

\*

See p. 144.

### КУРДСЬКОМУ БРАТОВІ

*Борітеся — поборете!*  
Т. Шевченко

Волають гори, кровію политі,  
Підбиті зорі падають униз,  
В пахкі долини, зранені і зриті,  
Вдирається голодний шовінізм.

О, курде, бережи свої набої,  
Але життя убивців не щади!  
На байстрюків свавілля і розбою  
Кривавим смерчем, бурею впади!

Веди із ними кулями розмову,  
Вони прийшли не тільки за добром:  
Прийшли забрати ім'я твое, мову,  
Пустити твого сина байстрюком.

З гнобителем не житимеш у згоді:  
Йому — панянь, тобі — тягнути віз!  
Жириє з крові змучених народів  
Наш ворог найлютіший — шовінізм.

Він віроломство заручив з ганьбою,  
Він зробить все, аби скорився ти . . .  
О, курде, бережи свої набої,  
Без них тобі свій рід не вберегти.

Не заколисуй ненависти силу.  
Тоді привітність візьмеш за девіз,  
Як упаде в роззявлену могилу  
Останній на плянеті шовініст.

\*

See p. 146.

\* \* \*

Є тисячі доріг, мільйон вузьких стежинок,  
Є тисячі ланів, але один лиш мій.  
І що мені робить, коли малий зажинок  
Судилося почать на ниві нерясній?

Чи викинути серп і йти байдикувати,  
Чи долю проклясти за лютий недорід  
І до сусід пристать наймитувати  
За пару постолів і шкварку на обід?

Коли б я міг забуть убоге рідне поле,  
За шмат цієї землі мені б усе дали . . .  
До того ж і стерня ніколи ніг не коле  
Тим, хто взува холуйські постолі.

Та мушу я йти на рідне поле босим,  
І мучити себе й ледачого серпа,  
І падати з утоми на покоси,  
І спать, обнявши власного снопа.

Бо нива це — моя! Тут я почну зажинок,  
Бо кращий урожай не жде мене ніде,  
Бо тисяча доріг, мільйон вузьких стежинок  
Мене на ниву батьківську веде . . .

\*

See p. 147.

\* \* \*

Понеси мене на крилах, радосте моя,  
Де на погорбах і схилах сонця течія.  
Де стоять в обновах білих, в чистому вбранні  
Рідні хати, білі хати з хмелем при вікні.  
Де замріяні дівчата ходять до криниць,  
Де послались шовком ниви обіч ґрунтовиць.

Де мене, рум'яне диво з прутиком в руці,  
Ухопив гусак сварливий за нові штанці.  
Благослови, добра доле, вередухо вперта,  
На цій землі мені жити, та на ній і вмерти.

\*

See pp. 147-148.

### НЕКРОЛОГ КУКУРУДЗЯНОМУ КАЧАНОВІ, ЩО ЗГИНУВ НА ЗАГОТПУНКТІ

Не чути голосінь. Іржавіють оркестри.  
Оратори втомились від кричань.  
В труні лежить не вождь і не маестро,  
А просто — кукурудзяний качан.

Труна із тупости, бездарністю оббита.  
Бредуть за нею втомлені думки:  
Кого оплакувать? Кого мені судити?  
Кому із серця відбивать замки?

Кого трясти за петельки і душу?  
Кого клясти за цю безглузду смерть?  
Помер качан, і я кричати мушу,  
Налитий смутком і злобою вщертъ.

Качане мій, за що тебе згноїли?  
Качане мій, кому ти завинив?  
Качане мій, лягли в твою могилу  
І людська праця, і щедроти нив.

Безсонні ночі, неспокійні днини,  
Мозолі, піт, думок гарячих щем  
Лягли з тобою поруч в домовину  
І догнивають під густим дощем . . .

Прокляття вам, лукаві лиходії,  
В яких би ви не шлялися чинах!  
Ви убиваєте людські надії  
Так само, як убили качана.

\*

## ЛІНА КОСТЕНКО

See pp. 123-124.

... О, скільки стало в нашому столітті  
скалічених і безнадійних душ...

Захворів дехто на морську хворобу,  
хитається по палубі землі.

Розхитаний, спустошений і кволий,  
біда, якщо в мистецтво забреде, —

шукає форм небачених ніколи,  
шукає форм, нечуваних ніде.

І тут же просто шукачі прокорму,  
і шахраї, і скептиків юрма —  
шукають найсучаснішої форми  
для того змісту,  
що в душі нема.

. . . . .

Різні бувають естафети.

Передають поетам поети

З душі у душу,

Із мови в мову

Свободу духу і правду слова,

Не промінявши на речі тлінні —

На славолюбство і на вигоду.

\*

See p. 125.

## САДЖЕНЕЦЬ

Деревце оперилося.

Пір'я зелене

тріпотіло на радісному гіллі.

В листопаді опало . . .  
Дереце називалося кленом.  
Обкопали його,  
Відорвали його від землі.

Повезли — повезли  
по дорогах трусських осінніх.  
В незнайомі ґрунти  
посадили в далекім краю . . .

Не зів'яло воно,  
бо у вузлик міцного коріння  
на дорогу взяло  
найріднішу землю своєю.

\*

## БОРИС ОЛІЙНИК

See p. 110.

### НЕ ДЛЯ ДІТЕЙ

— Краще померти стоячи,  
Ніж на колінах жити? —  
Сказав учитель історії  
Дітям.

Слухайте, діти, вчителя,  
Слухайте маму й тата,  
І дай вам Бог тільки з читанок  
Про це читати.

Да-а . . . »Краще померти стоячи . . .«  
Сказано мужньо і строго.  
. . . А в них були перебиті  
Ноги.

Вони піднялись на колінах —  
І впало вороння крепом.  
. . . Ой, зросла в полі червона калина,  
А над нею сине-небо . . .



Це я не вам, діти,  
Я просто думаю, діти,  
Що можна і на колінах  
Померти краще, ніж стоячи жити.

... Діти.  
Читайте історію.

\*

## МАКСИМ РИЛЬСЬКИЙ

See pp. 124-125.

### ПОРАДА

Мені казав розумний садівник:  
»Коли ти пересаджуеш ялинку,  
Відзнач північний і південний бік  
І так сади: ростиме добре й гінко.

Нехай на південь дивиться вона,  
Як і дивилася — тим самим оком;  
Тих самих віт хай темна гущина  
З північним вітром бореться широким.

І ще одно: сади її в гурті;  
Сама вона, без подруг, не ростиме...  
... Поради є хороші у житті,  
І я навів не гіршу поміж ними.

\*

## ТАРАС ШЕВЧЕНКО

See p. 87.

... Людей муштвораних чимало.  
А сліз? А крові? Утопить  
Всіх імператорів би стало  
З дітьми й внучатами, втопить  
В сльозах удових... А дівочих,  
Проливих нишком серед ночі?

А матерніх гарячих сліз,  
А батьківських, старих, кривавих?  
Не ріки — море розлилось,  
Огненне море!..

\*

See p. 90.

... І тебе забрали, мій друже єдиний,  
Мій Якове любий! Не за Україну,  
А за її ката довелось пролить  
Кров добру, — не чорну; довелось запить  
З московської чаші московську отруту.  
О, друже, мій добрий, друже незабутній!  
Живою душою в Україні витай;  
Літай з козаками понад берегами  
Розриті могили в степу назирай,  
Заплач з козаками дрібними сльозами,  
І мене з неволі в степу витядай!..

---

## FAIRY-TALES

See pp. 83-94

### ЦАР ПЛАКСІЙ ТА ЛОСКОТОН

#### Цареве сімейство

Там де гори і долини  
Де гуляє вітровий, —  
Там цвіте краса-країна  
З дивним ім'ям Сльозолий.  
І колись в країні тій  
Був на троні цар Плаксіей.  
Голова його, мов бочка,  
Очі — ніби кавуни.  
В Плаксія було три дочки  
І плаксивих три сини.  
Старша звалася Нудота,  
Середульшая — Вай-Вай,  
Третя донечка — Плакота, —  
Всі сльозливі через край.  
А цареві три сини  
Так і звалися — Плаксуні.  
Отака була сім'я  
У царя у Плаксія.  
Цілі дні вони сиділи,  
Голосили, та сопіли,  
Та стогнали, та ревли,  
Сльози відрами лили.  
Цар Плаксіей велів сердито:  
»Хай із ними день при дні  
Плачуть всі в країні діти,  
Бо сміятись і радіти  
У моєму царстві — ні!  
Хто всміхнеться — в часі тім  
Я того негайно з'їм!«  
Ще була у Плаксія  
Грізна гвардія своя:  
В ній служили молодці  
Забіяки-сльозівці.  
Хто сміявся — вони хапали  
І нагайками шмагали.

See pp. 95-109.

### ПОДОРОЖ В КРАЇНУ НАВПАКИ

Лесик, Толя й два Володі  
Сумували на колоді.  
Лесик скаржився: »Хлоп'ята,  
Страх як тяжко жить мені —  
Слухай маму, слухай тата,  
Умивайся день при дні.  
Ох, і тяжко жить мені!«  
Толя теж сидить бідує,  
Вилива жалі свої:  
»Дуже Тоня вередує,  
Розважай весь час її...«  
А Володя скитлить: »Тато  
Змусив квіти поливати...«  
І зітхає вся четвірка:  
»Як нам тяжко!  
Як нам гірко!«  
Раптом трісь — і перед ними  
Бородань малий з'явивсь  
Хитруватими очима  
На четвірку він дививсь.  
І сказав до них суворо  
Цей химерний чоловік:  
»Я почув про ваше горе  
Й через доли, через гори  
Свою бороду волік —  
Поспішав мерщій сюди  
Виручати вас з біди.  
Недалеко звідсіля  
Є чудна одна земля —  
Там ні дня нема, ні ночі,  
Кожен робить там, що скоче...«  
Тут всі четверо до нього:  
»Поможіть нам, допоможіть!  
Як пройти в оту країну,  
Розкажіть нам, розкажіть!  
»Поможу я вам охоче, —  
Каже власник бороди, —

## ЦАР ПЛАКСІЙ . . .

Так що в царстві тому скрізь  
Вистачало плачу й сліз.  
Цар любив, як плачуть діти,  
Бо любив їх сльози пити.  
Отакий був цар ПлаксіЙ.  
У країні Сльозолий.

### Дядько Лоскотон

Але в тому диво-царстві,  
Зневажаючи закон,  
Жив у мандрах і митарстві  
Добрий дядько Лоскотон.  
Він приходив кожний вечір —  
Хай чи дощ іде, чи сніг —  
До голодної малечі  
І усім приносив сміх.  
Мав він вдачу теплу й щиру,  
Ще й лукавинку в очах.  
І була накидка сіра  
В Лоскотона на плечах.  
Лоскотливі мав він вуса  
І м'якенькі, наче пух,  
І м'яке волосся русе  
Розсипалося до вух.  
Він як прийде, залоскоче,  
То сміється, хто й не хоче.  
Тільки де він появлявся,  
Зразу плач там припинявся  
І приходив до усіх  
Голосний та щирий сміх.  
Не любили Лоскотона  
Цар ПлаксіЙ і Плаксуни,  
Видавали заборони  
Проти лоскоту вони.  
І за дядьком Лоскотоном  
Із нагайками в руках  
Охоронці злих законів  
Полювали по хатах.  
Але дядько Лоскотон

## ПОДОРОЖ В КРАЇНУ . . .

Ви на мить заплющіть очі —  
Я відправлю вас туди.  
Тільки так усі зробили,  
Всіх як вітром підхопило,  
Закрутило, завертіло,  
Заревло і загуділо  
Й над степами,  
Над лісами  
Аж під небом понесло!  
Як розплющили всі очі,  
Закричали:  
»Тру-лю-лю!  
Я роблю тепер, що схожу  
Що захочу, те й роблю!  
Ми потрапили таки  
У країну Навпаки!«  
Ну, а цей чудесний край  
Для малечі просто рай:  
Там в річках тече чорнило,  
Там ніхто й не чув про мило!  
Всі замурані по вуха,  
Галасують всі щодуху,  
Оком чують, вухом бачать,  
Догори ногами скачуть.  
Сажотруси хати білять,  
Землеміри небо ділять,  
Косарі дерева косять,  
Язиками дрова носять.  
Взявши торби, малюки  
Ходять в небо по зірки.  
Наберуть їх повні жмені,  
Ще й напхають у кишені  
І додому з неба — скік! —  
Хто на скирту, хто на тік.  
Лесик, Толя, два Володі,  
Як малі телята в шкоді,  
Цілий день брикали, грались,  
Реготали і качались,  
То з якимись хлопчиками  
Воювали галушками,  
То в тустих чагарниках

## ЦАР ПЛАКСІЙ . . .

Не боявся цих заслон:  
Він ходив по всій країні  
І носив з собою сміх  
В розмальованій торбині,  
В пальцях лагідних своїх.

### Арешт Лоскотона

Розізлились тоді Плаксію —  
Цар країни Сльозолий.  
Гнівню він тукнув із трону:  
»Гей, ледачі сльозівці!  
Хто впіймає Лоскотона,  
Буде муж моїй дочці!  
Хто його посадить в льох —  
Вибирай одну із трьох!  
Бо уже цей Лоскотон  
Скоро нам розвалить трон:  
Що тоді ми будем пити,  
Як не будуть плакати діти!«  
І завзяті сльозівці  
Понеслися у всі кінці,  
Щоб скарати по закону  
Баламута Лоскотона.  
Довго скрізь його шукали,  
У всі шпари заглядали,  
Перерили всі двори,  
Обходили всі бори,  
Час потратили дарма:  
Лоскотона скрізь нема,  
Бо його завжди і всюди  
Од ловців ховали люди.  
Опівночі Лоскотон,  
Коли всіх колише сон,  
Йшов собі в бідняцькі хати  
Їхніх діток розважати.

Був тоді у Плаксія

## ПОДОРОЖ В КРАЇНУ . . .

Танцювали на руках.  
І кричали:  
»Тру-лю-лю!  
Що захочу, те й роблю!«  
Потім, стомлені й щасливі,  
Спали, висячи на сливі.  
Одіспавшись, ласуни  
Рвали з дуба кавуни  
І з куців серед левад  
Смакували шоколад.  
Якось їх біля млина  
Стріла гвардія чудна —  
Ці вояки в штанах синіх  
Верхи їхали на свинях.  
»Хто такі? — спитав похмуро  
Найстрашніший мацапура. —  
Це перевертні, не діти!  
Гей, хапайте їх, в'яжіте!«  
І вояки той наказ  
Так і виконали враз  
Та й погнали неборак  
До палацу Невмивак.  
Ждав їх в будці для собаки  
Цар Великий Невмивака —  
Він найстаршим тут вважався,  
Бо сто років не вмивався.  
Як побачив цар малих,  
Закричав, завив на них:  
»Що це в біса за прояви?  
В них праворуч руки праві?!  
Чом вони очима бачать?  
Що це, слуги мої, значать?  
Треба їх обмити чорнилом,  
Бо від них одгонить миллом.  
Потім всім їм для науки  
Треба викрутити руки,  
Ще й відтяти треба вуха  
Та навчить очима слухать.  
Лиш тоді ці диваки  
Зможуть жити в Навпаки.  
А тепер цих недотеп

## ЦАР ПЛАКСІЙ...

Лютий посіпака,  
Віроломний, як змія,  
Капітан Макака.  
Так хотілося йому  
Царським взятєм стати,  
Що ні разу в ту зиму  
Не лягав і спати.  
Все ходив, усе він служав  
І нарешті все рознюхав.  
На світанку Лоскотон,  
Насмішавши діток,  
У міцний поринув сон  
Між кленових віток.  
А лукавий капітан  
Підікрався змієм  
Й Лоскотонові аркан  
Зашморгнув на шиї.  
Руки вивернув назад,  
Міцно спутав ноги  
І мерщій у Плаксотрад  
Рушив у дорогу...

### Весілля в палаці

Лоскотона посадили  
За вузьенькі грати,  
А в палаці порішили:  
— Час весілля грати... —  
Гей, зійшлися царенята  
І придворна свита  
Наречених шанувати,  
Сльози діток пити.  
До вінця веде жених  
Висохлу Нудоту,  
Та дивитися на них  
Зовсім неохота.  
Хоч Макака був бриджий,  
А вона ще гірша,  
Ім поет один гладкий  
Присвятив ще й вірша.

## ПОДОРОЖ В КРАЇНУ...

Замуруйте в темний склеп!  
Так, зіпершись на ломаку,  
Гаркнув трізний Невмивака,  
І дітей всіх чотирьох  
Слуги кинули у льох.  
У льоху в холодній тиші  
Шаруділи сонні миші,  
Од стіни та до стіни  
Сновитали таргани  
І, забившись в кутки,  
Пряли пряжу павуки.  
Пронизав усіх хлоп'ят  
Страх нечуваний до п'ят,  
То ж всі четверо щосили  
У тюрмі заголосили.  
І від тих солоних сліз  
Льох увесь по швах поліз:  
Спершу стіни тануть стали,  
Потім двері з цукру впали.  
І щаслива дівтора  
З криком радісним »Ура!«  
Задали стрімкого дьору  
Од царя страшного двору.  
А вояки в штанях синіх  
Дчали назирці на свинях  
І кричали, й докоряли,  
Й помідорами стріляли.  
Ось-ось-ось були б спіймали,  
Але свині раптом стали  
Й повернули до лози  
Смакувати гарбузи.  
Як вояки не галділи,  
Свині й слухать не хотіли —  
Тільки рохкали й хрумтіли,  
Гарбузи все їли, їли.  
А наївшись, як одна,  
Всі чкурнули до батна  
Тож вояки всі чимдуж  
Мчали слідом до калюж  
Та благали:  
»Любі паці,

## ЦАР ПЛАКСІЙ...

Стільки там було хвальби,  
Так скрасив їх вроду —  
Навіть жаби від ганьби  
Булькнули у воду!  
Але цар ходив, пишався,  
Він із зятем цілувався,  
Похвалявся: »Ну, тепер  
Лоскотон,» вважай, умер!  
Недоступним став для всіх  
Голосний та щирий сміх.  
Тож від радості стрибайте!  
Тож від радості ридайте!  
Ми тепер встановим скрізь  
Віковічне царство сліз!«  
Так розхвастався Плаксі́й —  
Цар країни Сльозолий.

## Звільнення Лоскотона

Та поки гуло весілля,  
То п'яниці вартові  
Напились якогось зілля  
Та й послули у траві.  
А вночі йшли до в'язниці  
Батраки й робітники,  
Щоб звільнити із темниці  
Лоскотона навіки.  
Рознесли всі перепони,  
Гнули грати, мов пруті:  
— Гей, веселий Лоскотоне,  
Це прийшли твої брати!  
Йди до нас, веселий брате,  
В нашу здружену сім'ю!  
Підем разом догравати  
Ми весілля Плаксію...

## Продовження весілля

## ПОДОРОЖ В КРАЇНУ...

Вже пора вставать до праці!«  
Свині добре все це чули,  
Але й вусом не моргнули  
І пролежали в багчі  
Дві секунди ще й два дні.  
А тимчасом наші діти  
Мчали мов несамовиті  
Через поле й сінокіс  
Та й потрапили у ліс.  
Тут, у лісі на поляні,  
Квіти бавились рум'яні —  
Грали в гилки, в коперка,  
Танцювали топака.  
Як побачили малих,  
Прудко кинулись до них,  
Застрибали, заскакали,  
У листочки заплескали:  
»Йдіть до нас!  
До нас у коло —  
Потанцюем, як ніколи!«  
Квіти діток гратись кличуть,  
А вони стоять кигичуть:  
»Там вояки в штанах синіх  
Доганяють нас на свинях.  
Хочуть ці лукаві круки  
Повикручують нам руки.  
Ой! Ой! Ой! Де наші мами,  
Що без них тут буде з нами?«  
Квіти з жаху стали сині:  
»Нас також потопчуть свині!...«  
Тут до них підскачав дід  
Кущовик Червоний Глід:  
»Не сумуйте, не кричіте,  
Я поляну оточу,  
І свиней топтати квіти  
Відучу!«  
Глід, Шипшина й Терен дикий  
Вмить без галасу і крику  
Всю поляну оточили,  
Нашпорошили голки  
Й заганяли їх щосили

У палаці кожен скаче  
 Та від щастя гірко плаче,  
 Ллються сльози як ріка, —  
 Бачте, радість в них така!  
 Раптом цар упав на трон:  
 — Ой, рятуйте — Лоскотон! —  
 Всі відразу «ох!» та «ах!»,  
 Жах у кожного в очах.  
 А веселий Лоскотон  
 До царя стрибнув на трон  
 І сказав йому якраз:  
 — Насмієшся ти хоч раз! . . . —  
 Став царя він лоскотати,  
 І ПлаксіЙ став реготати.  
 Так сміявся — аж заливався,  
 Аж від реготу качався,  
 Кулаками очі тер —  
 Потім лопнув і помер.  
 Ой, була ж тоді потіха —  
 Цар ПлаксіЙ помер од сміху!  
 З ним придворні одубіли,  
 Бо сміятися не вміли.  
 А цареві три сини,  
 Три завзяті Плаксуни,  
 Так сміялись-реготали,  
 Що штани з них попадали —  
 Тож всі троє без штанів  
 До чужих втекли країв.  
 Три царівни теж навтьоки  
 У чотири бігли боки.  
 Кровопивці-сльозівці  
 Стали п'явками в ріці.  
 А макака-забіяка  
 З'їв себе із переляку.  
 Так веселий Лоскотон  
 Розвалив поганський трон.  
 Сам же він живе й понині,  
 Дітям носить щирий сміх  
 В розмальованій торбині,  
 В пальцях лагідних своїх.

Свиням в ноги і боки.  
 І воякам шматували  
 Пишний одяг і тіла —  
 Впало ранених чимало  
 Кров з них ріками текла.  
 Вже вояки, як не брались,  
 Тільки геть пообдирались —  
 В колочках, усі в крові  
 Повтікали ледь живі.  
 Розізлився Невмивака,  
 Що зірвалася атака,  
 І звелів поставити, клятий,  
 Круг поляни вартових,  
 Щоб зухвальців упіймати —  
 Хай чи мертвих, чи живих!  
 Він сказав:  
 »Дітей схопіть  
 І в чорнилі утопіть!«  
 І вояки в штанах синіх  
 Сновитали скрізь на свинях,  
 Доглядали, щоб малечі  
 Не було шляхів до втечі.  
 Ну, а діти, бідні діти,  
 Стали худнути, марніти,  
 Стала їх бороти втома,  
 Закортіло всім додому.  
 І зітхала вся четвірка:  
 »Як нам тяжко!  
 Як нам гірко!«  
 Раптом трісь »— і перед ними  
 Бородань малий з'явивсь.  
 Хитруватими очима  
 На четвірку він дививсь.  
 »Хто із вас додому хоче, —  
 Каже власник бороди, —  
 Хай лишень заплющить очі —  
 Віднесу його туди . . .«  
 Тільки всі отак зробили,  
 Всіх як вітром підхопило,  
 Закрутило, завертіло,  
 Заревло і загуло



## ЦАР ПЛАКСІЙ . . .

Схочеш сам піти в цей край,  
То маршрут запам'ятай:  
Треба йти спочатку прямо,  
Потім вправо завернуть,  
А тоді поміж дубами  
Поведе наліво путь.  
Після цього вже помалу  
Чимчикуй куди попало:  
Як од втоми не впадеш —  
В цю країну попадеш.

## ПОДОРОЖ В КРАЇНУ . . .

Й над степами  
Над ярами  
Потід небом понесло!  
Як розплющили всі очі,  
Гульк — уже в своїм дворі!  
Їх стрічають, обнімають  
І бабусі, й матері.  
І кричать мандрівники:  
— Нас тепер ніяким дивом —  
Навіть бубликом красивим! —  
Не заманите віки  
У країну Н а в п а к и !

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## SHOT STORIES

See pp. 68-69.

На неї задивлялися навіть дідугани, і вже рідко який хлопець не міряв очима з голови до п'ят. В одних у зорі світилося захоплення, в других — неприхована хіть, а треті милувалися нею, як шедевром краси. Коли вона кидала чорні коси на пружні груди і пливла селом з сапкою на плечі, хлопці божеволіли. Приходили боязко до її воріт і натхненно говорили про кохання, а вона тільки слухала і мовчала. Ніхто не насмлювався торкнутися її, мов боявся осквернити дотиком красу. Вона ніким не гордувала і ніколи не ганила, а тільки прохала прощаючись:

— Не ходи до мене більше. Добре? . . .

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See pp. 70-71.

## ЧОРНА ПІДКОВА

Хмари повзли так низько, що перехожі несподівано виринали з них і так само несподівано тонули. Дівчина задерла

голову, ніби хотіла протаранити очима їх клубчасту похмуристь. Довгими віями вона торкалася країв хмар, а її очі були єдиними синіми цятками серед передгрозової сірості.

— Я не люблю тебе, — сказала дівчина, дивлячись у небо.  
— Ти брехав мені . . .

— Я не брехав тобі . . .

— Ти не любив мене.

Він дивився в землю і не бачив, що коїться над ними.

— Я люблю тебе, — хлопець нервово човгав черевиком по зеленому горбику і вже вибив на ньому чорну підкову. — Я люблю тебе . . .

— Ти просто боїшся втратити мене і залишитись самотнім.

— Дурниці! — раптом загарячився він. — Коли я став байдужим тобі, то . . .

Вона метнула на нього дві сині блискавки.

— Чому ти весь час дивишся в землю?

Він важко, мов гирі, підняв свої очі і спідлоба глипнув на неї, але за мить його очі знову впали в траву.

— Це не має значення, куди я дивлюся.

— Ти ніколи не дивився мені в очі. Ти завжди був жадібним і нетерплячим, — розстрілювала вона його сумніви. — Ти не хотів бути щасливим зі мною, ти просто хотів ошчасливити мене.

Вона раптом заплакала і ледве втрималася, щоб не припасти йому до грудей.

— Я теж хочу бодай одну людину зробити щасливою, — сердито ввігнала підбор у глевку землю і прожогом кинулася геть.

— Почекай, — він рушив за нею.

Тягуче закашлявся грім, і об листя запорошчали великі, мов боруб'яки, краплі. З хмар виринули двоє. Вони трималися за руки і бігли прямо під клен. Зупинилися захекані і мокрі, щасливі, що знайшли таку густу корону.

— Дивися підкова, — вигукнув хлопець.

Вони присіли біля чорної дуги, впаяної в зелене божевілля. І якось несподівано зустрілися їхні очі, потім руки і губи.

— Підкову знаходять на щастя, — прошелестіли її уста.

Ті, що знаходять підкову, ніколи не думають про того, хто загубив її.

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See p. 73.

... Колись він глузував над позитивними героями убогих романів. Позитивним завжди снівся верстат або трактор...

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See p. 73.

... — Та ми навіть не знайомі! — заміялася дівчина.

Від несподіванки він ледве не став кам'яним монументом.

— Як? Ви навіть не знайомі? І ви сидите поруч і посміхаєтесь одне одному перед очима цілого міста?

Мені здавалося, що він репне від гніву, він так заходився шпарувати нас банальностями, що навіть сонце спіткнулося і нахромалося на вістра тополі. Я хотів уже заткнути вуха і сторчма кинутися, куди влучу, але тут озвався отой сивий-сивий чоловік.

— Якого дідька ви прилипли до цих молодят? Нехай собі посміхаються, це ображає тільки бегемотів.

— Через таких потуральників, як ви, і молодь у нас розбещена, — з жовтю напереваги ринув захисник цнотливості на сивочолого.

— Та йдіть геть, бо покличу міліціонера, — втомлено відповів той. — Зануда.

— Це вас треба у міліцію! Безсоромники! — зарепетував ображений, але таки ушнипився йти, і за хвилину його постать, сповнена обуренням і прописними істинами, зникла за остріхом кущів.

А ми знов сиділи і посміхалися. Небо реготало так, що аж видно було його червоні ясна.

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See p. 75.

... Він розповідав їм, що бачив у снах квіти, як вони перешіптуються з сивими зорями, вигадував казки про дивовижні краї, де квіти не тільки пахнуть, але й розмовляють, і ходять, і граються в піжмурки, а в'януть лише тоді, коли в тій країні з'являється хоч одна нещаслива людина.

— Квіти люблять щасливих. У нас від нещастя вони не в'януть а плачуть. Ви бачили, скільки вранці на них роси? Ото їхні сльози. Хто росяного ранку знайде незаплакану квітку, той буде дуже щасливий.

— А ви знаходили незаплакану квітку?

— Ні, я не знаходив, та, мабуть, і не знайду . . .

See p. 79

. . . Він — син свого часу. Колись якимось висунувся, його підняли і посадили на це крісло. І він сидить. І сидітиме без жодних нарікань, доки не пересадять в інше. Як це завжди буває з людьми низької культури і убогої душі, совість його не турбує. Він навіть зверхньо дивиться на людей, особливо неспокійних, і вважає себе незамінним. Порожнечу справді нелегко замінити чимось . . .

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## THE DIARY

See pp. 40-41.  
18. IX. 1962.

Зачинаю цей щоденник не тому, що хочеться побавитися у великого. Мені потрібен друг, з яким я міг би ділитися геть усіма своїми сумнівами. Вірнішого і сердечнішого побратима, ніж папір, я не знаю.

Земля вже двадцять восьмий раз несе мене навколо сонця. Мало встиг я зробити за цей час гарного і доброго. Зате навчився я пити горілку, смердіти тютюном, навчився мовчати і бути обережним, коли слід кричати. І найстрашніше — навчився бути нещирим.

Брехня — мабуть, моя професія. Талант брехуна у мене вроджений. Є три категорії брехунів: одні брешуть, щоб мати з цього моральну чи матеріальну вигоду, другі брешуть, аби брехати, а треті служать брехні як мистецтву. Вони, власне, вигадують або домислюють логічні кінцівки до правди. Ці брехуни, з моєї брехунівської купини, видаються мені благородними. Вони художники. Вони — резерв літератури . . .

... Такі, як я, теж необхідні для літератури — ми своїми кволими думками угноїмо ґрунт на якому виросте гігант. Прийдешній Тарас або Франко. Жду його, як віруючий пришесть Христового...

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See p. 42.  
19. IX. 1962.

Діти часом несвідомо говорять видатні речі. Пригадую: рік тому ми з Олесем гуляли біля Казбетського ринку. Уздрівши пам'ятник деспота, він запитав мене:

— Тату, хто це?

— Сталін.

Одну мить він дивиться на нього і ніби між іншим запитує:

— А чого він туди виліз?

Справді, Сталін не зійшов на п'єдестал, не люди поставили його, а він сам виліз — через віроломство, підлість, виліз криваво і зухвало, як і всі кати. Тепер цей тигр, що живився чоловічиною, здох би від люті, коли б дізнався, якою знахідкою для збирачів металолому стали його бездарні лубкові пам'ятники.

Це страшно, коли прижиттєва слава і обожествлення стають посмертною ганьбою. Це взагалі не слава, а тільки іграшка, якою тішаться дорослі діти. Не розуміють цього тільки убогі душею і мозком.

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See p. 43.  
27. IX. 1962

... Я — ні. На мене він ще тоді справив глибоке і сильне враження. Я повірив у нього з першого знайомства і, гадаю не помилився...

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See pp. 43-45  
8. X. 1962.

Три дні і сто вражень. Вінграновський, П'янов, Коломієць і грішний аз вчинили кавалерійські наскоки на Кривий Ріг і

Кіровоград. Хоч жодного разу не вдалося виступити перед численною аудиторією, я лишився задоволений. Микола — безперечно, трибун. Слова у його поезіях репаються від пристрасти і думок. Поруч з ним глибинієш душею.

З П'яновим сперечалися ми про «Троянди в траурі». Мені здається, що не можна плутати Мадонну, створену мистцями, і суто релігійну Матір Божу. Лицеміри в рясах прекрасного Ісуса і його Матір перетворили в насильників людської плоті і духу. Коли навіть найпрекрасніша легенда (а Ісуса і діву Марію я вважаю витворами унікальними) стала засобом духовного пригнічення, тоді вже про «дійових осіб» легенди я не можу судити безвідносно до того, що роблять бузувіри, прикриваючись їх іменами. Ніякі високоблагородні і високогуманні настанови будь-якого вчення не можуть прислужитися поступу, коли вони стають еталоном. Непорочна, пречиста діва варта захоплення, але, даруйте — не наслідування. Зречення плотських радостей — протиприродне, а тому жорстоке і реакційне.

До того ж у «Трояндах в траурі» я зовсім не мав наміру «повалити богів». Я виступаю в них проти нової релігії, проти лицемірів, які не без успіху намагаються перетворити марксизм у релігію, в прокрустове ложе для науки, мистецтва і любови. Сумні приклади з кібернетикою, генетикою, бурхливе проростання поганок у літературі й живописі, вічні заклики до жертвування і безконечні обіцянки «раю на потім» — хіба це таке вже й далеке від трагедії Бруно і Галілея, псалмо- та іконописання, від монастирів і царства небесного?

Якщо марксизм не вистоїть перед шаленим наступом догматизму, він приречений стати релігією. Ніяке вчення не сміє монополізувати духовне життя людства. Все таки Айштайн не був моїм політичним однодумцем, хоч і зробив відкриття, які потрясли науку.

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See pp. 46-47.  
16. X. 1962.

Немає нічого страшнішого за необмежену владу в руках обмеженої людини.

Голова колгоспу з Єременкового села кричав на зборах від безсилля і люті:

— Я вам зроблю новий 33-й рік!

Звичайно, ніхто навіть не подумав взяти за комір цього негідника. А цей же дурень однією своєю ідіотською фразою знищить наслідки роботи десятків розумних людей. Якби в наших вождів було більше глузду, ніж є, подібні крикуни милувалися б небом крізь ґрати.

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See pp. 47-48.  
21. X. 1962

До безтями ненавижу казенну, пантентовану, відгодовану мудрість. Якими б цитатами бездари не підпирали свою розумову стелю, вона однак занизька для нормальної людини. Як простір немислимий без руху, так поезія немислима без думки. Що то за простір, коли в ньому не можна рухатися? Яка то поезія, коли вона не мислить? Поезія — це прекрасна мудрість.

До чого змілів наш гумор, як зубожіла сатира! Стиляги, перекупки, вузькі штанчата і модні зачіски — чи варто серйозним людям тратити на це нікчемство не лише слова, а й нерви? А скільки вже назубоскалили з поганих літконсультантів! Я ніколи навіть не пробував писати ґрунтовні і глибокі відповіді на мілкі твори. В калюжі глибоко не пірнеш, будь ти хоч японським шукачем перлів.

Треба написати поему про Герострата. Це зараз дуже актуально. Земля кишить Геростратами.

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See p. 49.  
9. XI. 1962.

Минули святки, і мені соромно згадувати свою вчорашню поведінку, я вів себе як покидьок — навіть ображав людей. Як жаль, що ніхто не розквасив мені носа! Треба якось брати себе в руки і менше тельнякати язиком, а більше ворушити мозком.

Запізніле каяття завжди схоже на позерство. Але у мене немає іншого виходу. Треба вчитися бачити себе збоку.

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See pp. 51-52.  
21. VI. 1963

Майже півроку я не заглядав до цього зошита, хоч деякі події, що трапилися впродовж цих шости місяців, треба було якось зафіксувати.

Ледве не задихнувся в пороховому диму ідеологічних баталій. Реалізм одержав чергову вікторію, не творами, правда, а адміністративними заходами.

Взагалі небезпека формалістичного безумства, здається, була позірною. Принаймні на Україні я не зустрів жодного уболівальника абстракціонізму чи якогось неофутуризму. Реальною залишилася, як і була, загроза формалістичного недоумства в літературі. Бо хіба не формалізм, коли сотні писарчуків за наперед заготовленими схемами обсмоктують десяток другий так званих вічних ідей — люби працю, поважай тата й маму, не дивись косо на сусідів? Формалізм починається там, де кінчається думка.

Якщо поет не приносить нових думок та емоцій — він формаліст. Як би не реклямував свою мниму належність до реалістів. Холуйським реалізм не може бути. Є реалізм, якому служив Шевченко, і є реалізм, що користується послугами Дмитерка. Різні речі! Не дмитерки спадкоємці літератури. Вони живуть з неї а не для неї.

Навряд чи мені можна закинути формалізм, а не друкують нічого.

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See pp. 52-53.  
6. VII. 1963

Не знаю, чи це кожному властиве, чи тільки зі мною таке буває. Часто сумніви нищать будьяку впевненість в своїй мужності. Я не знаю, як триматимуся, коли посиплються на мою голову справжні випробування. Чи лишуся людиною, чи так засліпить не лише очі, а й розум? Втрата мужности це втрата людської гідности, котру я ставлю над усе. Навіть над самим життям. Але скільки людей — розумних і талановитих — рятували своє життя, поступаючися гідністю, і,



власне, перетворювали його в нікому не потрібне животіння. Це — найстрашніше.

Минулої неділі ми були в Одесі, де місцеві твердолобі натішили нас своїм ідіотським жахом: аби чого не сталося. Фактично нам заборонили виступати на Шевченківському вечорі. Виходить, Тараса дехто боїться досі. Обивателі від революції.

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See p. 53.  
22. VII. 1963.

Мабуть, почалося моє згасання. Фізично я майже безпорадний, хоч морально ще не зовсім виснажився. Думаючи про смерть, не почуваю ніякого страху. Можливо, це тому, що вона ще далеко? Дивна річ: я не хочу смерті, але й особливої жадібності до життя не маю. Десять років — для мене більше, ніж достатньо.

З іронією оглядаюся на пройдене: мені двадцять дев'ять скоро стукне, а що я зробив, чи бодай почав, значне? Не життя, а низка дрібних клопотів, дрібних розчарувань і дрібних успіхів!

Ні, не так я мріяв жити, як живу. Щасливий той, хто хоче мало від життя — він ніколи не розчарується в ньому, Найпростіший і найкоротший шлях до так званого щастя — стати обивателем. Мозок, здатний породжувати мислі, не здатний зробити його власника щасливим.

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See pp. 53-54.  
3. IX. 1963

... Друзі мої принишкли, про них не чути й слова. Друковані органи стали ще бездарнішими і зухвалішими: »Літературна Україна« каструє мою статтю, »Україна« знущається над віршами. Кожний лакей робить, що йому заманеться. Як тут світитися вдячністю, як не молитися щовечора і щоранку за тих, що подарували нам таку вольготність. До цього можна ще додати, що в квітні були зняті мої вірші у »Зміні«, зарі-

зані (?) у »Жовтні«, потім надійшли гарбузи з »Дніпра« і »Вітчизни«.

Ай, ай, ай, весело! Всі ми під пресом.  
Так воно треба задля прогресу.

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See pp. 64-65.  
5. IX. 1963.

Вчора написав »Казку про Дурила«. Написав одним подихом, хоч дещо було заготовлене раніше. Сьогодні казка ще подобається мені, жаль, що нікому її прочитати.

Тепер я став у Черкасах ще самотніший, бо немає і того колективу, що був у »Молоді Черкащини«. Приятельські стежки між мною та Негодою і Оглоблином, можна сказати, позаростали буйним шпорищем. Одному з них я був потрібен, доки міг щось допомогти, другий виявився звичайнісіньким флюгером. Не сумніваюся, що він цькуватиме мене з таким же запалом, як раніше вихваляв. Та він це й сам продемонстрував з кількох трибун на різних нарадах.

Але — нам своє робить.

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See pp. 65-66.  
20. IX. 1963.

Коли я говорю про »дикий острів« і свою самотність, то в цьому немає ніякісінької зневаги до людей. Те, що в Черкасах я майже не маю друзів, зовсім не означає, що я вважаю всіх нікчемами, не гідними моєї уваги і т. д. (це закидає мені дружина). Просто не зустрів я серед них духовної рідні, а дружба, як відомо, не може триматися лише на раціо.

Недавно познайомився з Б. Г.

Здається, я став писати гірше, ніж рік тому. Зледачили мозок і серце.

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## NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

See pp. 54-57.

### ДЕКОРАЦІЇ І ЖИВІ ДЕРЕВА

Кажуть, чукчі знають сорок »сортів« снігу. Зате в їхній мові немає загального поняття сніг. Є сніг рипучий, є сніг сизий, є сніг лапятий і навіть гарячий, і кожен з них існує осібно, уперто відмовляючись об'єднатися зі своїми братами в слово-федерацію, тобто у загальне поняття. Не зрозуміло, як чукотські поети миряться з таким неподобством. Адже їм, бідолахам, треба знати всі оті сорок »сортів«. І це в той час, коли, як засвідчує досвід, декому з нас вартго запам'ятати, що сніг білий і можна пересипатися ним у віршах, скільки заманеться.

Безперечно, кожна високорозвинена мова має безліч загальникових понять. Нарікати на це було б нерозумно, але мені здається, що письменнику чи художнику треба згадувати про них вряди-годи. Принаймні, малюючи ліс, не слід малювати дерева взагалі, а краще взяти на олівець конкретну породу, скажімо, липу. Тим паче, що це прекрасне дерево згадують лише тоді, коли в кулуарах обговорюють чиясь дисертацію чи статтю.

Мені часом здається, що в нашому літературному гаю, особливо в поезії »проізрастає« дуже багато синтезованих рослин, котрі, маючи всі ознаки дерева (зелені, дерев'яні), не мають ні своєї корони, ні свого глибинного коріння. І ще мені здається, що найкращим ґрунтом для таких диворослин є наша непомірна, прямо-таки безмежна любов до загальних слів і понять. Візьмемо хоча б таке священне для всіх нас поняття, як праця, і краєчком ока глянемо, як ми поводимося з ним.

Те, до чого старші письменники йшли через творчі муки, з людськими болями і ваганнями, що для них було відкриттям і знахідкою, ми з самопевністю і настирливістю дилетантів перетворюємо в банальність. Коли ми пишемо про працю, то твердо знаємо, що вона буває фізичною і розумовою. Якщо оспівуємо фізичну — »дайш« мозолі і піт, якщо розумову — замислине чоло і надхненні очі. Висновків ми не завжди шукаємо. Висновок готовий: праця возвеличує людину, праця

потрібна суспільству, отже, спасибі тобі, Марійко, за мозолисті руки, за недоспані ночі і за кухоль смачної моні.

Все це дуже правильно і дуже благородно. Але все це не поезія, а тільки інтелігентське сюсюкання, тільки профанація літератури. Та й чи може бути поезією бездумне однописання, позначене «школярським підленьким прагненням зробити все гладенько-правильним»?

В теперішній пересічній молодій поезії можна спостерігати парадоксальне явище — відокремлення праці від людини. Якщо вже вірш «трудоий», то оспівується в ньому не індивідуальність, а якийсь середньоарифметичний трудар. Людська праця має свій внутрішній зміст, і коли поет не бачить його, а милується механічними рухами, які виконує, скажімо, токар біля верстата, то він пише не про людську працю, а хтозна про що. Виробничі процеси можна і треба механізувати, фізична праця може зникнути зовсім, але поезія праці зостається, якщо вона — поезія, а не механізований процес віршування.

У Максима Рильського є невеличкий цикл «В косовицю». Написаний він настільки людяно й сердечно, що після першого знайомства я буквально марив ним.

Одспівала коса моя,  
Сохнуть теплі сіна.  
Переходжу лісами я —  
Тишина, тишина . . .

Коли читаєш цей цикл, якась шалена радість просинається в душі, щось незрозуміле ніжне і прекрасне. Поет не придивляється, як хто з косарів вивертає п'ятку, а вихлопнув на папір свій соняшний настрій — і диво дивне сталося! Слова запашили хмільним ароматом сіна, терпкою радістю і солодкою втомою від праці. І тоді разом стільки бачиш, чуєш і почуваєш.

Ти цілий день в густі валки гребла  
Напоєне вином і медом сіно.  
Жарота без жалю тобі пекла  
Відкриті без лукавості коліно.

І навіть оте граціозне «люто», що так несподівано постає

в середині третього рядка («жАЛЮ ТОбі») — яке воно тут доречно. Дозволю собі процитувати ще заключний акорд цієї невеличкої симфонії.

Ой зелена земле моя,  
Голубі береги!  
Велетенською плямою  
Вітер кинув лути.

В праці радісний тону я —  
Сотні радісних кіс...  
Від хустини червоної  
Вітер пісню доніс.

Це про людську працю, бо це згусток енергії і мислі. Про косарку так не напишеш, як би не пнувся. Можна ще зазначити, що згаданий цикл написано майже тридцять років тому, але час не торкнувся його та й не торкнеться. Бо це — справжнє, а не підробка. Таку поезію не можна не любити, з такою поезією треба по-хорошому змагатися.

Тому дуже радісно, якщо молодий поет підходить до себе з великими вимогами, з усвідомленням тієї елементарної істини, що він не починає українську літературу, а розвиває її.

Але прикро читати молодого поета, якщо він в полоні загальнодекларативних понять і пишучи про працю, обмежується вигуками і закликаннями на зразок:

Розлетілись ми повсюди нині:  
В Казахстан, на Лену і Донбас.  
У цехах будуємо машини,  
Щоб в піснях пшениця піднялась.  
(Дм. Головка)

Звичайно, я далекий від думки, що усі поети мають перебивати копії зі згаданого циклу Максима Рильського. Кожен справді талановитий твір мусить бути новаторським. Талант не може бути консервативним і повторювати давно відоме. Талант обов'язково новатор і шукач, першовідкривач духовних покладів.

Саме з такою вимогою треба підходити до оцінки поезій кожного поета, а молодих поетів можна і треба цінувати без

жодної знижки на молодість. Та й взагалі поблажливості не місце в літературі, вона тільки псує письменників. Потрібна сувора і нещадна критика. Така критика, яка б розвивала наш мозок, а не самолюбство. Повірити в свою геніяльність можна без улесливості рецензентів. Для цього особливих розумових завдатків не треба. А вчинити суд над самим собою може далеко не кожен. Якщо ж поет уміє тільки ображатися на критику, він уже не поет.

Дуже багато розмов точиться про чутливу, тонку, вразливу душу письменника, яку, мовляв, треба оберігати від усяких неприємностей. Але що то за чутливість, що то за духовна витонченість, коли вона у чесній критиці вбачає лише прикраси? Не треба забувати, що від надмірного споживання цукру людина втрачає зуби.

Про все це кажу тому, що, як добре відомо, критика для письменницької праці має величезне значення. Тільки з її допомогою можна домогтися, щоб в нашому літературному гаю менше «проростало» дерев невизначених порід.

м. Черкаси

В. Симоненко

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## QUOTATIONS

See p. 14.

... Складність суспільно-політичної обстановки того часу породжувала і в літературному житті боротьбу різноманітних течій, напрямів груп. «Ніколи досі на ниві нашого слова не було такого оживлення, такої маси конфліктів суперечних течій, полеміки різнородних думок і змагань, тихих, але глибоких переворотів» — відзначав І. Франко (Літературно-науковий вісник, 1901, т. XV, ч. 6, стор. 1). І він мав цілковиту рацію. Виступ М. Вороного з модерністськими гаслами у 1901 р. — і критика їх Франком; відозва 1903 р. М. Коцюбинського і М. Чернявського до письменників стати ближче до життя, розширити тематичний, ідейний і образний діапазон літератури — і опір ліберально-буржуазних діячів всім цим заходам; маніфест «Молодої музи» 1907 р., скерований проти

реалізму прогресивної літератури — і гостре засудження його всім демократичним табором; нарешті, націоналістичний волюнтаризм »хатян« ...

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See p. 18

... Видання постанови ЦК 1932 р. в справі літератури означало, що партія сама перебирає керівництво літературою в свої руки. Гасло »пролетаризація« було одкинене й йому протиставлене гасло »советизація«. До складу Союзу була включена низка письменників, що на попередньому етапі, через своє непролетарське походження, лишилися од літератури осторонь. Але цей крок у бік »демократизму« як і відмовлення од пролетарських гасел, зовсім не означав послаблення тиску. Зовсім навпаки. Саме з 1933, як ми вже знаємо, хвиля репресій підноситься на нечувану висоту, контроль над письменниками згущується до повної неможливості дихати вільно. Втручання органів державної безпеки в справі літератури стає безпосереднім.

Писати і саме писати за директивними вказівками центральних органів партії стало обов'язком письменника, ухилитися від якого він не міг. »Хочу« не існувало. Існувало тільки »мусиш«. Праця письменника стала суспільно обов'язковою, чи, краще сказати, партійно або ж державно обов'язковою, підпорядкованою центру справою ...

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See p. 19.

... Псевдописьменники заповнюють ряди українських письменників. Письменики були винищені. Порожні місця в лавах зайняли псевдописьменники. Українська література 30-их років в УРСР — це радянська література українською мовою.

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See p. 25.

Цього року в житті Спілки письменників України сталася подія по-своєму знаменна: кількість письменницької організації перейшла за п'ятсот.

Що це значить? Що в цій цифрі знаменного? Багато це чи мало?

В минулому, особливо під час Великої Вітчизняної Війни, Спілка письменників України зазнала значних втрат. На кінець війни наша спілка нараховувла всього близько двохсот п'ятдесяти письменників. Це була у кількісному відношенні одна з найменших республіканських письменницьких організацій, якщо брати до уваги співвідношення до загальної кількості населення кожної із союзних республік . . .

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See p. 50

. . . Певна частина творчої інтелігенції звернулась до формалістичних експериментів дехто захопився навіть крайнім виявом формалізму — абстракціонізмом, що являє собою продукт занепаду, розкладу буржуазної культури. А окремі діячі літератури і мистецтва договорилися навіть до того, що висунули ідею «мирного співіснування» в нашій художній творчості будь-яких літературно-мистецьких напрямів. Це вже об'єктивно звучить як заклик до мирного співіснування в галузі ідеології, тобто до примирення непримиренного — передової комуністичної ідеології з ідеологією загниваючого імперіялізму . . .

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See p. 61.

. . . Кілька слів хочеться сказати про впорядкування збірки. Якщо сьогодні про неї кажуть «хороша книжка», то мають на увазі лише зміст. Збірка оформлена дуже недбало. Починаючи від портрета, де ретушер доклав багато зусиль, щоб створити обличчя автора, та якогось «алюрного» вступного слова Миколи Сома і кінчаючи самим принципом добору віршів. Навіщо було розбивати цикл поезій «Україні» і розкидати їх по всій книжці? Стає незрозумілим з ким говорить поет — з рідною землею чи з коханою жінкою? . . .



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See p. 67.

Новела — дуже важливий вид художньої прози, який вимагає великої майстерності від письменника, бо тут у стислій формі треба подати багатий зміст. У новелі не можна, як у повісті, докладно описувати, розповідати. Тут кожне слово мусить мати значне навантаження.

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See p. 72.

... Поет і критик Я. Савченко слушно висміяв у мене такий, до нестями штучний, образ: »Надворі знову, як і вчора, як і три дні тому, блукали сірі, сліпі, безбарвні й нудні, як типова інтелігенція, жмари« ... А коли трохи згодом я прочитав у Чехова: »Светила печальна августовская луна; печальная потому, что приближалась осень«, і помітив, як ця коротка, проста фраза створила мені картину передосінньої ночі й мінорно настроїла мене, я зрозумів, що перевернувши на папері тонни словесної руди, я не добув ще і грама радію — нового слова ...

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See p. 74.

... Важливе місце в новелі займає не тільки деталь. Новела, як і твір будь-якого жанру, насичена виразними епітетами, влучними порівняннями, вагомими метафорами, точними синонімами та іншими образними засобами, вибір яких у творі у кожному окремому випадку обумовлюється його ідейно-тематичним змістом, і, несучи максимальне навантаження, підпорядкований розкриттю образу ...

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See pp. 76-77.

Останнім часом наші друковані органи стали більше пильно і дбайливо розглядати творчість по-справжньому талановитих молодих письменників. Мені також хотілося б висловити свої міркування про творчість одного з молодих, чий

голос досі звучить так щиро, безпосередньо, схвильовано. Це живий голос поета, якого вже немає серед нас.

Сказати про нього треба, мабуть, ще й тому, що його коротка, але яскрава творчість, глибокий світ асоціацій гаряча закоханість в рідну природу, віра в високий громадський ідеал, роздуми про місце людини в суспільстві, її красу, душевне благородство досі не здобули належної оцінки критики.

Нещодавно пішов од нас талановитий лірик, поет справжньої громадської мужності, поет чистих, ніжних звуків і глибоких задумів — Василь Симоненко.

Пішов, але залишив хорошу пам'ять про себе, помітний слід в літературі (в поезії і в прозі). Про поезію В. Симоненка вже писалося. Але от у журналі «Дніпро» (Нс. 1 за 1964 р.), вже після смерті поета, опубліковані цікаві задушевні спроби В. Симоненка в прозі.

Тут він теж справжній поет. Його новели «Вино з троянд», «Чорна підкова», «Весілля Опанса Крокви», — сприймаються як поетичний реквієм людській красі, людській мужності і благородству, чистоті і вірності кохання, як гімн життю, хоч сам автор уже знав про свою страшну невиліковну хворобу.

Мова його новел (як і поетичних творів) образна, мелодійна, в зображенні природи він виступає, як справжній, зрілий художник...

... Герої новел Симоненка — це щирі, душевно красиві люди, яких хочеться наслідувати, хочеться запам'ятати.

Новелам властиві глибокий народний гумор, лізирм та непідроблена щирість, що відразу прокладає мости між читачем і автором.

\*

See pp. 77-78.

## ПОЕЗІЯ В ПРОЗІ

Книжка новел Василя Симоненка «Вино з троянд» потрапила мені до рук випадково. Я одкрив її, прочитав перше речення і не закривав уже доти, доки не прочитав останнього.

Досі я знав В. Симоненка як талановитого, самобутнього поета. І хоч він устиг проспівати тільки заспів своєї багато-

надійної пісні, вже й по тому можна судити, яка це була обдарована людина...

... Збірка містить тринадцять невеликих новел. І в кожній з них Симоненко залишається поетом. Поетом великого громадянського звучання і цілощодої естетичної наснаги. В його творах немає умовних красивостей, чисто стильових ефектів. Мова письменника лаконічна, і в цьому лаконізмі криється пружна міць натягнутої тятиви. На перший погляд здається, що Симоненкові небагато треба, щоб, скажімо, змалював зовнішність і душевний стан героя, передати дію. Але це тільки здається, бо в тексті не можна закреслити жодного слова, не можна переставити його з місця на місце чи замінити іншим...

\*

See p. 78.

... Красиві люди, може, зовні й не такі привабливі, як зсердини, живуть у талановитих, поетичних оповіданнях Василя Симоненка. Вони — наші сучасники...

\*

See p. 78.

У збірці «Вино з троянд» немає твору, який би не викликав «дивного скімління в серці», хоч автор далекий від мелодраматизму чи сентиментальності. Навпаки, і в трагічних, і в перейнятих добродушною іронією епізодах він залишається мужнім, суворим, а то й нещадним, коли йдеться про засудження тих, або того, що кидає тінь на людину, на життя...

... Партійна, комуністична позиція художника однаково проявляється і в ствердженні, і в запереченні. Василь Симоненко ніде не збирається в камерний тон, не членує людини на «особисте» й «громадське» і не вип'ячує одного на шкоду іншому — його цікавить людина в цілності і єдності індивідуальних та суспільних чинників своїх. Легко виявити героїв, яких він особисто любить — вони присутні в кожному оповіданні...

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See p. 81.

... У казках радянського часу показано героїзм народу в дні Великого Жовтня і Вітчизняної Війни, керівна роль Комуністичної партії, діяльність великого Леніна, славних полководців, героїв праці...

\*

See p. 108.

... При таких умовах дуже природно, що свобода виходу з союзу, якою ми виправдовуємо себе, виявиться пустим папірцем, нездатним захистити російських іногородців від навали тієї істинної руської людини, великороса-шовініста, по суті негідника і насильника, яким є типовий російський бюрократ. Немає сумніву, що мізерний процент радянських і радянізованих робітників потоне в цьому морі шовіністичної великоруської шушвалі, як муха в молоці.

Кажуть в оборону цього заходу, що виділили наркомати, які мають відношення безпосередньо до національної психології, національної освіти. Але тут постає питання, чи можна виділити ці наркомати повністю, і друге питання, чи вжили ми з достатньою дбайливістю заходів, щоб дійсно захистити іногородців від істинно руського держиморди? Я гадаю, що ми цих заходів не вжили, хоч могли і повинні були вжити...

\*

See p. 127.

... буває так, що деякі представники мистецтва судять про дійсність тільки по запахах відхожих місць, зображають людей у нарочно потворному вигляді... змальовують дійсність відповідно до своїх упереджень, перекручених, суб'єктивністю уявлень про неї, за надуманими ними хирлявими схемами... При цьому всьому ми вважаємо за необхідне звернути увагу всіх творчих працівників на деякі помилкові мотиви і тенденції, що виявляються в творах окремих авторів. Неправильні тенденції полягають головним чином в тому, що вся увага односторонньо зосереджується на фактах без-

законня, сваволі, зловживання владою . . . . . Відомо також, що Сталін мав намір винищити значну частину творчої інтелігенції Радянської України . . . . . Коли б українські більшовики піддалися тоді настроям Сталіна, то, очевидно, українська інтелігенція зазнала б великих втрат, і, мабуть було б створено «справу» про українських націоналістів . . .

\*

See p. 128.

. . . Прийшовши в літературу, Василь Симоненко, наділений щедрим талантом і непідкупним розумом, голосно заспівав сердечну пісню. Його перша книжка «Тиша і грім» відразу пішла в люди, стала помітним явищем в українській поезії останніх років.

Сьогодні Василя Симоненка серед нас нема. Та залишилася його полум'яна пісня, і сам він залишився вічно молодим у житті і в поезії . . .

\*

See pp. 130-131.

. . . текстологічна історія багатьох поезій В. Симоненка поки що не з'ясована і важко сказати, що в кожному окремому випадку змінено автором, а що — редакторами. Було й те, було й інше. І є такі виправлення, які суттєво поліпшують твір, а є й такі, які не роблять чести тим, хто їх робив . . .

. . . Таким чином, зі всього циклу «Поезій заборонених в УРСР», практично лишилося три вірші: «Брама», «Злодій», та «Некролог кукурудзяному качанові». Вірші, що й казати, гострі. Таким і був В. Симоненко — безкомпромісним, різким нещадним. Але й ці вірші, при всій їхній гостроті й різкості, не є антирадянськими: критикувати окремі явища колгоспного життя — не значить заперечувати колгоспний лад взагалі. Та й різкі вони не більше, ніж опубліковане «Пророцтво 17-го року» . . .

. . . Отже, свою концепцію про уявну збірку, яку В. Симоненко нібито створив, «але її радянські видавництва відкинули», І. Кошелівець будує лише на кількох віршах. Яка ж може бути збірка з кількох віршів? Цього, звичайно, замало для

того, щоб створити цілу легенду про двох Симоненків і така легенда може здаватися правдоподібною для тих, хто не може перевірити фактичну підоснову легенди . . .

\*

See pp. 131-132.

Василь Симоненко — поет. Народився 1935 року на Полтавщині. Член КПРС. Закінчив Київський державний університет імені Т. Г. Шевченка. З 1960 року працює в газеті «Молодь Черкащини». У Держлітвидаві України вийшла збірка його поезій «Тиша і грім» (1962 рік). Зараз поет підготував другу книжку — «Берег чекань».

\*

See pp. 133-134.

## ЖИВІ СЛОВА . . .

. . . Нещодавно, здається, ще ходив між нас — замріяний, усміхнений. І от літературна громадськість України відзначила вже п'яту річницю з дня його передчасної, трагічної смерті — однієї з найтяжчих втрат, що її зазнала за останні роки наша молода поезія.

Але громовий гуркіт його потужних поетичних моторів ще досі лине до нас із-за крайнеба, з тих високих орбіт, що судилися йому назавжди його долею.

Нині ми подаємо нову добірку неопублікованих поезій Василя Симоненка. В письменницькому архіві поета їх збереглося немало — за попередніми підрахунками близько 2,000 рядків. В основному це вірші раннього періоду його творчості — шкільні і студентські спроби, варіанти тощо. Але є й пізніші твори, які з різних причин не потрапили до збірок: часто їх перекреслював нещадно вимогливий до себе поет.

Пропонована добірка містить невідомі казки, байки, пародії В. Симоненка, який в останні роки свого життя пристрасно цікавився зброєю наших сатириків і гумористів, виступав на сторінках журналу «Перець», планував видати книжечку в серії «одноперчан» (ближчим часом ця не здійснена за життя мрія поета-сатирика і гумориста — здійсниться).

Не важко помітити, що і в цьому жанрі поет встиг сказати

свое вагоме і повнокровне, живе слово, напоєне пристрасстю його дум і бажань, високими громадянськими пориваннями: від традиційних учнівських байок на ідиферентні анімалістичні теми він ішов до ширших, соціально важливих і суспільно значимих тем.

І зумів здобути тут цілий ряд неперехідних успіхів, якими також визначається його місце в історії української радянської поезії.

\*

See p. 137.

... Ein leidenschaftlicher, ja geradezu revolutionärer Hass flammt aus jenen Gedichten Symonenkos, in denen er die Ausbeutung und Erniedrigung durch das bolschewistische Regime mit Spott und Fluch geißelt ...

\*

See pp. 139-140

... Это — проблема очень важная, но совершенно различно освещаемая и решаемая в марксистской и идеалистической эстетике. В сущности, здесь выдвигается проблема соответствий, соотношений и различий биографии автора, его литературной личности, социально-исторической индивидуальности — и «образа автора» в системе его литературно-художественного творчества. Возникающий в этом кругу ряд задач и вопросов нуждается в углубленной философической и эстетико-стилистической разработке ...

... Антиисторизм в понимании категории индивидуального стиля и тенденций ее исторического развития ведет к узкой, очень ограниченной оценке возможностей научного изучения стиля как единой, внутренне объединенной, индивидуально-целостной системы средств словесно-художественного выражения и изображения. »То, что отдельное произведение рассматривается как таковое и не как единое целое, а только как носитель характерных признаков, и лишь по необходи-

мости ставится в один ряд с другими произведениями писателя, является сущностью изучения индивидуального стиля»...

\*

See p. 150.

... Василь Симоненко — один з кандидатів на Шевченківську премію. Він один з найдостойніших кандидатів, бо своїм коротким, але подвижницьким життям, невеликим, але значним доробком продовжив і розвинув у сучасній українській поезії її крадці гуманістичні традиції. Поет зумів усі свої сили, весь талант, всю снагу до останку віддати рідному народові...

\*

See pp. 150-151.

... казка Василя Симоненка »Подорож в країну Навпаки« разом з книгами його поезій »Тиша і грім« та »Земне тяжіння« висунута на здобуття премії Т. Г. Шевченка 1965 року. Нам здається, що вона заслуговує цієї високої відзнаки. Такої ж оцінки варті й книжки »Тиша і грім« та »Земне тяжіння« ...

\*

See p. 151.

... Багато почуттів і думок викликає ця невелика книжечка. Закриваєш її. Бачиш знайоме ім'я: Василь Симоненко. . . І думаєш його думкою:

Мало великим себе уявляти,

Треба великим быть.

Він не уявляв себе великим. Він став прекрасним поетом нашої доби, цей скромний юнак, якому цього року сповнилося б лише тридцять ...

\*

See p. 151.

... Немалий скарб таланту передав сучасникові Василь Симоненко. Його книжка пройнята філософським проникненням у життя, свіжістю тематики ...



\*

See p. 151.

... Я дивлюсь на портрет Василя Симоненка, вміщений у його поетичній збірці «Земне тяжіння». Знайомі риси обличчя. Замріяні очі... Напіввідкриті уста... Здається, зараз він скаже тобі, йому, мені — своєму однодумцю, другові, ровеснику-землянину:

Сьогодні усе для тебе —  
Озера, гаї, степи.  
І жити спішити треба,  
Кохати спішити треба —  
Гляди ж, не проспи !..



## CONTENTS

<i>Epitome</i>	7
VASYL SYMONENKO AND HIS BACKGROUND	9
THE DIARY NAMED <i>MARGES OF THOUGHT</i>	38
THIRTEEN SHORT STORIES	67
TWO FAIRY-TALES FOR ADULTS	80
THE POETRY OF COURAGE AND ANGER . . . .	111
A. The Poets of the Sixties . . . .	111
B. Symonenko's Poetics	128
BIBLIOGRAPHY	153
INDEX	161
APPENDIX	165
A. Poetry	166
B. Fairy-Tales	181
C. Short Stories	187
D. The Diary	190
E. Newspaper Article	197
F. Quotations	200
CONTENTS	212



From 1968 he served as an Assistant Professor of Russian language and literature at Southern Illinois University (Carbondale campus), where he was granted tenure in 1972. During his years at SIU he twice conducted Russian Language Study Tours abroad, during which he served as a Director at the Kalinin's International Polytechnical Institute in Leningrad, USSR (Summer, 1969 and Summer, 1972).

In 1973 he was granted a paid sabbatical year of absence by SIU and took one year of absence without pay, for the years 1973-1975, to complete his research work. In September, 1973 — he moved to Venice, Italy, to devote these two years to uninterrupted writing.

In 1974, for good reasons, he resigned his position at SIU and now lives and works as an independent researcher in Venice, Italy.

He is the author of numerous essays and seven published books.

PUBLISHED BOOKS  
AUTHORED BY IGOR  
SHANKOVSKY:

- URST Dowbush* (Germany, 1951)  
*The Gift of April* (Germany, 1958)  
*Dissonances* (USA, 1960)  
*Hundred Poets — Hundred Songs* (Germany, 1966).  
*A Short Summer* (Canada, 1970)  
*Symonenko. A Study in Semantics* (Great Britain, 1975 — in the Ukrainian language)  
*Symonenko. A Study in Semantics* (Great Britain, 1978 — in the English language).



Photo by Dott. Umberto Pedrazzoli, Recoaro, Italy. 1975.

*Symonenko was a dissident. He lived and worked in the Soviet Ukraine, and, like any young man anywhere else in the world, felt deeply and suffered from facing the issues of the day. He died young, in the midst of his best creative period, about one year before Nikita Khrushchev was condemned to obscurity by "the most humane and democratic system" on this earth.*

*Symonenko was unique. Like no other man alive he felt earth's gravity with his own keen sense of justice. Nowadays, these kind of people seldom make it in life, they mostly make it after they've gone. One of his posthumous volumes was named Earth's Gravity, and published by those, who during his lifetime managed to disturb and humiliate him most. He lived in the age of opportunism never known before, and he put up against it everything he had, above all — his talent and his sense of awareness.*

*Having said that in a simple dedication, one might imagine that some kind of a "giant" is involved. No, not that kind of a "giant", not in the contemporary value judgement. In life Symonenko was a quiet, deep thinking man, leaning heavily towards modesty. Let this study be a tribute to his short, insignificant in his opinion, life of a true and dedicated man.*

*Igor Shankovsky*