Creating a Modern Ukrainian Cultural Space

Essays in Honour of Jaroslav Rozumnyj

Edited by
Myroslav Shkandrij

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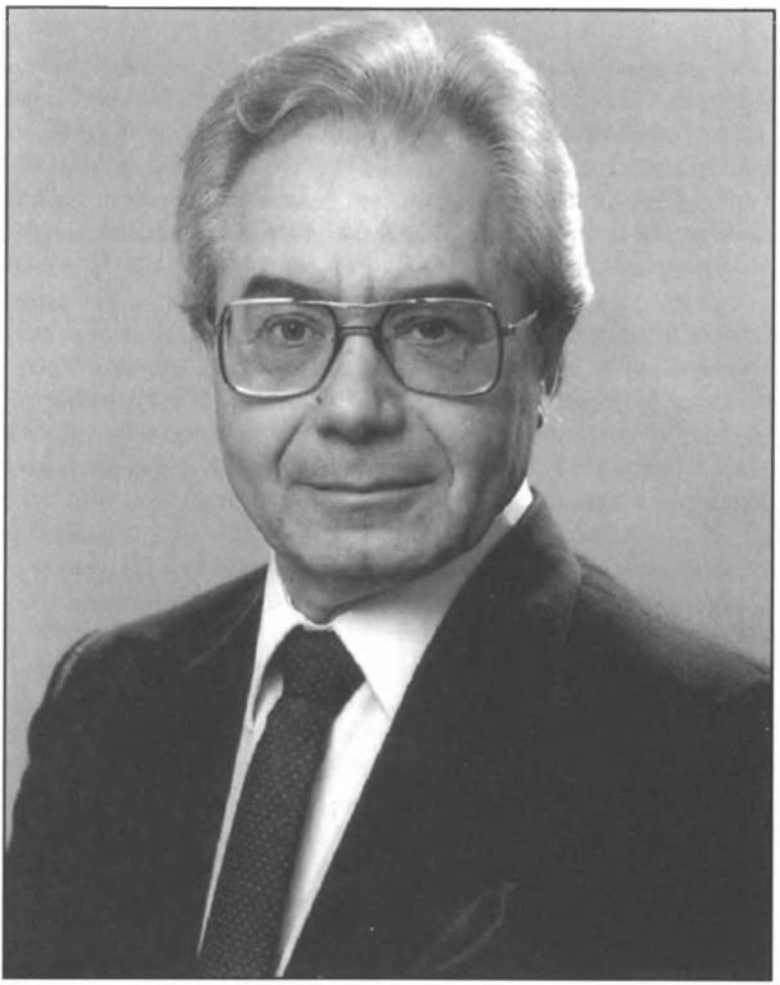

Jaroslav Rozumnyj

Introduction

This special issue of the *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* honours Jaroslav Rozumnyj. The theme, "Creating a Modern Ukrainian Cultural Space," brings together essays from a number of disciplines and perspectives that reflect his particular interests in cultural developments, both in Ukraine and in the diaspora communities. Professor Rozumnyj has been associated primarily with the University of Manitoba, where he taught for over thirty years and headed the Department of Slavic Studies (1976–89). He has also maintained close connections with other institutions. He has taught at the Ukrainian Free University in Munich and was the dean of that institution's Faculty of Philosophy in the years 1995–96. Since 1992 he has been a member of the International Advisory Board of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy National University, and in 1996 he was made an honorary professor of that university. Professor Rozumnyj has also been a visiting professor or research scholar at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Rome, the University of Ottawa, and Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia.

Throughout his career, as the selected bibliography in this volume indicates, Professor Rozumnyj maintained scholarly interests in a number of fields. They include modern and contemporary Ukrainian poetry, the Ukrainian cultural experience in Canada, early modern Ukrainian writing, and postwar Ukrainian film. He was also a very active reviewer, a regular contributor to newspapers, and a constant participant in community life. This aspect of his work has been recognized by the presentation of a number of awards by the University of Manitoba, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, and other community organizations.

Jaroslav Rozumnyj was born in 1925 and grew up in the village of Vychilky (now Honcharivka) near Ternopil in Western Ukraine. The Second World War interrupted his high-school education, which he was able to complete only after the war as a displaced person in Germany. He obtained a B.A. in philosophy and theology from the Ukrainian Catholic Seminary in Culemborg, Holland in 1951 before moving to Canada, where he completed an M.A. and then a Ph.D. in Slavic Studies at the University of Ottawa. His wartime experiences and early training in philosophy and theology left their mark on his work and activism. Throughout his life he has been constantly involved with historical and political issues and always vitally interested in detecting the unique spiritual imprint that a writer manifests in his or her work.

At the University of Manitoba Professor Rozumnyj introduced and taught a number of courses in folklore and nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature. The writers covered—Skovoroda, Shevchenko, Franko, Lesia Ukrainka, the generation of the 1960s in Ukraine, and the New York Group of poets—became the subjects of his articles and of the M.A. and Ph.D. dissertations that he supervised. In the 1960s, when it was still controversial to do so, and in the 1970s and 1980s he hosted and organized poetry readings for many writers from Ukraine, among them Vitalii Korotych, Dmytro Pavlychko, Ivan Drach, Roman Lubkivsky, and Borys Oliinyk. These visits led to the establishment of close links between Manitoba and a number of institutions, writers, and scholars in Ukraine. In the early 1990s Professor Rozumnyj established close relations with Viacheslav Briukhovetsky, who revived the Kyiv Mohyla Academy, the first university among the Eastern Slavs, and became the first president of the recreated institution. Today this is the leading reform university in Ukraine, a unique bilingual Ukrainian-English institution. professor Rozumnyj was closely involved in its foundation and in gathering support for it in Canada and other countries.

Jaroslav Rozumnyj always understood the importance of conducting research into the life of the Ukrainian community in the United States and Canada. On his invitation several contemporary émigré poets associated with the New York Group visited Manitoba, among them Bohdan Boychuk, George Kolomayets, Patricia Kylyna, and Yuriy Tarnawsky. Professor Rozumnyj has edited two volumes of essays on Ukrainians in Canada and is currently involved in the preparation of the Canadian volume of the seven-volume *Entsyklopediia ukrainskoi diaspory*. A volume of his selected essays is also in preparation.

The contributions in this volume are a tribute to Jaroslav Rozumnyj's work and the impact it has had on Ukrainian studies. Many of the authors are his friends, all of whom have been shaped by his scholarship and influenced by his desire to advance knowledge of Ukrainian cultural achievements. We wish him success in the projects that he is now bringing to completion.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, particularly that of Roman Senkus, and of the contributors in putting this volume together.

Myroslav Shkandrij

Rape in Taras Shevchenko's *Trizna:* Textual Fact or Theoretical Fiction?

Oleh S. Ilnytzkyj

This paper is prompted by George G. Grabowicz's "Nexus of the Wake," still the most current, thorough, and influential examinations of Shevchenko's *Trizna.*[1] My focus here will not be the study itself, but rather the more confined yet quite indispensable claim made therein—namely, that *Trizna* depicts a rape. My argument will be that, on this particular point, Grabowicz's interpretation is fundamentally in error and that there is in fact no sexual violence in the passage he singles out for such a treatment.[2]

Trizna (1843) is one of three poetic works that Shevchenko wrote in Russian. The two others are "Slepaia" and a fragment of the drama "Nikita Gaidai." Grabowicz argues intriguingly that these works—and *Trizna* above all—"perform a meditating function" between Shevchenko's Ukrainian poetry and his Russian prose. *Trizna*, he says, stands strategically between the mythic mode of Shevchenko's Ukrainian poetry and his "ratiocinative" Russian prose. The poem tells the story of a yearly wake, an act of remembrance, for a deceased "best friend," a man described as a prophet who, to use Grabowicz's words, is characterized by a "message of love, freedom, and peace" (p. 327). The longest part of this lengthy narrative poem presents the "lifestory of the hero." Grabowicz draws attention to the autobiographical elements of the poem, emphasizing the "topoi of [Shevchenko's] symbolic autobiography" (e.g., solitude, alienation, mission in life). He writes: "This deeper form of autobiogra-

1. *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 3–4 (1979/1980): 320–47. Subsequent page references to this article appear within the text.

2. My teaching experience tells me that, on first reading, Grabowicz's argument about rape is nearly always accepted by students as very persuasive. I wrote this paper after my graduate class encouraged me to present an alternate view.

phy constitutes the initial basis for our considering *Trizna* as a representative, conjunctive expression of Shevchenko's inner world" (p. 330).

Grabowicz devotes only about three and a half pages of his article to seduction and rape, but the theme plays a prominent role in his overall analysis. It is also the first major topic to which he turns following a series of preliminary historical and summary comments. Grabowicz gives considerable weight to sexual violence in *Trizna*, invoking or alluding to it on several other occasions. He speaks of rape as the hero's "primal trauma" (p. 336), his "primal violation and fall" (p. 338). In another instance he affirms: "[the hero] is permanently marked by the violation and trauma that becomes for him his peculiar original sin" (p. 339). "[I]t is through death that the hero's profane nature, his 'original sin' and 'curse,' are purged and expiated, and his sacred nature finally established" (p. 343). Given both the narrow and wider repercussions of this theme, there seems ample reason to re–examine this particular aspect of *Trizna* more carefully.

Grabowicz prepares the ground for a sexual reading of *Trizna* with a brief review of "rape" and "seduction" in Shevchenko's oeuvre. Mention is made of "Kateryna," "Slepaia," "Vidma," "Naimychka," "Kniazhna," "Maryna," "Mariia," "Tsari," and "Buvaie v nevoli inodi zhadaiu." Apparently trying to suggest beforehand what allegedly will occur in *Trizna*, Grabowicz makes the claim that "rape and seduction ... can also happen to a man" (pp. 333–4), citing the narrative poem "Petrus" as an example. Unfortunately, no convincing elaboration or analysis follows this questionable declaration, making it, at best, an extraordinarily strained explication.[3] Grabowicz does, however, quote one indisputable example of incestuous rape from "Kniazhna."

> ... Прокинсь!
> Прокинься, чистая! Схопись,
> Убий гадюку, покусає!
> Убий і [Б]ог не покарає! (ll. 353–6)[4]

3. "Petrus" tells the tale of a poor noblewoman condemned to a loveless relationship when she is given away in marriage to a general, a seemingly kind man but one she does not love. A small bastard boy who accompanies her to her new estate as part of the dowry serves as a memory of her parental home and the object of her affection. She educates the boy; he matures into a handsome young man, and she falls obsessively in love with him. Although she entreats heaven to save her from her passion, she ultimately goes mad, poisoning her husband. The poem ends with Petrus taking the blame for the murder and being sent off to Siberia.

Given this plot, it is hard to imagine either of the two males as victims of "seduction" or "rape." One is murdered, the other sacrifices himself for a woman who loved him. Neither man's fate resembles that of Shevchenko's female sexual victims.

4. Taras Shevchenko, *Povne zibrannia tvoriv u dvanadtsiaty tomakh,* vol. 2 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1990), 16. All poems will be cited from this edition. However, to avoid

Grabowicz argues that in such rape or seduction scenes as the one portrayed above Shevchenko typically resorts to a repetitive pattern of images, which inevitably include a dream, the rape itself, and fire. He says: "the dream (or sleep), rape (or seduction, or violation in general) and fire ... constitute a structural unit" (p. 334). This "set is explainable by the mechanism of psychic trauma and repressions: the repressed content (i.e., the 'rape') is revealed ... only when the defenses of the conscious mind are down, as in dreams. An integral component of the experience is the recollected shock, the total assault on the ego which is here symbolized by destructive fire, by a conflagration" (p. 335).

With this background and theoretical framework in place, Grabowicz then poses a rhetorical question: "What, one may ask, is the relevance of this for *Trizna*?" And he answers: "The relevance is, in fact, quite considerable" (p. 335). The evidence for extending to *Trizna* his interpretive paradigm about rape is found in the following scene. The highlighted text (ll. 89–111) is the one that Grabowicz quotes and on which he focusses most of his analysis. I have provided the other lines in order to establish a wider context and facilitate further discussion below.

85. В семье убогой, неизвестной
86. Он вырастал; и жизни труд
87. Как сирота, он встретил рано;
88. Упреки злые встретил он
89. За хлеб насущный ... **В сердце рану**
90. **Змея прогрызла ... Детский сон**
91. **Исчез, как голубь боязливый;**
92. **Тоска, как вор, нетерпеливо,**
93. **В разбитом сердце притаясь,**
94. **Губами жадными впилась**
95. **И кровь невинную сосала ...**
96. **Душа рвалась, душа рыдала,**
97. **Просила воли ... Ум горел,**
98. **В крови гордыня клокотала** ...
99. **Он трепетал ... Он цепенел** ...
100. **Рука, сжимаяся, дрожала** ...
101. **О если б мог он шар земной**
102. **Схватить озлобленной рукой,**
103. **Со всеми гадами земными;**
104. **Схватить, измять и бросить в ад!..**
105. **Он был бы счастлив, был бы рад.**

---

inconsistencies in line numbers, *Trizna* will be quoted from the same edition of Shevchenko that Grabowicz used: *Povne zibrannia tvoriv u shesty tomakh* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo Akademii nauk URSR, 1964).

106. **Он хохотал, как демон лютый,**
107. **И длилась страшная минута,**
108. **И мир пылал со всех сторон;**
109. **Рыдал, немел он в исступленьи,**
110. **Душа терзалась страшным сном,**
111. **Душа мертвела,** а кругом
112. Земля, господнее творенье,
113. В зеленой ризе и цветах,
114. Весну встречая, ликовала.
115. Душа отрадно пробуждалась,
116. И пробудилась ... Он в слезах
117. Упал и землю лобызает,
118. Как перси матери родной!..
119. Он снова чистый ангел рая,
120. И на земле он всем чужой.
121. Взглянул на небо: «О, как ясно,
122. Как упоительно-прекрасно!..
123. как там вольно будет мне!..»
124. И очи в чудном полусне
125. На свод небесный устремляет,
126. И в беспредельной глубине
127. Душой невинной утопает.

Grabowicz not only regards the foregoing as an obvious rape but asserts: "The parallelism, indeed, the structural equivalence of *this seduction-rape* [in *Trizna*] with the various others is not extraordinary by itself. What is extraordinary, however, is the fact that the usual encoding is dropped—*the victim* now is not one of Shevchenko's many seduced (or raped) and abandoned women, but the autobiographical, if symbolically, *projected persona of the poet himself.* The importance of this cannot be overestimated. It again reaffirms the pattern of identifications, and here specifically the pattern of Shevchenko's feminine identification. *It is a pattern that coheres into a fundamental structure of his creative personality* ..." (p. 336; emphasis added). In a footnote Grabowicz elaborates: "it should be noted that in terms of psychoanalytic theory, such feminine identification often points to a homosexual orientation." Lines 89–111 are given this specific exegesis:

> From his dream of childhood the hero "awakens" through the agency of a "serpent" (!) into a terrifying reality, which is called at the end a "strašnyj son." *That the scene is full of sexual implications and veiled allusions to sexual violation is hardly in doubt;* it is enough to compare it with analogous scenes in "Knjažna," "Slepaja," "Maryna," or "Cari" to see distinct parallels. Significantly, too, the constant in these seductions-rapes is the image of the snake, the *zmija* (cf., for example, the exclamation of the narrator in "Knjažna" cited above or the mother's warning to her daughter in "Slepaja": "Ty ne znaeš, / Čto skoro vstretiš meždu nimi / Zmeju, užasnuju zmeju!"; lines 597–599). The serpent, moreover, is not

> not merely a tempter, but, as the movement of the passage makes clear, a *violator*; and *the fate of the hero, as of all the ravished victims* in the various other poems, is *to be helpless*. Finally, here, too, we see *the recollected violation* presented through the image of cataclysmic fire: "I mir pylal so vsex storon." (p. 336; emphasis added)

In contrast to the preceding, I will argue that while the scene in question may contain words and phrases that are superficially suggestive, in context and as a whole it is bereft of *all* sexual connotations. Consequently it is my contention that *Trizna* generally, and this scene in particular, has no relevance to the rape/seduction theme in Shevchenko's work or his autobiography, symbolic or otherwise. I will show that the twenty-three lines that Grabowicz cites contain no "veiled allusions to sexual violation"; that the serpent is not a violator; and that the hero is neither a ravished victim nor helpless. The image of fire—despite some perfunctory resemblance to larger structural patterns in Shevchenko—is not linked in any way to a "recollected violation."

Before we turn to *Trizna*, one general comment is in order. It may be possible to come away from Grabowicz's text with the impression that the "structural unit" (of dream [sleep]/rape [seduction]/fire) applies to most, if not all, of the poems that Grabowicz enumerates as part of his seduction/rape theory: he speaks of these features as appearing "frequently" and "often" (p. 334). This, however, would be an erroneous conclusion. As a unit or set, these three elements are actually very rare and apply only to "Slepaia" and "Kniazhna"; they are absent (both as a unit and individually) in "Kateryna," "Naimychka," "Mariia," and "Petrus"; and they are only partially present in "Tsari" (which has neither a dream nor fire), "Maryna" (which has no sleep or dream), "Vidma" (which contains neither a dream nor fire), and "Buvaie v nevoli inodi zhadaiu" (which has no dream or sleep, at least not one attributable to the victim). It should also be borne in mind that these poems speak about a very broad range of sexual and erotic topics, some of which hardly qualify as rape or violence, and may not even fall under the category of seduction. Thus, on one end of the scale we have a poem like "Tsari," which deals explicitly with rape and incest; and on the other we have "Kateryna," which, strictly speaking, is not even a poem about seduction, inasmuch as the woman freely and actively loves the man who abandons her. It seems, therefore, that Grabowicz brings together under one heading poems that rightly belong under several. Moreover, the set of contiguities or structural units that he speaks of, if they are at all valid, are based on very limited textual evidence, and hence his claims of their universal applicability (or obsessive repetition, cf. p. 335) in Shevchenko's oeuvre seem to be exaggerated.

To begin, perhaps the most rudimentary reason for questioning a sexual reading of *Trizna* is found in l. 115, which, curiously, Grabowicz neither cites nor discusses. Here Shevchenko explicitly states that the hero is emerging from

his dream feeling *cheerful*: "Душа *отрадно* пробуждалась." If the dream is indeed a "recollected violation," as Grabowicz posits, then this line is at best totally out of place or, at worst, grotesque: his thesis asks us to accept that the same "soul" that is racked, presumably, with remembered sexual torture in ll. 96–7 and 110–11 can come out of sleep happily. A similar objection is raised by l. 106—"Он хохотал, кака демон лютый" (He laughed like a mad demon)—which appears towards the end of the purported rape scene. How does one account for such laughter in a character who is ostensibly being sexually violated? Can these lines be brought into harmony with the idea that the protagonist is in the grip of "recollected shock" and "the total assault on [his] ego" (p. 335)? I suggest they cannot. If we introduce, as we must, these passages into Grabowicz's interpretation, they not only confound his reading but suggest that *Trizna* does not partake of the typical "structural unit" that Grabowicz says governs rape/seduction in Shevchenko. Shevchenko, after all, typically expresses horror and revulsion at the very thought of rape. The example from "Kniazhna" above is an excellent illustration of this. The awakening to which the heroine is urged by Shevchenko's lyrical voice is full of alarm and murderous rage.[5]

Grabowicz, however, in effect asks us to give credence to the notion that both the protagonist and the narrator in *Trizna* can recall an alleged rape and then blithely and joyfully proceed to other matters (note that ll. 111–14 are on the subject of spring). As I stated, he remains silent on the obstacles that these lines present to his interpretation, choosing instead to resume his construction of *Trizna* with ll. 116–19 ("Он в слезах / Упал и землю лобызает, / Как перси матери родной!.. / Он снова чистый ангел рая"), which lead him to the conclusion that the "hero ... is cleansed [from his rape] through tears" (pp. 336–7). This is a reading that is unsatisfactory not only from a purely psychological point of view but also the textual. Given that in "Kniazhna" even murder of the rapist is felt to be a barely adequate punishment for his heinous crime, it seems both strange and improbable that the victim in *Trizna* would find almost instant purification and solace through tears alone. (One might note that in "Slepaia" Oksana goes mad and kills her abuser; and vindictive madness also envelops "Vidma" for long stretches of time.) But more importantly, Grabowicz again refrains from commenting on why the victim would greet the return of a

5. In "Buvaie v nevoli inodi zhadaiu," the father is so upset by the recollection of his daughter's rape that he appears to stutter as he recalls it, while the narrator (Shevchenko as a boy) betrays fear:

> Вони, вони — не бійся, сину!
> Вони, ксьондзи, мою дитину
> З собою в хату завели,
> Замкнулись п'янії, я бачив.

repressed memory about rape with such obviously buoyant expressions of thanksgiving and joy as found in ll. 115–19.

Another reason to doubt Grabowicz's interpretation is found in the entire framing or motivation of the alleged rape. If this is a rape, then Shevchenko certainly foreshadows it in an atypical manner. Consider "Kniazhna" again: here rape is preceded by drinking and surreptitious entry into the girl's room, and the poem later includes fitting historical analogies to Beatrice Cenci (see ll. 357–9). Moreover, unlike in *Trizna*, the perpetrator is clearly identified:

Пляшки і гості, де що впало,
Там і осталось. Сам не впав,
Остатню каплю допивав.
Та й ту допив. Встає, не пада,
іде в покої ... Скверний гаде!
Куда ти лізеш? Схаменись!
Не схаменувся, ключ виймає,
Прийшов, і двері одмикає,
І лізе до дочки. (ll. 345–53)

"Buvaie v nevoli inodi zhadaiu" anticipates the rape similarly, as does "Slepaia."[6] In *Trizna,* on the other hand, Shevchenko lays the ground for the dream (i.e., the alleged recollected rape) in an entirely different manner, resorting to a general mention of poverty, hunger, orphanage, and social conflict (ll. 85–9); in other words, he offers no obvious cue for a rape, which he does on most other occasions. Grabowicz dismisses these lines as simply "one or two cursory generalities about ... [the hero's] childhood." But in fact they are a crucial guide for what follows in ll. 89–111, signalling the start of a social and moral plane of exposition (instead of a sexual one) that confirms in another way the essential character of *Trizna* as a whole. Grabowicz submits that, unlike Shevchenko's other poems, which are heavily "encoded," this work is "virtually transparent," i.e., it bares its devices (p. 335; cf. also pp. 330 and 347). If that is the case, however, then *Trizna* turns out to be much more reserved and undemonstrative on the issue of sexual violence (assuming for a moment that it is present) than many other of Shevchenko's works, where this subject is treated openly and unambiguously. *Trizna* contains none of the forthrightness of "Kniazhna," for example, and therefore Grabowicz must engage in rather sophisticated decoding in order to establish the sexual argument. His deciphering of Shevchenko's sexual code should not blind us to the structure of the text itself, i.e., the obvious unity and connection that exist between what precedes and follows l. 89. Attention to this fact makes it obvious that the discourse and events of this section are not arranged to reveal a violent carnal encounter, but to register an

6. Cf. "Slepaia," l. 777: "И пан к страдалице идет, / Бесстыдно пьяный ..."

intense psychological (perceptual) transformation that is engendered by social forces. To put it briefly, I contend that the scene in question is about the effect that society, *not* rape, has on the hero. The logical convergence of the text is not on the violated body but the mind, the soul, and the heart. The short episode is replete with words of this order ("сердце"; "разбитое сердце"; "душа"; "Душой невинной утопает" [l. 127]; "ум горел"), strongly suggesting that what is at stake is not sexual abuse but torments of the spirit.[7] It is life's troubles ("жизни труд," l. 86) and malicious recriminations ("Упреки злые," l. 88) that inflict on the protagonist deep emotional wounds and provide him with painful knowledge about the world.

Obviously, much of the evidence for a sexual interpretation is tied up with ll. 89–90: "В сердце рану / Змея прогрызла" (Into the heart a wound / the serpent gnawed). The supposition is that the serpent is the violator, while the wounded heart represents the injured body of the youth. But does the context support this scenario? It may be useful to point out that Shevchenko's poetry exploits the image of the serpent on many occasions without any obvious sexual connotation. For example, take these excerpts from "Ieretyk":

Отак німота *запалила*
Велику хату. І сім'ю,
Сім'ю слав'ян роз'єднила
І тихо, тихо упустила
Усобищ лютую *змію*. (ll. 17–21)

У злодія вже злодій краде,
Та ще й у церкві. *Гади! гади!*
Чи *напилися* ви, чи ні
Людської крові? (ll. 169–72)

While the lines above contain almost all of *Trizna*'s suggestive vocabulary, including the reference to fire and the drinking of blood, one would be hard pressed to find any true sexual innuendo there. Use of the word "serpent" appears in "Dumy moi, dumy moi" (1840):

Заховаю *змію* люту
Коло свого серця,
Щоб вороги не бачили ..." (ll. 81–3)

"Kateryna" betrays the main character's despondency with these words:

7. This section basically illustrates what the poem established long before this: namely, that a sensitive, pure, and creative individual can do nothing but suffer in this life. The hero's ontological emotional distress is already underscored in ll. 39 and 48; the first two lines of *Trizna* declare: "Душе з прекрасным назначеньем / Должно любить, терпеть, страдать ..."

Тяжко усміхнулась:
Коло серця — як *гадина*
Чорна повернулась (ll. 510–12)

and a nearly identical situation occurs in "Petrus":

... Везла
Назад *гадюку* в серці люту
Та трошки в пляшечці отрути" (ll. 184–6).[8]

Such examples prove that there is ample precedent in Shevchenko's work for considering the imagery of the serpent in non-sexual terms and more specifically as the embodiment of evil, anger, and anguish, with the three meanings often so closely associated that they become mutually reinforcing. *Trizna* also resorts to such a conflation of meanings. In l. 90 "serpent" can suggest social evil if related to preceding lines about the hero's early suffering; moreover, only thirteen lines later the poem speaks of "earthly serpents" ("Со всеми *гадами земными*," l. 103), which clearly do not represent all rapists.[9] Alternately, "змея" in l. 90 can be a very plausible metaphor for dark emotions and depression, as it is in Shevchenko's other poetry cited above. *Trizna* itself uses the word when the hero verbalizes his despondent mood:

«О дайте вздохнуть,
Разбейте мне череп и грудь разорвите,—
Там черви, там *змеи*, — на *волю* пустите!
О дайте мне тихо, навеки заснуть!»" (ll. 348–51)

Interestingly, just as in l. 97, the hero begs for freedom (воля) as the answer to his spiritual anguish.

The use of "змія" in the sense of a tormenting thought is also evident in a variant redaction of "Petrus." Here the heroine is seen struggling with her illicit love for a young man (a bastard) whom she raised as her own boy:

Неначе лютая *змія*,
За серце грішная впилася
Любов нечистая ... не раєм,
А лютим пеклом розлилася
По грішній крові!.. і не знає,
Сама не знає, що робить.
І що їй діяти з собою?[10]

8. This same poem contains among the variants these lines: "В село небога привезла / Свою *змію*, ще гірше люту ..." (*Povne zibrannia tvoriv*, 2: 390).

9. The linking of "earth" and "serpent" invokes previously established significations in *Trizna* of the earth as sinful ("Почтили вы свято на *грешной земле*," l. 17) and enslaved ("Воспойте свободу на рабской *земле*!" l. 20).

10. Cf. Taras Shevchenko, *Povne zibrannia tvoriv u dvanadtsiaty tomakh*, vol. 2 (Kyiv:

"Slepaia" offers an interesting insight into the other key words of lines 89–90, "В сердце рану." As the following passage reveals, the "wounded heart" can clearly connote emotional or psychological wounds rather than sexual violation:

> І вот она в грязи разврата,
> Во славу дряхлых ваших дней,
> Перед толпою черни пьяной
> Пьет кубок .....
> І запивает *сердца раны.* (ll. 101–5)

Aside from ll. 89–90, the most sexually suggestive passages are contained in ll. 92–100, which on the surface seem to outline both what is being done to the victim and his impotent flailing. The active or aggressive agent first manifests itself as the serpent ("Змея прогрызла ...") but—and this is both strange and noteworthy—is transformed before long into "anguish" ("Тоска ... кровь невинную \ сосала ..." ll. 92–4). This metamorphosis should give pause to any speculation that the serpent stands for a rapist; instead, it rather strongly supports the idea of the serpent as a tormenting thought. The passive or helpless agents are the soul (l. 96) and, to a lesser degree, the mind (l. 97) and pride, with the former struggling, weeping, and begging for freedom: the mind is on fire; pride seethes. By l. 99 the poem speaks of the hero in the third person for the first time since l. 88, showing him trembling and turning numb, as it turns out, either because of pride or an impending rage. If I understand Grabowicz correctly, he sees the active and passive agents as distinctly separate, one identifying a pederast, the other his victim. But it is more than likely that there is in fact only one subject or actor in ll. 89–100, namely, a personified mental grief that is described in both passive and active ways. The "serpent" (змея), as in other instances of Shevchenko's oeuvre, seems indeed to be just another name for "anguish" (тоска), for surely it is unlikely that "anguish" can serve as another name for "rapist."[11] In *Trizna*, as on many other occasions, Shevchenko in effect reifies and dramatizes the emotions. It is, after all, usual for him to show the emotional struggle violently in terms of weeping, tearing, beating, fainting, and so on. Compare these examples:

- За чорнії брови / *Серце рвалося, сміялось,* / Виливало мову ("Dumy moi, dumy moi," ll. 29–31).

Naukova dumka, 1990), 390. Compare with analogous constructions without the word "serpent": "А лютеє лихо / В самім серці ворухнулось / І світ запалило ..." ("Nevolnyk," ll. 403–5); "Сховалося у серці *лихо,* / *Як звір* у темнім гаї" ("Naimychka," ll. 92–3).

11. "Тоска" and its derivatives (e.g., "тосковал," "тоскующей") are used fifteen times in the poem, thereby underscoring the centrality of the theme.

- Що на Україні, / Серце *мліло,* не хотіло / Співать на чужині ... ("Dumy moi, dumy moi," ll. 37–9).
- Як і на чужині. / Чого ж серце *б'ється, рветься*? / Я там одинокий ... ("N. Markevychu," ll. 12–14).
- І сліду не стало. / Серце *мліє,* як згадаю ... / Чому не осталось? ("Haidamaky," ll. 373–5).
- Його сльози, давить душу, / Серце *роздирає.* / «Ой ви сльози, дрібні сльози!» ("Haidamaky," ll. 1471–3).
- Та не таким горем / *Карай* серце: *розірветься,* / Хоч би було камень. ("Haidamaky," ll. 1508–10).
- На неокраєнім крилі, / Нехай же серце *плаче, просить* / Святої правди на землі. ("Chyheryne, Chyheryne," ll. 36–8).
- Рвуться душу *запалити,* / Серце *розірвати.* / Не *рвіть,* думи, не *паліте,* ("Chyheryne, Chyheryne," ll. 49–51).
- В тілі душу закували, / Серце *запалили* / І галичі силу ("Son [Komediia]," ll. 211–13).
- Чого мені тяжко, чого мені нудно, / Чого серце *плаче, ридає, кричить,* / Мов дитя голодне? Серце моє трудне, ("Choho meni tiazhko, choho meni nudno," ll. 1–3).
- Що сам єси тепер москаль, / Що серце *порване, побите,* / І що хороше-дороге ("Nu shcho b, zdavalosia, slova ..." ll. 43–5).
- Неначе цвяшок, в серце *вбитий,* / Оцю Марину я ношу. ("Maryna," ll. 1–2).
- На серце падали Марії, / І серце *мерзло* і *пеклось*! ("Maria," ll. 194–5).

The so-called rape, therefore, is nothing more than an elaboration of the hero's emotional suffering, which is established in the opening sequences and reiterated repeatedly as the poem unfolds. Even the narrative voice shares in this Weltschmerz, begging the protagonist for relief:

> Хоть на единое мгновенье
> *Темницу сердца* озари
> *И мрак* строптивых *помышлений*
> И разгони, и усмири. (ll. 56–9)

Significantly, after the terrible ordeal above (i.e., ll. 89–100), we are told the following about the hero:

Надежди он не схоронил,
Воспрянул дух, *как голубь* горний,
И мрак сердечный, мрак юдольный
Небесным светом озарил ... (ll. 155–8)

These lines virtually summarize what Grabowicz's alleged rape scene (ll. 89–127) dramatizes: the hero's "darkness of the heart," his experience of "earthly darkness/gloom" ("*юдольный*" here refers to the "vale" or "valley of tears," a word used also in l. 28), is alleviated only through an encounter with a divine natural world, the recognition of his own purity, and thoughts of the beyond.

Grabowicz, it will be recalled, stated that "From his dream of childhood the hero 'awakens' through the agency of a 'serpent' (!) into a terrifying reality, which is called at the end a 'strašnyj son' [terrible dream]" (p. 336). His formulation is not entirely clear,[12] but it seems to be suggesting that the hero, while sleeping, has a terrible dream of a childhood rape. A closer look at Shevchenko's poem reveals that the lines in question do not actually speak of an "awakening"; the dream, we are told, "disappeared": "Детский сон / *Исчез*" (ll. 90–1). (This detail is significant, as we shall show in a moment). Moreover, there is a complication: the hero is roused—this time quite literally and "joyfully" in ll. 115–16 ("Душа отрадно *пробуждалась*, / И *пробудилась* ..."), and this happens not "through the agency of a 'serpent'" but, apparently, spring. If "исчез" and "пробуждалась" are synonyms simply referring to a single dream of rape, then something is clearly amiss: after having such a nightmare, why would the hero wake up in joy? Perhaps this is a single dream consisting of two parts: one about childhood and the other about rape? Unfortunately, there seems to be little textual evidence for this, and, moreover, it still would not explain why the rape sequence would be followed by expressions of exultation. Speculation that this may be a sign of relief would also fail, since nothing in the poem warrants such a line of interpretation.

There is, however, a way out of this quandary if we are prepared to look at this so-called recollected rape dream from another perspective. The first step is to recognize that "детский сон" is not a "dream of childhood" but simply a "childish/childlike dream" that "disappears" not on waking, but under the duress of the hero's difficult life (this is made obvious by the preceding lines). In other

12. The sentence in effect says: the hero wakes up from a *dream* [of childhood] into a [terrible] *reality* that is called a [terrible] *dream*. If the "terrible reality" is the rape, then the hero is not recollecting it in a dream ("when the defenses of the conscious mind are down," p. 335) but experiencing it while awake. However, from other things said in the article, I am assuming that Grabowicz meant to say that the terrible reality is the realization of childhood rape that came to the hero during sleep. I am also assuming that the "dream of childhood" is something separate from the "cursory generalities about his childhood" mentioned by him previously (p. 335).

words, as the hero matures (N.B.: "Он вырастал," l. 86), his adolescent naïveté is replaced with the emotional distress ("тоска") of an adult. Lines 140–3 suggest as much: "И вздох глубокий, / *Недетский вздох*, он испустил; / Как будто в сердце одиноком / Надежду он похоронил." In short, there is no dream or sleeping implied by these lines: the word "сон" indicates the unrealistic view of life typical of a child, but one that the hero loses prematurely, thus explaining both his pain and wisdom. The poem makes a point of the hero's ability to understand the world for what it is while still maintaining an innocent and moral (literally "virginal") perspective, an achievement that comes at the cost of great spiritual suffering. Consider these lines:

> Какой ужасною ценою
> *Уму познания* купил,
> І *девство сердца* сохранил. (ll. 180–3)

This message is repeated only a few lines later:

> Пройти мытарства трудной жизни,
> [...]
> И сохранить полет орла
> И *сердце чистой голубицы*!
> Се человек!.. (ll. 184–91)

The references to the hero's continued purity and innocence that appear after l. 111 (cf. ll. 119 and 127) make considerably more sense when viewed as a preserved psychological condition that survives the trauma of unpleasant truth; it makes much less sense when seen as recovered sexual chastity obtained through tears following a rape.

The "terrible dream" ("страшный сон," l. 110) that Grabowicz interprets as part of the same "dream of childhood" actually refers to something entirely separate and different: these words describe the unusual state of wrath and anger into which the hero slips in l. 99. The poem, therefore, uses "dream" in two senses, neither of which is related to rape: (1) as something naïve that is lost and (2) as a fearful ("terrible") projection of how the hero will deal with an evil society. The "terrible dream" is prefigured by the phrase "terrible minute" ("И длилась страшная минута," l. 107), signalling the duration of time when the hero conjectures his unexpected acts of moral retribution while laughing madly like a demon. It follows therefore that "И мир пылал со всех сторон" (The world was aflame from all sides, l. 108) has nothing remotely in common with "the recollected violation [being] presented through the image of cataclysmic fire": it sooner invites comparisons with biblical scenes of destruction associated with the wrath of God, where fire is purging and purifying. Subsequently the content of this "terrible dream/minute" will find an analogue in one of the hero's supplications, in which God is asked to bless an act that is both "new and harsh," calculated to "redeem" the world:

Благослови всесильным словом
На подвиг новый и *суровый*,
На *искупление земли*,
Земли поруганной, забытой,
Чистейшей кровию политой,
Когда-то счастливой земли. (ll. 251–6)

Later the hero will be shown sermonizing about defending the people and punishing evil ("Стать за народ и зло казнить," l. 289). And later still we have him advocating that "harsh" justice be meted out to the "people's butchers":

Сложите вы псалом *суровый*
Про сонм *народных палачей*. (ll. 429–30)

Even before the purported rape scene that we are analyzing takes place, the hero is beseeched by the narrative voice:

Скажи мне тайное ученье
Любить гордящихся людей
И речью кроткой и смиреньем
Смягчать народных палачей ... (ll. 66–9)

The preceding discussion puts to rest not only the idea of rape, but also the notion of the hero as defenceless victim. His "terrible dream," it turns out, is far from the impotent episode Grabowicz makes it out to be. With line 97 (i.e., the reference to pride), the poem clearly indicates that the protagonist struggles to free himself from his emotional distress and disillusionment—by electing to purge the world of evil. Although phrased in the conditional mood ("О если б мог он ..." l. 101), it is obvious that he envisions himself in an active and dynamic light, to wit, as an outraged, wrathful god (alternately, a mad demon—"демон лютый"), cleansing the world of evil serpents. At this point the image of the hero is anything but helpless; there is no sign of victimization. The hero lashes out with an "embittered/outraged hand" ("озлобленной рукой," l. 102); his laughter is demonic ("Он хохотал, как демон лютый"); his self-righteous frenzy ("исступление") brings him to the point of tears and speechlessness ("Рыдал, немел он в исступленьи"). The thought of casting earthly evil into hell brings him joy (l. 105), a prefigurement of emotions that will be expressed even more completely just a few lines hence. The representation of the earth in this episode as being both morally foul (i.e., populated by evil serpents)[13] and divine ("Земля, господнее творенье," l. 112) explains why the hero will fall down and kiss it in line 117. It is this latter epiphany, along with his liberating

13. The twin vision of the world as both evil and good recurs: "мир наш, темный и лукавый" (l. 47); " Планета наша, / Прекрасный мир наш, рай земной" (ll. 168–9); "на грешной земле" (l. 17); "на рабской земле" (l. 20).

vision of a "terrible" vengeance that cleanses him and brings him to express his delight. It follows, therefore, that there is no helpless victim here, but a perceptive and sensitive individual racked emotionally by life's injustices and determined to set them right. The "terrible dream," far from depicting a rape, is very much part of what Grabowicz later refers to as Shevchenko's "imperative of action ... [and] revolution" (p. 345), a somewhat subdued but nonetheless prominent motif in *Trizna*.

If we now recognize the alleged rape scene for what it actually is, it should also become obvious that the pattern of the hero's turbulent psyche, which it establishes in ll. 89–127, is essentially recapitulated in ll. 129–68.[14] Here again the hero falls into a state of melancholy and depression—"взор унылый" (l. 137), "Надежду он похоронил" (l. 143), "Туман душевный" (l. 147), "мрак юдольный" (l. 155)—but revives through the intercession of heavenly forces and inspiration (e.g., "И путь тернистый, / путь унылый / *Небесным* светом озаряй. / Пошли на ум твою святыню, / *Святым наитием* напой ...," ll. 149–52). This is an almost perfect structural parallelism to ll. 119–27, where the hero also recovers from his emotional darkness ("Он снова чистый ангел рая," l. 119) by turning his thoughts to heaven. With these two episodes the poem confirms what the narrator established at the onset of *Trizna*, namely, that the hero is "chosen" ("Душе с прекрасным *назначеньем* / Должно любить, терпеть, страдать," ll. 1–2; "Душа *избранная*, зачем / Ты мало так у нас гостила?" ll. 37–8), that he is an individual who belongs more to heaven ("рай") than to earth. Not surprisingly, he is called an angel several times, and the narrator even prays to him (ll. 51–2). Therefore his tenure on earth must, by definition, be painful. He stays long enough to spread his word of justice and freedom. He then returns to his natural abode, taking his place near God's throne, and contemplates the sad world:

> И ты на небе в вечной славе
> У трона [Б]ожия стоишь,
> На мир наш, темный и лукавый
> С тоской невинною глядишь. (ll. 45–8)

In summary, it must be said that the notion of rape is entirely superfluous for an understanding of *Trizna*. It is a hypothesis that creates irresolvable textual contradictions in the poem and leaves much unexplained. The protagonist's personality is adequately motivated and explained without this contrived reading. He is fated to a life of lovelessness and angst not because of an early rape, but because of his unique and difficult stature as heaven's favourite: a visionary and an inspired prophet.

14. Note, for example, that ll. 112–18 are paraphrased, occasionally almost verbatim, in ll. 166–72.

On Varvara Repnina's "Devochka"

Roman Weretelnyk

Future historians, wrote a contemporary of Princess Varvara Repnina, "will without doubt number her among those pure, considerate individuals who have had a benevolent influence on society by virtue of their existence."[1] The prediction was accurate, and today Repnina is mostly remembered as a kind soul who brought Taras Shevchenko joy for a short period of time. Few of Repnina's contemporaries, however, could have imagined the world full of repressed emotion and passion that co-existed with the pious and devout exterior of this complex woman. It was her romance with Shevchenko during the years 1843–44 that prompted Repnina to turn her innermost feelings into words. She began an unfinished novel about Shevchenko, of which a fragment, "Devochka" ("The Young Maiden," written expressly for Shevchenko and later made part of the novel), she presented to the poet as a short story about her own life. This story and how it evolved out of the relationship that developed between Repnina and Shevchenko is the focus of this article.

Repnina was born in Moscow in 1808. She was the daughter of Prince Nikolai Repnin and Princess Varvara Rozumovska. Repnin, born Volkonsky in 1778, took his maternal grandfather's surname by order of the tsar in order to prolong the family name. He was a general in the Russian imperial cavalry and served as vice-regent of occupied Saxony after the War of 1812. In 1816 he was appointed governor-general of the tsar's army in Left-Bank Ukraine. Repnin served in that position until 1834, when he was removed from his post by Nicholas I because of a financial scandal in which he was accused of misappropriating government funds. But the underlying causes of his removal were the tsar's suspicion that Repnin, whose writings promoted the abolition of serfdom, sympathized with Ukrainian separatist tendencies, and because there was a mutual antipathy between the two men. The investigation surrounding the accusations against Repnin lasted almost ten years, almost ruining him financially in the process. Repnin's holdings were seized, and part of his property was

1. N. S., "Pamiati kn. V. N. Repninoi," *Kievskaia starina,* 1892, no. 37: 312–13.

auctioned. He was demoted and left Ukraine with his family, living in virtual exile for the several years in Italy, Switzerland, and Germany.

The family returned to Ukraine in 1842, settling on Princess Rozumovska's estate in Iahotyn. Repnin's wife was the granddaughter of Kyrylo Rozumovsky, the last hetman of Ukraine and brother-in-law of Empress Elizabeth I. She spent much of her time taking part in and organizing benevolent actions and cultural work. When the war ended in 1812 she organized a women's group in aid of orphans and widows, a benevolent institute for girls in St. Petersburg, and an institute for upper class girls in Poltava.[2] Rozumovska also brought her husband into contact with the Ukrainian gentry.

Varvara Repnina received an excellent domestic education, and by virtue of her father's postings and travels she acquired a wide circle of influential friends and acquaintances.[3] By the time Shevchenko first met her in 1843, she was an unmarried woman of thirty-five and a woman of many contradictions. Although very solidly entrenched in the gentry and respectful of its mores, Repnina had developed critical views of the world in which she lived. These views were largely coloured by her father's experiences. She was especially incensed by the tsar's treatment of her father, and she could not have remained unaffected by the fate of her uncle, Sergei Volkonsky, who had received a twenty-year sentence of hard labour for his part in the Decembrist uprising. It is clear from her writings that Repnina, like her father, was troubled by the existence of serfdom.[4] The intensity of her pain caused by the knowledge that Shevchenko had been a serf was great. Repnina was also proud of her Ukrainian heritage on her mother's side. In her room she kept the scythe that her great-grandfather had used when he was still a simple Cossack. She regarded Hetman Ivan Mazepa as the tragic hero in the Battle of Poltava.[5] More importantly, Repnina became a believer in the future of Ukrainian as a literary language.[6]

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2. See Varvara Repnina's description of her childhood years in "Iz avtobiograficheskikh zapisok kniazhny V. N. Repninoi," in *Russkii arkhiv*, 1897, no. 11: 479–90.

3. For instance, the Repnins played host here to the tsar's sister, Catherine, and to her family. Ibid.

4. Repnina wrote to Eynard about Shevchenko: "C'était un pauvre serf. Oh, vous noble fils d'un pays libre, vous ne pouvez comprendre dans toute son étendue l'horreur de ce mot!" (M. Gershenzon, *Russkiia propilei*, vol. 2 [Moscow: Izdanie S. Sabashnikovikh, 1916], 188).

5. See the account by Petro Seletsky, who visited the Repnins in Iahotyn in 1843. Together with Repnina, Shevchenko, and others, they planned to compose an opera about Mazepa. Everyone except Seletsky wished to portray Mazepa in a heroic light. Furthermore, everyone but Seletsky wanted the libretto to be written in Ukrainian. See "Zapiski Petra Dimitrievicha Seletskago," *Kievskaia starina*, 1884, no. 9: 621–2.

6. Repnina later expressed the desire to learn Ukrainian in order to read all of

Such was the woman that Shevchenko met in July 1843 when, during his first trip to Ukraine since his boyhood, he travelled to Iahotyn in order to make several copies of Repnin's portrait. Although by this time Shevchenko's reputation as a poet, earned through the success of his *Kobzar*, had brought him significant popularity among the Ukrainian gentry, Repnina was not aware of his existence or of the *Kobzar*, most likely because her family had just returned to Ukraine from abroad. The two saw each other on three occasions in 1843. After their first meeting in July, Shevchenko returned to Iahotyn twice, in October and December, for lengthier visits. It was during these last two stays that an intense friendship between them developed. Their encounter, which eventually resulted in Shevchenko writing "Trizna" (The Wake) for Repnina and in her response in the form of "The Young Girl," is well documented in a variety of sources. Among them are reminiscences by contemporaries; the letters between Repnina and Shevchenko; a long letter from Repnina to her Swiss "confessor" and confidant Charles Eynard (1808–76), in which she recounted the story of this most significant period of her life; and Repnina's unfinished and untitled novel about Shevchenko, which she wrote almost immediately after the poet's departure from Iahotyn in January 1844.[7]

From these documents it is evident that Repnina and Shevchenko's encounters represented, on the one hand, the somewhat awkward and painful coming together of two vastly different individuals and, on the other, the fusion of two kindred souls. On a social level, the difference between the poet and the princess was enormous. At the time Shevchenko was still completing his education at the prestigious St. Petersburg Academy of Arts. Although he was the favourite student of the celebrated painter Karl Briullov and was part of St. Petersburg's cultural elite, barely five years had passed since his freedom from serfdom had been purchased. Meanwhile Repnina, despite her father's downfall, had emerged from the most privileged sector of imperial Russian society. Whatever societal walls may have stood between the two, they were ultimately of no concern to Repnina. Indeed, perhaps it was precisely the fact that Shevchenko had been a serf, and thus a martyr in her eyes, that initially made him so attractive to her.

Repnina wrote that if Shevchenko had returned her expressions of tenderness towards him (even to the least degree imaginable), she would have responded with an open declaration of love for him (p. 189). It is certain that she wished

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Shevchenko's poetry. See her letter to Shevchenko dated 20 December 1844 in *Lysty do Tarasa Shevchenka,* ed. V. S. Borodin (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1993), 31.

7. Repnina's letters to Eynard, her unfinished novel, and "Devochka" were published in Gershenzon's *Russkiia propilei*, 2: 179–263. All subseqent page references in the body of this article are to this collection.

to marry Shevchenko; this fact is attested by the concern that their growing intimacy caused her mother, sister, and family friend and advisor Oleksii Kapnist, who had originally brought Shevchenko to Iahotyn and introduced him to Repnina. At first Shevchenko was on guard with the Repnins. As Repnina describes, this apprehension soon disappeared once Shevchenko had become convinced of the genuine warmth and empathy with which the Repnins greeted him in their home (p. 189). Repnin's reputation as a humane liberal and Ukrainophile, his wife's ancestry, and his daughter's extraordinarily perceptive understanding of the burgeoning Ukrainian cause all contributed towards making Shevchenko feel secure in Iahotyn.

Shevchenko's sense of security in the Repnin household and, by extension, in the environment of the Ukrainian gentry was accompanied, however, by a growing internal rage that he felt during his first visit to his homeland as an adult. Thus, although genuinely moved by his reception and the growing national awareness of the Ukrainian elite, the poet must have been terribly pained by what he interpreted as the seemingly irreversible tragedy that he saw around him. Largely owing to his contractual work in 1843, Shevchenko wrote only two poems during that year: "Rozryta mohyla" (The Plundered Grave) and "Trizna." He wrote the latter in Russian for Repnina and dedicated it to her. "Rozryta mohyla" vividly reveals Shevchenko's awakened rage and marks a sharp departure from his earlier ballads. "Trizna" is an intensely autobiographical work in which Shevchenko, motivated by his trust and admiration for Repnina, attempted to reveal to her the deepest corners of his soul. The creation of the poem was probably sparked by his doubts that Repnina fully understood him. Shevchenko's sincerity toward Repnina, as expressed through his poetry, not only drew her closer to him, but had the unforeseen effect of helping her confront her own, perhaps more repressed but still very real, rage and loneliness.

By the time Shevchenko presented Repnina with "Trizna" and read the poem for her and some friends in her closest circle in December 1844, he belonged to her "starry heaven," as she wrote to Eynard (p. 188). In Repnina's words, Shevchenko's poetry had "totally overcome" her (p. 195). Her intense reaction to "Trizna" was preceded by no less a strong impression that Shevchenko had left by his reading of "Slepaia" (The Blind Woman).[8] It is to Repnina's credit that she immediately recognized Shevchenko's greatness as a poet and inspirational force. It is also noteworthy that she saw no contradiction in the fact that he expressed his genius in Ukrainian. Repnina's impressions of Shevchenko's

8. Although no record exists of Repnina's reactions to Shevchenko's Ukrainian poetry up to that time, in a later letter she wrote to him about her intention to learn Ukrainian in order to understand his poetry better. This likely means that that Shevchenko had also read his poetry to her. See *Lysty do Tarasa Shevchenka*, 31.

poetry were voiced from a mature and sensitive perspective, a keenness that characterized her critical enthusiasm for the writings of Nikolai Gogol (Mykola Hohol), Shevchenko's compatriot and also her acquaintance.[9]

Apart from the wide yet ultimately bridged social gulf that lay between Shevchenko and Repnina, there existed another, less easily definable gap. By this time in her life Repnina had found comfort in leading the life of a pious and devout Orthodox believer, and she was intent on bettering herself through prayer and faithful devotion to Christian ideals and a strict moral code. Her trust in Eynard, whom she had met earlier in Geneva, was unwavering. Eynard, a friend and adherent of the views of the theologian Alexandre Vine and something of a mystic, was sought after by a number of women as an advisor and confessor. To reflect the highest esteem that she felt for Eynard, Repnina customarily addressed him as "cheri Directeur" or "cheri maître" and signed her letters "votre pupille" (p. 197). Repnina's letters to Eynard are extraordinarily frank and detailed, both from a personal and spiritual point of view. In one letter, for instance, she describes a "not innocent" kiss that she gave Shevchenko and candidly expresses her shattered sense of belief in her devotion to Christ because of what she had experienced with Shevchenko; she adds that, even more to her dismay, she feels no shame about this (p. 198). In general Repnina's letters to Eynard are replete with self-chastisement, self-effacement, and pleas for guidance from her spiritual master. Eynard's responses are in turn unwaveringly stern, advising Repnina to resort to prayer and self-discipline and to subdue her ego and sense of individuality.

Other people close to Repnina provided her with advice similar to Eynard's. Repnina writes about a letter that she had received from her younger sister advising her to be less selfish and more content with fulfilling her role within her family rather than gratifying her own personal (romantic) needs. Although Repnina's mother, who years before had ended her daughter's romance with a young officer (an episode that Repnina painfully remembered as a personal tragedy), was sympathetic to Shevchenko, she did not approve of the growing intensity of the relationship between her daughter and the young poet (p. 198). During Shevchenko's stay in Iahotyn Repnina therefore kept her feelings for Shevchenko secret. She later told her mother about the whole affair, but only after ascertaining that Shevchenko would never respond to her overtures.

Another confining influence on Repnina was the person who was most instrumental in ending the "Shevchenkian period" of her life—Vasyl Kapnist. A Decembrist, liberal thinker, Ukrainophile, and admirer of Shevchenko, Kapnist met Repnina's open admissions of her strong feelings for Shevchenko with shock and quickly decided to put an end to what he correctly identified as a potential

9. See Repnina's article "O Gogole," *Russkii arkhiv*, 1890, no. 10: 227–32.

romance. He managed to achieve this by convincing Repnina that any union between her and Shevchenko would be harmful for the future of the poet. Kapnist's tactics were effective, and in the end Repnina herself "asked" Kapnist to suggest to Shevchenko that he not return to Iahotyn. Despite her ultimate trust in Kapnist's advice and her desire that Shevchenko remain Kapnist's friend, Repnina must have felt betrayed by her advisor (she referred to him as "le mauvais Kapnist" in her letter about the affair to Eynard [p. 199]). Kapnist, who had not met Eynard but was well aware of Repnina's "confessor," counselled her to follow the advice of her stern spiritual guide in the hope that it would help drive her further away from the poet.

Repnina's strongly influenced and guided sense of morality was at times annoying (yet ultimately appealing) to Shevchenko. In his travels in the region Shevchenko had met Repnina's neighbours. One of the Zakrevsky brothers who owned nearby Berezova Rudka, Viktor, was also a liberal and a Ukrainophile, and the self-styled leader ("*ioho vysokopianishestvo*"—his high-drunkenness) of the "*mochemordia*" (wet-snout) fraternity, a rowdy collection of young Ukrainian noblemen bent on carousing whose motto was *in vino veritas*. Another prominent wet-snout was the landowner Iakov de Balmen, to whom Shevchenko took a particular liking and who presented Shevchenko with a Polish translation of the *Kobzar,* which he himself had illustrated. Despite their rambunctious façade and open displays of shocking behaviour (Zakrevsky had been cashiered from the officer corps for filling a bust of the tsar with wine during a soirée), the wet-snouts were a group of dedicated, well-connected, young men with serious oppositionist tendencies.

Repnina, with her strict personal moral code, found the behaviour of the "wet-snouts" to be particularly offensive and refused to be associated with them. Shevchenko's friendship with and open admiration for them not only disturbed Repnina but even enraged her. As a result she showed Shevchenko her irritation and began giving him allegorical "moral lectures," both in person and through notes that she had passed on to him. She advised Shevchenko to stay away from the wet-snouts, fearing that they would corrupt him, the lofty ideals of his pure soul, and what she now saw as his holy cause. Thus even though Shevchenko perhaps longed for and needed the woman in Repnina, he received "Eynardian" lectures instead. It was precisely after one such lecture that he chose to open his soul to Repnina through "Trizna." This was probably a sincere attempt on his part to intimate to her that his behaviour with the wet-snouts and open sympathy toward them represented a more complex phenomenon than actions stemming from a weak moral stance. For Shevchenko and the other wet-snouts their fraternity represented a manifestation of the despair and impotence that they felt.

The intense sincerity that Shevchenko expressed in "Trizna" and the poem's literary brilliance proved to be even more powerful than he may have expected. Repnina's growing irritation with Shevchenko's behaviour completely disap-

peared once he had read "Trizna" to her. "Once more," she writes, she "was overcome" (p. 189). Repnina, whose trust in Shevchenko's talent had been immediate and genuine and who by this time was deeply in love with the poet, realized, perhaps for the first time, the depths of the tragedy that pained him. Hearing Shevchenko read "Trizna" gave her enough courage to write that same evening about the tragedy of her own life "in a final attempt to bring Shevchenko close to me" (p. 199). The result was a short story entitled "Devochka," an autobiographical account of a woman's feelings at various stages of her life.

The story is divided into four parts, representing different ages in the woman's life: twelve, eighteen, twenty-five, and thirty-five, the last being how old Repnina was when she met Shevchenko. In this powerful story and confession about her own life, she appears far more complex and different than her pious exterior may have led those around her, including Shevchenko, to believe. The story begins with the thoughts of a young girl who sees two lovers in a park. The girl is aroused by a myriad of new emotions, even more so when, as a twelve-year-old, she finds a note from *him* to *her* and imagines herself "wed to *him* in her own thoughts" (p. 234). "During the day she is a carefree child—she idles, learns, accepts scoldings, cries, plays—while in the evening she is the seedling of sensual woman" (p. 234). Repnina portrays a girl opening herself to a concept of love that is at once pure and beautiful, yet sensual and not chaste. "But here the thoughts of others slowly begin to crowd her mind, and she begins to suffer" (p. 234). The girl is told about the Antichrist and the meaning of the word "sin," and she begins to fear the Antichrist and, even more, that she is sinful. "She understood sin—and the magic of sin" (p. 235). The girl is caught in a whirlwind of confusion:

> ...pity, Eve ate only part of the forbidden apple and left it to be finished by her descendants! The dream of love, about which she would be ashamed to tell her own mother, appears to her for the first time as being sinful, yet she feels that sin is magical and that she does not have the strength to overpower it. She feels this and fears the Antichrist, and persecuted by her fear and tribulations she gets up from her child's bed and lies down with her sister so that she can fill the terrible vacuum through the presence of a living entity.... Days pass, years pass; she plays and suffers, she takes on certain appearances, foreign thoughts; she's invisible, a bland girl, like all girls, and here she is, already eighteen years old. (P. 235)

She continues to live her double life. Inside she burns with passion, obsessed by her beautiful thoughts of love. "Only in her heart the pure fire of passion for everything beautiful flashes—and what better thing is there than love?" (p. 235). As before, however, her sensuous thoughts and passions are quickly doused:

> She enters society, looks at people, smiles at everyone, she is grateful for everything; conventionality is demanded of her, she is not to be overly cheerful nor is she to engage in thought too much; the blandness in which the

> young girl was cloaked is now made into an obligation for the young woman. Those around her forget that within her lies a heart, that a soul has been awakened, that her lips want to cry out a hymn of gratitude and happiness—that everything within her screams love, love! The young woman's "holy" passion for an unnamed lover is transformed into a shameful weakness by those around her, who, falsely understanding what constitutes morality and innocence for a woman, contaminate her ... and again new thoughts with cruel names painfully creep into her, thoughts that cause her to blush, that convulsively choke her heart, force burning tears out of her ... that forbid her, in the name of decency, to love, to be enraptured, to cry! (P. 236)

Despite the pressures that the young woman feels, she somehow emerges with the one "spark" that her heart manages to protect from the intruders, and she knows that this spark, though "small and weak, will reign" (p. 236).

The young woman falls in love and once again is overtaken by the emotions that she first felt as a child: "she was reborn, the love within her killed her honour" (p. 236). Bliss turns into yet more pain, however, when she learns that *she* is but one of many for *him*. "Mother speaks the truth when she says that one should not believe them" (p. 236). She begins to see that falsehood exists in this world, "and she believed that so it must be; she quietly submitted, anguished, became serene—and surrendered" (p. 237). She begins to attend balls again and listens to empty compliments and meaningless phrases. She cries and remembers her earlier dreams, and although her "honour returns and is reborn and attempts to rule the orphaned place of love ... faith in happiness is not killed within her; it is only frightened, and she loves again, suffers again, again awaits only not to be rewarded" (p. 237).

Days and years pass, and the young woman is now twenty-five. The crisis of her duality reaches its apex. "She withers, becomes frail, ages, but the heart is young, unchangingly young; in loneliness it cries over its own past" (p. 237). The woman comes to love again only to remain unnoticed once more. "Emptiness, fear, fatigue" are the result (p. 237). She embarks on empty romances, becomes frightened that she may be "evil," and turns to books, expecting to find answers in the romances of others. Instead she finds "cold, boring" depictions of emotions that irritate her. "The heart does not allow falsehood into itself—it needs the truth" (p. 237). But the young woman begins to fear that the truth is not meant for her: "Will I always be as I am now? Am I born for this?" (pp. 237–8). For the first time her mind and reason triumph. But the triumph is unwelcome:

> the mind, which was completely secondary when she expected and loved, now reigns; its time has come, a pitiful reign; it is good when the mind remains the servant of the heart—but when it takes the lead—oh no!—its triumphs are tiring, mired in sadness, and dig a deeper and deeper canyon in the soul. She is an orphan, [she] searches, still expects, and is again deceived. She still stands atop

> the holy peak, but evening is setting in ... accompanied by a fog ... her eyes are cloudy, the sun is setting, faith is dwindling ... she is drowning in darkness—and descends from the peak, quietly at first, then more rapidly. (P. 238)

This part of the story ends with an entirely new thought. The young girl's and young woman's rebellious nature is finally overpowered. The passion that she has longed for over the years and the battles that she has fought in order to remain true to her hopes are sidelined in the wake of something new: "O God! Only You can stop her. There is a canyon at the foot of the peak—she will die there. But miracles are possible for You, and You want to save her; Your holy grace can stop the suffering. She is sinful, but You are holy! She is weak, but You are strong! She will perish, but You are the Saviour! She believes, she is saved, she is free!" (p. 238). The young woman to whom sin has always been such a foreign concept finally resigns herself to accepting what she has always been told—that she is a sinner.

The final part of Repnina's story begins with the words, "What is an old maid?" (p. 238). The woman is now thirty-five. Thoughts of emotion, passion, and bliss are no longer present. There are no more expectations of love, sensuality, and truth. Instead a powerful new ideal has set in: "True faith glows in this canyon, all the broken strings have flown to heaven from having received grace, and the one who has suffered in this world with her heart awaits in heaven a hundred times more glory, joy, and love than she could have had in this treacherous valley" (p. 238).The woman sees her new ideal as a powerful liberating force ultimately offering her much more than her previous expectations. Her earlier feelings seem to her no more than a prelude, a preparation for the person that she has become. She thus triumphs, having found her own way to happiness and accompanying wisdom. Yet doubt lingers as to what might have been had her earlier dreams and desires been realized.

Repnina could not have imagined Shevchenko's reaction to her literary response, which was intended to "bring him closer" to her and answer his admissions in "Trizna." So overwhelmed was the poet that he wrote the following in a note to Repnina the same night that he read her story:

> the feeling that I am now experiencing is my all-engrossing pain—art is powerless and incapable. I suffered, opened myself to people as to brothers, and submissively begged for at least one cold teardrop in exchange for a sea of bloody tears. Yet no one wetted their sunburnt lips with but one drop of life-giving dew. I groaned—"he groans very well," they said—Oh, but I am a feeble, small-spirited man! A girl, simply a girl (stone would groan and gush blood if it would hear the cry of that simple girl) ... yet she remains silent, proudly remains silent, and I... O God! Multiply my pain tenfold, but do not deny me the hope for the hours and the tears that You have sent to me through your angel! O good angel! I pray and

> cry before you: you have confirmed in me faith, shakened through inexperience, in the existence of saints on earth![10]

Shevchenko's exalted response to Repnina's story marked a turning point in the relations between them. Perhaps for the first time the poet would truly notice the depth of his hostess and friend and the pain at the heart of her existence. In her unfinished novel about Shevchenko Repnina later wrote that his note to her filled her heart with euphoric "pure, live joy" (p. 228).

The following evening Shevchenko appeared to be "cold, unfocussed, and evasive" (p. 228). Seeking an explanation, Repnina asked Shevchenko why he was avoiding her. He responded by turning his attention again to "Devochka": "This is poetry, terrifying poetry—what suffering, and how it is rendered! I have never encountered anyone whose soul would be such a good pair for my soul as yours!" (p. 229). As a result of this meeting, Shevchenko would from now on regard and refer to Repnina as his "spiritual sister," a designation that he understood and used with the utmost reverence. The new closeness that emerged between them is seemingly devoid of what could be considered romantic intimacy between a man and a woman, the attainment of which was one of Repnina's main goals in writing her story for Shevchenko. Thus her attempt to "bring the poet closer" to her as a man seems to have been a failure.

It would be tempting to classify Shevchenko's response to Repnina's overture to him as a nineteenth-century example of a man's inability to relate to a woman as an equal, viewing her instead as either inferior or superior—in this instance as an angel on a pedestal. This supposition has some validity. In his poetry Shevchenko shows a very complex and tortured relationship with women. George Grabowicz writes:

> one basic opposition [in Shevchenko's poetry], that between male and female, between the male and female worlds, has not and cannot be resolved.... In terms of mythical transformation ... the opposition of male and female is resolved in desexualizing the relationship. In the utopian new order that relationship is cast either as pre-sexual ... or as a conflation of the pre-sexual and the post-sexual ... Ševčenko often depicts marriage itself as asexual.... sexuality, especially male sexuality[,] is removed precisely because it had so insistently been identified with the coercive and exploitative nature of structure and authority in society."[11]

Grabowicz's observations hint at the extraordinarily complex world of male-female interaction in Shevchenko's poetry and the great awareness with which the poet approaches the topic. What emerges is the picture of a man whose

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10. *Povne zibrannia tvoriv Tarasa Shevchenka*, vol. 3, ed. Serhii Iefremov (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Ukrainy, 1929), 16.

11. George G. Grabowicz, *The Poet as Mythmaker: A Study of Symbolic Meaning in Taras Ševčenko* (Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1982), 154–5.

designation of a woman as a "sister," a term that in his poetry sometimes has the connotation of wife, represents a multi-levelled and perhaps coded response. If, for Shevchenko, the truest form of male-female relationship, the form that is desirable and accounts for past wrongs (patriarchal transgressions), is one symbolically devoid of sexuality and replaced by a feeling of kinship, then his reference to Repnina as his "spiritual sister" can be understood on several levels. Rather than being just a patriarchal response, it is a response that perhaps deals critically with patriarchy.

Repnina must have been both overjoyed and deeply disappointed by the effect that her story had on Shevchenko, whose response mirrored her own internal divisions. On the one hand, she became convinced that Shevchenko would now accept her lectures and moralizings in a new light, which in effect occurred. Upon reading "Devochka," Shevchenko seemed to have crossed over a threshold in his understanding and tolerance of Repnina's moralizings, regarding them as the outcome of deep suffering rather than of misguided piety. On the other hand, he did not cross over that other threshold, the one that stood between him and Repnina as a man and a woman. For despite her description in her story of faith as the replacement for passion, Repnina never gave up hope of finding earthly happiness as a woman in union with a man. In her confessional letter to Eynard, she writes that, despite everything, "I do not deny that if I felt from him romantic love, I perhaps, would answer him with passion" (p. 199).

Shevchenko left Iahotyn soon after reading "Devochka" and never returned. "In tears I threw myself to embrace him, made the sign of the cross on his forehead, and then he ran out of the room," reads Repnina's description of their parting (p. 229). In the following years Repnina and Shevchenko often corresponded. She involved her highly placed friends in helping him to sell his series of lithographs "Ukraine in Pictures," which he had made in order to earn enough money to buy the freedom of his still enserfed siblings, and the Repnins helped Shevchenko secure a position at Kyiv University. After Shevchenko's arrest in 1848 and his subsequent imprisonment and exile, Repnina and her friend, the landowner Andrii Lyzohub, were the only two people among Shevchenko's friends who dared to correspond with him. Their letters from this time are filled with extraordinarily tender feelings and genuine expressions of deepest mutual respect. Repnina sent Shevchenko books, among them the Bible, and Gogol's *Selected Correspondence of Friends*. She also took it upon herself to intercede on Shevchenko's behalf with the authorities, writing a letter to the chief of the Third Division, her distant relative Count Aleksandr Orlov, asking him to allow Shevchenko to paint. Orlov's response was stern: "By decision of His Highness the Emperor, I have the honour to advise your Excellence as to the inadvisability of such intercessions on behalf of Private Shevchenko, and also that it would be wiser for you to involve yourself less in the matters of Little Russia, otherwise you yourself may give reason to become the subject of

investigation."[12] Other warnings followed, and the desired affect was achieved. The last letter from Repnina to Shevchenko dates from 1851.

Shevchenko and Repnina were to meet again in 1858, after the poet's release. Travelling through Moscow, he looked forward to seeing his dear friend. The meeting proved to be particularly awkward and painful for both of them. Repnina thought that the poet had grown old and looked "extinguished."[13] Shevchenko, with a touch of irony, wrote in his diary that "she had changed for the better. She is prettier and younger.... Has she, perhaps, met a good confessor in Moscow?"[14] One brief visit followed shortly after, but there is no documentation about this encounter.

In 1882 the first biography of Shevchenko, Mykhailo Chaly's *Zhizn i proizvedeniia Tarasa Shevchenka*, was published. While writing it, Chaly corresponded with Repnina. She was very co-operative and answered all of his questions. She even sent him a self-portrait that Shevchenko had given her in 1843, along with a drawing of the house in which he was born. In her letter she advised Chaly that he should keep these mementoes since she was in ill health. When her health improved, Repnina wrote to Chaly asking him to return the drawings.[15] Repnina's correspondence with Chaly indicates that Shevchenko remained a central figure in her life, "part of her starry heaven," in practice as well as in her thoughts. For example, when she learned about the neglected state of Shevchenko's grave, Repnina contributed money toward its upkeep and made sure that the situation was rectified. At Shevchenko's funeral in Kyiv in 1861 eyewitnesses noted the presence of a mysterious woman dressed in black who emerged from the crowd, placed a wreath on the poet's casket, and disappeared just as mysteriously as she had appeared. It has always been believed that this woman was Repnina, the "maiden" who had come to mean so much to the poet.

Perhaps no other time in her life was both as joyous and as frustrating for Repnina as her "Shevchenkian months." Repnina's romance with Shevchenko gave her the courage to make an open attempt to live by her own convictions. Although she did not succeed in confirming for herself her own personal vision of the truth, she vividly elaborated her personal tragedy in "Devochka," showing how her time and place circumscribed the feelings that she had developed as a young woman growing up in her stern world. It was this unfinished novel that

12. Orlov's letter to Repnina in *Taras Shevchenko: Dokumenty ta materialy do biohrafii, 1814–1861*, ed. Ie. P. Kyryliuk (Kyiv: Vyshcha shkola, 1982), 188–9; see Repnina's letter to Orlov in ibid., 160–1.

13. Pavlo Zaitsev, *Zhyttia Tarasa Shevchenka* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1993), 167.

14. Ibid., 167.

15. See "Iz perepiski T. G. Shevchenka s raznymi litsami," *Kievskaia starina*, 1897, no. 11: 151–75.

crystallized for Shevchenko and for history the remarkable story of a nineteenth-century woman.

Mykola Ievshan: Modernist Critic?

Maxim Tarnawsky

In 1926 Andrii Kovalivsky characterized the fundamental indistinctness of Ukrainian modernism as an understandable outgrowth of the vicious circle of underlying cultural conditions: "Модернізм у всіх його ріжноманітних формах (що в нас рожрізнялися дуже слабо) ховає в собі глибоку суперечливість. Він хоче творити «вищу культуру», індивідуалістичну, по суті своїй незрозумілу «юрбі», «натовпові» і т. д. Але, з другого боку, думки про цей «натовп» нашим модерністам не дають спокою."[1]

Kovalivsky's words describe the dilemma of trying not to think about elephants. How can a writer escape the pernicious effect of always thinking about the *narod* when he is always trying not to think about the *narod*? Much of the theoretical discussion about Ukrainian modernism involves an explicit or implicit examination of the inability of Ukrainian writers to escape from this vicious circle. But the circle includes not only the writers who attack this problem in practice but also critics who deal with it theoretically.

For the Ukrainian modernist critic, no less than for the writer, the dilemma of modernism inheres in the definition of the task itself. What does it mean to be a modernist critic? Let us look at some obvious answers.

1. The modernist critic is a champion and spokesperson for modernist principles. But does he preach high culture and individualism, as Kovalivsky defines it, to the uncomprehending masses, in which case this is clearly a waste of time; or does he promote these values among the cultural aristocrats and individualists who accept them, thus preaching to the converted?

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1. "Modernism in all of its various forms (which were differentiated very poorly among us) conceals within itself a deep self-contradiction. It wants to create a 'higher culture,' individualistic and in its essence incomprehensible to 'the mob,' 'the rabble,' etc. But, on the other hand, our modernists are continually troubled by thoughts about this rabble" (Andrii Kovalivsky, "Krytyka 'Ukrainskoi khaty,'" in his *Z istorii ukrainskoi krytyky* [Kharkiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Ukrainy, 1926], 64).

2. The modernist critic reviews and analyzes the works of modernist writers. But does he examine the works of these writers objectively and scientifically with the goal of discovering in them the essence of modernism, or does he praise and chide various authors according to whether they measure up to a personal yardstick of modernist writing? The first case does not denote a specifically modernist critic, since any other critic can describe contemporary literature. In the second case the critic follows specifically modernist critical imperatives. But what if the writers he analyzes do not?

3. The modernist critic is not a reflector but rather a creator of modernism, with no obligation to either the masses or the artists. Such a critic is a philosopher advancing modernist ideas. But this answer begs the essential question: which definition of modernism must this philosopher examine—Oscar Wilde's and Aubrey Beardsley's, or James Joyce's and Virginia Woolf's? Should Schopenhauer and Nietzsche be quoted, or Darwin and Freud?

These three answers and the oppositions I have sketched out within them are not, of course, so overwhelming as to defy resolution. They indicate, however, inherent ambiguities in the concept. In our context these ambiguities are compounded by the peculiarities of the Ukrainian cultural climate, particularly the fact that the battle for a modernist aesthetic in Ukraine was waged against both a political and cultural opponent.

The dilemma that results from this ambiguity is clearly evident in the literary criticism of Ukrainian modernism. Although a number of writers whose views can be considered modernist wrote about literature—for example, Ostap Lutsky and Osyp Makovei—and a number of essayists held what amounted to modernist views—for example, Andrii Tovkachevsky and Mykyta Sribliansky (Shapoval)—the consensus of opinion among scholars holds that of the modernists only one was genuinely a literary critic, namely, Mykola Ievshan (Fediushko). This view may be in need of revision. Ievshan's critical essays, which appeared for the most part on the pages of the journal *Ukrainska khata* between 1909 and 1914, are prime examples of the theoretical ambiguity that characterizes Ukrainian modernism. Whether he is examining the nature and function of art, the psychology of creativity, the development of literary styles, or the peculiarities of a particular writer or work, Ievshan is directly encircled by the unifying polarity of his subject. Moreover, at times his ideas clearly depart from what in contemporary criticism are regarded as modernist principles.

In his programmatic essay on the nature and function of the creative drive in man, entitled "Problemy tvorchosty" (The Problem of Creativity), the first essay in his collection *Pid praporom mystetstva* (Under the Flag of Art), Ievshan combines Nietzschean elitism, romantic messianism, and socialist idealism. In discussing the relationship between art and everyday human existence, he explicitly compares art to religion both in the perspective from which they are viewed by the common person and in the effect they can have on him. Both art

and religion allow the individual to escape mundane reality. This ennobling moral function, however, then re–establishes a link between art and life by influencing the individual's behaviour.

> Усвідомлюючи в собі стремліннє до того ясного ідеалу, який несвідомо кладе печать на всіх правдиво великих творах людського духа, здобуваємо собі те становище, з якого людина бачить все життє не як нужденний фарс, і воно стане набирать змислу в тім, що кожна одиниця має змогу стремитись до що раз більшого самодосконалення; з творів всіх великих геніїв буде спливати на неї що раз більше світло, в якому побачить, що в людині є сила, щоб спровадити високі постаті ангелів на землю, коли тільки вона виробить в собі досить моральної сили, яка робила б її відпорною супроти всякої порочности та гріху землі. Таким чином творчість являється в житті одиниці великою реальною силою, коли усвідомити її в стремлінню до витворення в собі святого, мудреця і артиста, які — по бажанню Ніцше — були б завершеннєм культури і виявляли силу людського генія.
>
> А в цьому — мистецтво стає вже одним з моторів самого широкого життя; мистецтво промовляє не тільки до одиниці людської, але до загалу.
>
> Тут воно стає елементом наскрізь революційним, коли почне виповідати нові правди, нові кличі.[2]

Great literature raises readers' eyes away from the sordid corruption of human existence and towards the heavens where they behold angels. But in beholding angels these same readers discover that they, mere mortals, are capable of angelic thoughts. This may sound ridiculous, but we are still in the domain of simple dialectics. In his essay Ievshan repeatedly uses these dialectical paradoxes, whereby art benefits the individual and therefore the community and ideals are only fruitful if they arise from matter. But then Ievshan's argument makes a

2. Perceiving within ourselves the striving toward a bright ideal, which unconsciously leaves its mark on all the truly great works of the human spirit, we ascend to that position from which a person sees all of life not as a miserable farce, and it begins to take on meaning in the realization that every individual has the opportunity to strive toward an ever–greater self–perfection; that from the works of all great geniuses will flow to him an ever–greater light, in which he will see that in humans there is the power to bring the great figures of angels down to earth if only he develops within himself sufficient moral strength to make him immune to the various faults and sins of the earth. In this way creativity appears in the life of the individual as a great and real force, when one is aware of it in the striving to transform oneself into a saint, a philosopher, and an artist, which—according Nietzsche's wish—would be the culmination of culture and reveal the power of the human genius. And in this, art becomes one of the engines of grand life itself; art speaks not only to the human individual, but to the everyone. Here it becomes a thoroughly revolutionary element when it begins to announce new truths and new slogans" (Mykola Ievshan, *Pid praporom mystetstva* [Kyiv: Petr Barsky, 1910], 9).

dramatic leap of faith. The realization that art makes the human an angelic creature makes art a fundamental force in the daily reality of both the individual and society. The notion that an individual's personal illumination and ennoblement readily translate into a general social force is outside the bounds of dialectics. What goes unspoken here is Ievshan's profound sense of the social responsibility of the individual. Just as the individual cannot escape his or her social obligation, so too art is fundamentally constrained by a public, social orientation. Having turned the dialectical argument inside out, Ievshan unabashedly announces: "В приготовленю тої возвищенної атмосфери серед загалу, у вихованню одиниць і цілих поколінь в тім напрямі, щоб зробити їх серця здібними до принятя та плеканя в собі всього гарного, радісного і величнього, лежить і найбільша місія усього мистецтва."[3] It is difficult to see what distinguishes these sentiments from those that might be uttered by Serhii Iefremov.

The central idea in Ievshan's view of the function of art and, indeed, in his view of literature in general is the notion of life—життя. For him life is a combination of biological and existential conditions. But it is also a system of values. He describes the current cultural climate through the metaphor of disease and mortality. Decadence in art, the constant search for something fresh, new, and exotic, and the absence of an organizing force in art has led to the decline of creative thinking in all fields, to a general spiritual morbidity.

> Таким чином і виявляється неминуча потреба иншої естетичної культури для творчости, культури, яка вивела б нас знов на свіже повітрє, дала б нам знов здоровлє душі.
>
> Отже відносно тієї нової естетики всяка инша шкільна, солодкаво філістерська тратить всяку вартість, бо вона вже втратила всякий вплив на життє і не вміє скріпити його підвалин. Нова мусить зайняти її місце. Станути мусить передовсім лікарем покаліченої душі людської, лікарем життя, а відтак будівничим нових життєвих вартостей, які могли б вияснити і поглибити весь зміст життя.[4]

3. The greatest mission of all art lies in the preparation of that rarefied atmosphere among the general masses, in the rearing of individuals and whole generations in that direction that will make their hearts capable of accepting and nurturing within themselves all that is beautiful, joyful, and grand" (ibid., 12).

4. "This reveals the unavoidable need for a different aesthetic culture for creativity, a culture that would lead us back into fresh air, that would renew our spiritual health. Therefore, in relation to this new aesthetic every other [aesthetic], [be it] bookish or sweetly philistine, loses all value because it has already lost all influence on life and can not strengthen its foundations. A new [aesthetic] must take its place. It must, in the first place, become the healer of the crippled human soul, the healer of life, and thus a builder of new values for life that could explain and deepen the very content of life" (ibid., 5).

The juxtaposition in this passage of "лікар людської душі" with "лікар життя" is a symptom of Ievshan's peculiar understanding of the concept of life. His reference to a sick and dying culture is consistent with traditional modernist high culture. His frequent references to Nietzsche and his complaints about philistinism confirm this association. The fact that he indicts decadent, art-for-art's-sake movements does not itself represent a conflict with traditional modernist canons, although it raises suspicion. But the rough equivalence Ievshan draws between the human soul and life points to a failure to distinguish an essential polarity of modernism.

One of the benchmarks of modernist thinking is precisely the incompatibility of the material and the spiritual, of the practical and the ideal, of the utilitarian and the aesthetic judgement. The concept of life that appears in Ievshan's works is always infused with abstract, spiritual significance. Favourable references to Goethe and Rousseau alongside those to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche suggest that this vision of life's significance is part of the neo-Romantic surge that characterizes much of Ukrainian literature in the first two decades of the twentieth century. But Ievshan's notion of "life" is not the subjective, individualistic, and natural force we find in Lesia Ukrainka's *Lisova pisnia* (The Forest Song) and *Kaminnyi hospodar* (The Stone Host) or in Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky's "Intermezzo" and "Tsvit iabluni" (Apple Blossom). Nor is it, on the other hand, the abstract, existential notion we find in Olha Kobylianska's *Tsarivna* (The Princess) or Volodymyr Vynnychenko's *Chesnist z soboiu* (Honesty with Oneself). It is, on one hand, a reflection of the influence of Ivan Franko's utilitarian view of literature and, on the other, an early forerunner of the ideologically committed, voluntaristic attitudes that will be found in Ukrainian literature in the 1920s and beyond, on both sides of the Zbruch River.

Ievshan's allegiance to Franko should, generally speaking, disqualify him as a modernist critic. In many of his essays he chides various modernist authors for shortcomings in their works. In his judgement of the aesthetic value of many of these works, Ievshan is right to bemoan a general decline. But the ideological yardstick he applies to their contents is often hostile to the essential tenets of modernism. This is most evident in his essay "Poeziia bezsyllia" (The Poetry of Impotence), in which he approvingly quotes Franko's indictment of modernists as writers who are hiding their lack of understanding life or their cynical indifference to it. Here Ievshan makes fun of those writers who see art as an exclusively aesthetic activity. He mockingly quotes Vasyl Pachovsky's dictum "То є штука — я не пхаю тут ідей" (This is art—I'm not pushing ideas here) and criticizes the authors who produce this literature without ideas thus:

> Не маючи змісту, вони форму беруть за зміст і утішаються нею; не уміючи дати собі ради з матеріялом творчим і обробити його, вони тим більше дбають про гарний стіль. Замість великих картин і малюнків, які

> були-б в силі своєю щирістю та виразом знайти відгомін в серцях людських — вони дають образи такі, що передовсім засліплюють очі, ударяють своєю яскравістю, надзвичайністю та несподіваністю. З фальшу та самих дісонансів—вони намираються дати гармонію. І те все кладуть високо по-над життєм, і поклоняються тим ідолам, як би це дійсно було їх святе мистецтво.[5]

Let us not mince words here. This is heresy, for modernist critics do not say such things. Ievshan is not only dismissing the quality of significant modernist writers, such as Pachovsky, Bohdan Lepky, and Mykhailo Iatskiv, but also attacking those very qualities that constitute their modernist credentials. Perhaps the concept of modernism is not as clearly defined as we would like, but the ascendancy of form over content, of innovation over tradition, of dissonance over harmony, and of shocking the average reader rather than coddling him are certainly part of its general profile. What kind of a modernist critic is it who attacks known modernist writers for their adherence to precisely those values that constitute the modernist position?

The answer to this question is far from simple or unambiguous. As the above example demonstrates, there is sufficient prima facie evidence to dismiss Ievshan from the modernist pantheon. But this drastic solution does not resolve all outstanding questions. First of all, why has he been considered a modernist by three generations of literary critics? Are there any features of his literary views that explain his preliminary approach to the rejection of modernist ideas?

The answer here, as in so many aspects of Ukrainian modernism, lies in the peculiarities of the rejection of literary realism and political populism by the wave of young cultural reformers in early twentieth-century Ukraine. What makes Ievshan a modernist for most Ukrainian literary historians is his rejection of the past. To wit, anyone who is an enemy of my enemies must be my friend. From such a perspective Ievshan is a modernist because he attacks ethnographic realism. Moreover, his argument against realism is couched in the politically correct modernist phraseology of anti-populist propaganda. For example, in *Kuda my pryishly* (Where We Have Arrived) Ievshan reads a catalogue of the faults of ethnographic literature. The problem, he says, is Ukrainophile romanticism, which consists of "Широке поле, степ розлогий, рідна пісня, кохання, дружба, веснянки, співи, воля, щастє всіх, краса природи, етнографія,

5. "Having no content, they take form to be content and take pleasure in it [instead]; unable to cope with creative material and to craft it, they pay even greater attention to a nice style. Instead of large canvasses and images that would through their sincerity and expressivity resonate in people's hearts, they provide images that primarily blind the eye, that strike [one] with their brightness, unusualness, and unexpectedness. From falsity and dissonances alone they intend to produce harmony. And they place all of this high above life, and they bow to these idols as if this were really their sacred art." (ibid., 15).

покритка, нетоплена хата, галушки, частушки, сватання, писар, старшина, парубки, дівчата, молодиці — і так без кінця, цілого пів століття!"[6] Ievshan very perceptively notes that an essential characteristic of the writers of the previous generation is that they never say "I" but always "we." They are tearful patriots who naïvely worship the so-called national spirit and "poetic archaeology." But they are also indolent and frightened. Their resistance to change and ideology is essentially a function of their bourgeois social position and values. According to Ievshan, their only ideal is "the easy life."

Like most critics of ethnographic literature, not all of whom are modernists (Dmytro Chyzhevsky, for example), Ievshan singles out drama for particular scorn. First, he chides Marko Kropyvnytsky for the artistic decline of his later dramas. But then Ievshan excuses Kropyvnytsky, who is one of the better writers, on the grounds that he is one of the originators of ethnographic drama, which in those early days was redeemed by its patriotic goals. But, declares Ievshan, the current crop of dramatists is even worse, and their influence is growing:

> Вони стають панами положення, вони друкують по кілька видань, вони виставляють свої твори в театрі, вони «репрезентують» українську драму! Бо вони знають, як треба писати, щоб підійти під смак хоч би останнього сорта публики, як її забавити. Вони уміють зробити свій твір сценічним. Поза ними майже вся нова українська драма, всі найкращі твори — книжкові, тільки читають ся. Вони тяжкі, серіозні, поважні, — вони не зробили би каси. І тому вони не йдуть на сцену.[7]

Ievshan's attitude sounds remarkably like the collective, envious lament arising today from the members of the Ukrainian Writers' Union who find that their unreadable, highbrow, bookish, traditional, and patriotic works cannot

6. "The open field, the endless steppe, the native song, romance, friendship, spring rituals, singing, freedom, happiness for all, the beauty of nature, ethnography, the fallen woman, the unheated home, dumplings, satirical songs, engagement rituals, the scribe, the officer, lads, lasses, young married women—and so on endlessly for an entire half century! (Mykola Ievshan, *Kuda my pryishly* [Lviv: Naukove tovarystvo im. Shevchenka, 1912], 7).

7. "They become masters of the situation, they publish their works in several editions, they perform their works in real theatres, they "represent" Ukrainian drama! For they know how to write in order to appeal to the tastes of the very lowest sort of audience, how to entertain it. They know how to make their work[s] scenic. Besides them, almost all other Ukrainian drama, all the best works, are [mere] books, [they are] only being read. They are difficult, serious, grave—they would not make it at the box office. So they are not staged" (ibid., 10).

compete in an open marketplace with Russian pornography. Ievshan, too, assumes this plaintive tone:

> І так вся найновіша «драма», та, що виставляєть ся в театрі, зійшла на найбільше ординарну фарсу. Се всьо самі «жарти», перевертанє козлів на сценї, поштуркуванє; актори — се кльовни, що обтовкають собі з надмірного скакання колїна та лїктї, а сцена хиба призначена на те, щоб вигнати останні рештки інтелїґенції з душі...
>
> І так собі гонить наперед кудись пяна кумпанїя блазнів, і заходить ся божевільним реготом. — Під прапором «українського» мистецтва! ...[8]

It is entirely appropriate for a modernist to berate popular, lowbrow culture, and there is really nothing surprising in the vehemence with which Ievshan attacks philistines. After all, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound also turned high modernism into a religion and believed that only the faithful were worthy of respect. The titles of Eliot's works speak plainly: "The Waste Land," "The Hollow Men." Compare Ievshan's judgement to Ezra Pound's denunciation of non-modernists in a brief essay entitled "The Constant Preaching to the Mob":

> Time and again the old lie. There is no use talking to the ignorant about lies, for they have no criteria. Deceiving the ignorant is by some regarded as evil, but it is the demagogue's business to bolster up his position and to show that God's noblest work is the demagogue. Therefore we read again for the one-thousand-one-hundred-and-eleventh time that poetry is made to entertain....
>
> Either such statements are made to curry favor with other people sitting at fat sterile tables, or they are made in an ignorance which is charlatanry when it goes out to vend itself as sacred and impeccable knowledge.[9]

Pound shares many of the emotional excesses that Ievshan shows in his analysis of popular culture. They both regard their opponents as demagogues, liars, bourgeois epicureans, and ignoramuses. But, unlike Ievshan, Pound does not blame them for their success. He is not embarrassed for them. Despite his reference to demagogy and evil, his judgement of them is aesthetic and intellectual, not ethical.

Not so Ievshan. His image of a drunken company of clowns suggests a moral judgement. His horror that this commercially successful buffoonery takes place

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8. "And so all the newest 'drama'—the one that is performed in the theatre—has descended to the most ordinary farce. It is nothing [on stage] but 'jokes,' cartwheels, [and] stunts; the actors are clowns who end up with bruised elbows and knees from their excessive jumping, while the production is apparently aimed at driving the last vestiges of intelligence from the soul.... And so this drunken band of buffoons races on and erupts with insane laughter. [And all of this is done] under the banner of 'Ukrainian' art!" (ibid., 10).

9. *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Elide (New York: New Directions, 1968), 64.

under the pennant of Ukrainian art belies his presumed aesthetic detachment. The problem with lowbrow art for Ievshan (as later for Chyzhevsky and others) lies not in the mere fact that it is not highbrow, but rather in the damage it does to the cause of promoting and stimulating Ukrainian culture. If Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton had made their films in Lviv, no doubt Ievshan would have been embarrassed too. The problem with lowbrow art for him is that it infects the social organism and thus prevents the salutary inoculation of high culture among the masses, which Ukrainian culture needs for its national salvation. By the same token it prevents the infected masses from passing their life-giving energy to the now barren and static highbrow art.

The notion of a sustaining vital link between high art and the masses is the essence of Ievshan's view of life. This is the basic criterion that he uses to judge the work of individual writers. He applies it, for example, in his analysis of Kotsiubynsky, whose individualism and existential relativism are not value choices by the author, but rather the outcome of a logical sequence of steps that begins, of course, with the failure of the link between the artist and society.

> Творча думка не могла мати терену в серцях людей; а не маючи такого терену, не маючи до кого звертати ся, не знаходячи ніякого відгомону, — мусіла або відразу капітулювати, або опинити ся зовсім самотньою, відокремленою від тенденції всього життя, в опозиції до його. І бачимо як дійсні творці, дійсні наші письменники виходячи від ширших інтересів, від згоди своєї з тенденцією життя суспільного, від бажання жити спільностю інтересів з ширшою громадою, — йшли щораз більше в противному напрямі, поки не опинювали ся самі тільки, перед проблємою індівідуалїзму. Душа опинюєть ся нараз сама серед широкого космосу і говорити може тільки з [Б]огом; вона бачить неможливість жити широким житєм і єдинити ся духом з окружаючою громадою. Тут її траґедія. Вона бачить повний образ прози життя, всю безвиглядність втїлити свої думки. І починає мріяти. Понад сїрою буденщиною заточує веселчані колїри, на крилах пісні летить на стрічу новому [Б]огови. І не можучи виливати перед загал скарбів своєї душі, нагромаджує їх в собі, культура своєї душі являєть ся одиноким суспільним завданєм і післанництвом ...[10]

10. "Creative thought could not have a place in the hearts of people; and not having such a place, not having anyone to turn to, not finding any response, it had either to capitulate immediately or end up entirely alone, separated from all of life's tendencies, in opposition to it. And we see how the true creators, our true writers who began with broad interests, from their agreement with the [general] tendency in the life of society, from a desire to live according to their common interests with the community at large, went increasingly further in the opposite direction until they ended up only by themselves, facing the problem of individualism. A soul suddenly ends up entirely alone in the entire cosmos and can speak only with God; he sees the impossibility of living a broad existence

This could hardly be further from the truth. Throughout his creative life Kotsiubynsky focussed attention on the enormous gulf between the individual and the community. But Ievshan, having found his theory, is not likely to be swayed by the facts. One after another, he examines various notable and less significant writers under the distorting lens of this modernist–cum–romantic–cum–vitalist approach. Needless to say, he finds most of the figures that he examines to be lacking the sincere commitment to life that his approach predicates as the supreme value. Indeed, the closer a given writer stands to real modernism as it is generally understood, the more likely Ievshan will find him or her wanting. The members of the Moloda Muza are perfunctorily dismissed. Petro Karmansky is an insincere pessimist who writes about the kingdom of darkness and captivity, but has not himself experienced its passions. Pachovsky is a poet of album verses who writes only on a limited range of subjects and therefore cuts himself off from experience. Iatskiv receives qualified praise, but the characteristics for which he is praised are anything but modernist: "Помимо великої, правдиво європейської культури артистичної, він все таки не перестав бути мужиком у своїому досадному, ляконичному, простому способі писання, а чиста українська мова і здоровий український елемент лучить його з тим народом, з котрого вийшов."[11] For a modernist, this is surely damning with faint praise.

Perhaps the most revealing of Ievshan's analyses are those that result in outright approval. Few of the writers he examines in *Pid praporom mystetstva* few receive his admiration. Among them are Kobylianska and Vasyl Stefanyk. Kobylianska's chief theme, the process of compromise between the idealized values of the artist and practical human needs and desires, is fundamentally in harmony with Ievshan's theoretical approach. But the critic fails to see much of what is central to Kobylianska's writing. According to him, the life she depicts is idealized. It is reality viewed from the perspective of eternity. Ievshan, however, completely ignores or perhaps entirely fails to realize that female sexuality is, in fact, the primary engine of the vital forces that Kobylianska

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and uniting in spirit with the surrounding community. Here lies his tragedy. He can see the full view of life's prose, the total impossibility of realizing his ideas. And he begins to dream. Above monotonous daily life he unfolds the colours of the rainbow, [and] on the wings of a song he flies to meet the new God. And unable to pour out the treasures of his spirit, he accumulates them within himself, [and] the cultivation of his spirit becomes his only social responsibility and mission" (Ievshan, *Kuda my pryishly*, 14–15).

11. "Despite [his] great, truly European artistic culture, he did not cease to be a peasant in his angry, laconic, and simple manner of writing, while [his] pure Ukrainian language and healthy Ukrainian element bind him to this people [*narod*] from which he emerged" (Ievshan, *Pid praporom mystetstva*, 33).

depicts in her works. (The fact that this sexuality is never actually described or portrayed is not a positive feature of her work.)

A similar misunderstanding occurs in Ievshan's reading of Stefanyk. He praises the author for his laconic portrayals of human suffering. According to Ievshan, Stefanyk outdoes all of the ethnographic writers who depicted the Ukrainian peasant even though he never actually describes them; he lets them speak for themselves, his portrayals are completely objective, and he identifies completely with the subject of his writing. Whether or not this notion of objectivity represents a misunderstanding of Stefanyk's method, it is a symptom of the real problem in Ievshan's understanding of the writer. The real source of the critic's satisfaction with this writer lies in the critic's sense that Stefanyk has a personal interest in the subject: "Творчість Стефаника — чи не найсильніше слово з усієї української літератури. Він показав не лиш, що таке дійсний артист з [Б]ожої ласки, але й те як артизм може йти в парі з иншими, моральної натури, цілями."[12] But Stefanyk is not an artist by the grace of God, and his works do not carry a moral imperative.

In the final analysis, Ievshan cannot escape the vicious circle of Ukrainian modernism. He cannot stop thinking about elephants. He is, by personal inclination and ideological necessity, a critic of hybrid, mixed approaches. Of the three kinds of modernist critics described above, Ievshan is, of course, a little of each of them. He is, in varying measures, simultaneously a preacher, a judge, and a visionary. But is he a modernist? I think not. He is a Ukrainian modernist.

12. "Stefanyk's oeuvre is likely the strongest word in all of Ukrainian literature. He showed not only what a true artist, by God's grace, can be, but also how artistry can go step in step with other goals of a moral nature" (ibid., 108).

Mykola Khvylovy and Expressionism

Vira Aheieva

The phenomenon of expressionism in literature has generally been viewed as receiving its fullest development in German-language works. Other literatures, it has been argued, felt the German impact and influence to a greater or lesser degree. In Ukraine in the first three decades of the twentieth century, neo-Romanticism was ascendant. At various times individual writers adhered to various models of it. In fact, in the 1920s a vigorous discussion took place about the terms "romantic vitaism" and "active romanticism," which had been introduced and promoted by members of the Vaplite writers' group, particularly Mykola Khvylovy.[1] However, expressionist influences were also most evident in the style that these writers proposed.

It is quite clear that Ukrainian lyrico-expressionist prose of the 1920s was greatly influenced by its Russian and German counterparts. One can detect these influences in the works of individual writers and in the formation of the entire neo-Romantic current. In fact, neo-Romantic and expressionist elements are closely interwoven in the styles of many Ukrainian prose writers of the day.

The revolutionary rupture and terrible reality of the ensuing civil strife and Russo-Ukrainian war impelled many authors to search for new forms and devices that would adequately depict the spirit of their age. Expressionism, with its agitational intensity and attention to socio-political aspirations and issues, was held dear by those writers who genuinely wished to hear the"music of revolution." Bold experimentation and sensitivity to the newest European aesthetic searchings were germane to the first post-revolutionary years, with their atmosphere of "the dawn of history" and renunciation of the past. Impartial representation or the worship of sensual beauty now appeared anachronistic. At the same time, however, the influence of impressionist traditions remained very

1. Khvylovy raised the issue of romanticism as an appropriate style for the times in his first pamphlet series, "Kamo hriadeshy" (1925), repr. in his *Tvory u dvokh tomakh*, vol. 2 (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1991), 419–20.

strong. Mykola Khvylovy appears to be the most interesting figure to investigate in the light of such an "ornamental" interweaving of various stylistic features. His manner as a writer changed abruptly and often unpredictably. He combined an expressionist, agitational, and debunking emotional intensity in his work with an impressionist attention to psychological nuances, beauty, and the multifacetedness and rich tones and colours of the external world. The author frequently acted simultaneously as an observer and a divulger in his works.

The stylistic features of Khvylovy's novelle can be traced to various literary influences. At specific times he was an admirer of Nikolai Gogol and Panteleimon Kulish, Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky and Vasyl Stefanyk, Andrei Bely and Boris Pilniak, and German expressionism and the Russian Serapion Brothers. The term "lyrico-expressionist prose" defines only a part of Khvylovy's creative output. Some of his works are marked by a clearly impressionist manner, while others can easily be classified as neo-Romantic. Each case of attributing direct influences to Khvylovy or charging him with imitation—a criticism that Khvylovy's contemporaries so misused—should be treated with caution.

Khvylovy's "romantic vitaism" or "active romanticism" has much in common with the prevailing neo-Romantic and expressionist concepts of his day, particularly with the "activism" of German expressionism. Various memoirs confirm that writers and artists in Ukraine were closely acquainted with the latter. The influential Ukrainian theatre director Les Kurbas, who had studied in Vienna, played a pivotal role in this regard. In 1919 he published an enthusiastic assessment of the German expressionists,[2] and under his direction expressionist plays predominated in the repertoire of the Berezil Theatre in Kharkiv. The expressionist influence is also evident in Oleksander Dovzhenko's early films, Andrii Holovko's prose, and Mykola Kulish's plays. In the 1920s as well, Ukrainian translations of the works of Kasimir Edschmid and Georg Heym and a collection of Ukrainian articles on expressionism and the expressionists[3] were published, and the Neoclassicist group of Ukrainian poets showed a sustained interest in German expressionism. In short, Ukrainian writers, actors, and artists were well versed in the new style that succeeded the last "great" literary and artistic trend of the nineteenth century—impressionism.

The expressionists rejected the impressionists' "pure" observational manner and strove to communicate all-encompassing, powerful, even ecstatic, emotions. High ideals and authorial passion again became legitimate, and consequently authors chose to depict exceptionally dramatic images. This new literary approach also seemed best suited for the turbulent post-revolutionary years in Ukraine.

2. "Nova nimetska drama" (New German Drama), *Muzahet* (Kyiv), 1919, 1–3.
3. S. Savchenko, ed., *Ekspresionizm ta ekspresionisty* (Kyiv: Siaivo, 1929).

In many of his novelle Khvylovy openly declares his evaluative, confessional, and even judgmental point of view. Moreover, he pays virtually no attention to depicting recognizably realistic or believable circumstances, which occasionally seem deliberately exaggerated. Here one can see many points of contact between the poetics of Khvylovy and prominent expressionist writers. The character in lyrico-expressionist prose is most often not a private individual but a public one—a person in a crowd, at the podium, at a meeting, i.e., the active subject.[4] Such protagonists appear in Khvylovy's first collection *Syni etiudy* (Blue Etudes [Kharkiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Ukrainy, 1923]), in the stories "Solonskyi Iar," "Chumakivska komuna" (Chumak Commune), "Baraky, shcho za mistom" (The Barracks outside Town), and "Legenda" (Legend); in his second collection *Osin* (Autumn [Kharkiv: Chervonyi shliakh, 1924]), in the stories "'Liliuli'" ("Liluli") and "Ia (Romantyka)" (I [A Romance]); and in his unfinished novel "Valdshnepy" (Woodcocks).[5] Similar characters appear in Leonhard Frank's wartime works "Der Vater," "Das Liebespaar," "Die Mutter," and "Die Kriegswitwe"; in Heym's "Der fünfte Oktober" (1913); and in Edschmid's "Der Bezwinger" (1916).[6]

The soldiers' widows and bereaved parents in Frank's stories are generally "small," unnoticeable people whose experience of grief, tragedy, and devastation awakens a need to protest and a desire to wreak vengeance on those guilty of the total evil brought on by war. The obedient waiter, whose only son was what gave his life meaning, is conditioned to serve and conform by his very profession. He finds an outlet for his unbearable spiritual suffering in summoning others to struggle against evil. He appears, with a napkin on his arm, at the head of a large anti-war demonstration. Similar mass scenes can be found in many of Frank's stories. Homiletic passion finds its outlet in fervid speeches at large gatherings. Maillard, the French revolutionary hero in Heym's "Der fünfte Oktober," and Frank's insurgents and war victims belong to different historical epochs. A comparison of these works reveals that the historical background and the characters' socio-psychological traits are conventions in expressionist prose. The temporal and the plot in general are meant to serve only as a means for emphasizing a basic idea. This feature was remarked upon by Oswald Burghardt

4. Cf. Mikhail Bakhtin, "Formy vremeni i khronotopa v romane," in his *Literaturno-kriticheskie stati* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1986), 145.

5. Part one was published in *Vaplite,* no. 5 (1927); the issue of *Vaplite* containing the next installment was confiscated by the authorities before it could be distributed and has not survived.

6. Frank's stories all appeared in the collection *Der Mensch ist gut* (Zurich and Leipzig: Rascher, 1917). Heym's story appeared in his collection *Der Dieb: Ein Novellenbuch* (Leipzig: Ernst Rowohlt, 1913). Edschmid's story appeared in his collection *Timur: Novellen* (Leipzig: Kurt Wolff, 1916).

(a.k.a. Iurii Klen): "Read Maillard's speech in the first story [of "Der fünfte Oktober"], and you will find in it that entire dynamic of gestures and words that you now see in the meeting scene of Kurbas's production of [Georg Kaiser's] *Gas*."[7]

In Khvylovy's "Legenda" the expressionist emphasis on open agitation is quite obvious. Its insurgent heroine also delivers her ideas in front of a crowd of listeners as a "great prophet," a leader: "Through death life will reign for us. Leave the forests, the thickets, the darkness. Fly like butterflies to the light.... Listen! Listen! Do you not hear how the ages are sounding the alarm?! Do you not see how we are climbing out of the chasm!? One more step and we will be in the azure land, but if we fail to make the step we will remain in the abyss, dark and slippery as a frog ..." This speech's words and intonation are reminiscent of Maillard's speech in Heym: "Again you will crawl into your caves, the torch of freedom has become but a small night light, a poor taper, bright enough only to illuminate the way to your holes."

The elevated, symbolic figures of the protagonists are placed in extreme, exceptionally dramatic circumstances that are frequently consciously theatrical. Khvylovy's characters are given to emotional gestures, loud monologues, and excessive passion, which is usually balanced by the author's ironic commentary. This raises the issue of the relationship between the author's voice and characters' voices (or points of view, in Bakhtinian terms[8]) in lyrico-expressionist prose. In Khvylovy's writing there are many divergences from the expressionist tradition. When one compares works that deal with a similar problem or topic, the difference is most obvious in the narrative structure. One of the most important expressionist motifs is the eruption and sudden transformation of an ordinary, average person under extraordinary, dramatic circumstances. The use of contrast and internal psychological conflict illuminates the very moment of spiritual flight by individuals who hitherto had appeared quite unremarkable. In Khvylovy's early novelle (written during the years 1920–22) this motif was his favourite. It occurs in his stories "Kit u chobotiakh" (Puss in Boots), "Solonskyi Iar," and "Legenda." Typologically similar characters occur in Vsevolod Ivanov's "O kazachke Marfe" (About the Cossack Girl Martha, 1926) and Frank's "Michaels Rückkehr" and "Der Vater." The representative, common nature of the social situation and the hero's fate are underlined in a number of ways. In Ivanov's story the Cossack girl joins a Red Army unit as a cook to save her son

7. Osvald Burhardt [sic], "Georg Haim [Heym]," in Georg Haim, *Novely,* trans. Osvald Burhardt, Maksym Rylsky, and Viktor Petrov (Kyiv: Slovo, 1925), 8.

8. See Mikhail Bakhtin, "Avtor i geroi v esteticheskoi deiatelnosti," in his *Estetika slovesnogo tvorchestva* (Moscow, 1986), 75–90.

from execution. Although she initially serves to "pay off her debt," she eventually becomes a celebrated commander.

As an art form, expressionism reflected an unstable, stormy, dangerous, and explosive reality. To underline their characters' exceptional nature, authors often limited their narrative to short, dramatic time frames. When the dramatic tension of the situation they were depicting waned and the high wave passed and life returned to its normal channels, these characters disappeared. Extraordinary heroes can operate only in unusual circumstances, i.e., when an epoch lifts and carries them aloft.

In his story Ivanov uses the folkloric, stylized, first-person *skaz* form of narration. He never expresses his own evaluations and views. Frank's "Der Vater," like his "Michaels Rückkehr" and "Die Mutter," are written using "objective" third-person narration: agitational intensity is restricted to the heroes' speeches, declarations, and monologues. There are, however, no lyrical digressions by the author as narrator or direct authorial comment in the narrative. In contrast, the lyrical element in Khvylovy's work, as in all Ukrainian expressionist and impressionist prose of the 1920s, is significantly stronger.

The German expressionists rejected the extremes of naturalism—in particular its excessive deference to nature—and apotheosized the great idea and the internal drive. Expressionist prose was wedded in particular to the growth of a powerful anti-war protest. Faith in humanity's indefatigable spirit of rebellion sustained the work of almost all representatives of this new trend. The tragic, entirely hopeless borderline situation was overcome by the hero, even if through death.

Ukrainian neo-Romantic and expressionist prose of the 1920s developed in an atmosphere of anticipated social renewal and national rebirth and zeal for insurgent heroics. But this atmosphere lasted only a few years, for a fleeting historical period of time that Khvylovy later depicted as a brief moment of embodied ideals. In keeping with contemporary romantic convictions, it was a time of battles and armed uprisings. Khvylovy's characters view these legendary days as the idealized embodiment of their romantic visions, as a passing moment in which their dreams and reality have coincided, and consider them as truly their own time. The collapse of their illusions places them in a position of being superfluous. Their enthusiasm gives way to disillusionment and sober realization that, contrary to their dreams of a "light-blue distance," society has once again fallen under the sway of "federation-wide philistinism" and the "undefeated boor."[9] Khvylovy's heroes are often dispirited, devastated, impotent, and no longer capable of continuing the struggle. The tragedy of the depicted situation

9. See Khvylovy, "Synii lystopad," in his *Tvory*, 1: 215, 210.

and no escape from it is transcended only through the author's passion and declaration of faith.

Expressionist influences are most evident in those novelle by Khvylovy where active heroes are at the centre. Works in which the protagonists are given to reflection and inclined towards passive observation are marked by an impressionist preoccupation with collecting and conveying sense impressions and capturing unforeseen nuances of moods. Initial chaotic impressions are somewhat ordered through authorial intervention. The work by Khvylovy that is most interesting in the way that it combines expressionist and impressionist elements is his story "Redaktor Kark" (Editor Kark) in *Syni etiudy*. It is constructed as the hero's indirect internal monologue, which is frequently interrupted by authorial commentary, evaluation, and even inserted sections in which the author directly addresses the reader. Kark is a Ukrainian *inteligent* and a romantic, superfluous man in an unstable and mercantile time who has become disillusioned with the reality of post-revolutionary life. He is fixated completely on a past filled with deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice. The symbol of this past is his revolver, which serves as the first link in a chain of memories and associations. Kark's reminiscences are fragmentary and touch on various periods during his life: "The history of the Browning is as follows: a forest, a road, escapees, enemies, and houses, and trees, and no one cares, no air to breathe any more, your lungs are on fire and burning up, burning up ... A shot ... A dark history." His thoughts are summarized by another voice, which is most likely the author's: "But this is not a diary, it's a real contemporary novella."[10] Kark is a hero with a penchant for self-reflection. His disillusionments and non-acceptance of the present take on global proportions as historical analogies are introduced one after the other. At the same time the past and the present are continually juxtaposed in his consciousness as heroism and mundane reality, as inspired motivation, on the one hand, and drab conformism on the other. Thoughts of suicide never abandon him.

Kark is indifferent to his personal future, completely inactive, and because of this exceptionally sensitive to the minutest manifestations of vital, natural life. His impressions are recorded without logical connection to the action of the plot, and his internal monologues are interrupted by the author's apostrophes to the reader. On the one hand, these apostrophes serve to deliberately destroy the expected novella form: "My dear readers! Here's a simple and understandable letter. I fear that you will not read my novella to the end. You are in the grip of *prosvita* literature. And I respect this. But there is a time for everyone. To create is to create."[11] The apostrophes also have another important function. In impressionist prose the author carefully notes changes in mood or a character's

10. Khvylovy, "Redaktor Kark," in his *Tvory*, 1: 137.
11. Ibid., 140.

stream of impressions without evaluating them or interjecting himself into what is being represented. Khvylovy is similarly attentive to nuances in his hero's moods and impressions, but at the same time he wishes to distance himself by underscoring a personal dissimilarity. He stresses his own optimism, creative élan, and faith in future successes. This strikes a dissonant note with the hero's mood ("I step onto the new path and I am joyful. Before me shines the star just as it once shone"[12]). The author dismays the reader by turning to his "vital thoughts" (*zhyvoi mysli*) and laughing at his traditional views. In the end he candidly explains his work's chaotic composition: "I want to speak off-topic and I am. I want to compose an agitational leaflet."[13]

"Redaktor Kark" presents an interesting example of a divided self, not within the hero but within the author. Kark is whole, almost unambiguously so. His context appears to be encompassed by two circles of the author's evaluation. Khvylovy undoubtedly sympathizes and identifies with him. This is evident in many instances when what is being said in the author's voice almost fuses with the thoughts of the hero. They have common memories; they were together on the revolutionary barricades. Khvylovy particularly underlines this. He confesses that the meaning of seeking a new form, a new creativity, lies in having the reader "Feel the struggle of my class! My class—the proletariat—bloodied among the weeds and on the paths of struggle for freedom, equality, and brotherhood."[14] (This is the same style that he justified when he stated that he wanted to write an agitational leaflet.)

The propinquity between the author's and the hero's evaluative positions is evident. But this is only one aspect of their relations. From another perspective Khvylovy never ceases to underline his dissimilarity. Kark is a candidate for suicide; he is tired, dejected, and indifferent to the future. Khvylovy, meanwhile, presents himself to the reader as someone who is stepping "onto the new path," as someone who will "joyfully wander along unknown paths of wild thyme" and "create in a new way."[15] He suddenly abandons his hero at the moment of the latter's darkest despair, when all of Kark's thoughts are centred on his revolver, and he announces that his "novelle is finished." A final comment follows, composed as Khvylovy's conversation with a reader who is mistrustful and irritated by unfamiliar stylistic innovations. He again distances himself from the hero and his despair: "My dear reader, this is Kark's diary (for the purpose of revealing the nature of [his] type), and only seldom did I intrude."[16]

12. Ibid., 144.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., 145.
15. Ibid., 144.
16. Ibid., 154.

By revealing his hero's mood in detail, Khvylovy is, on the one hand, allowing everything represented to be the basis of an evaluation of the hero without any prompting or commentary by the author. The hero speaks for himself through the chosen interior monologue form favoured by the impressionists. On the other hand, however, the author is unable to restrain himself from making his own judgements; he finds the framework of impartial representation confining. The contradiction is resolved by dividing the author's "I," especially through the use of irony. Lyrical intensity, a refined ambience, and trenchant irony, with nearly poster–like agitation and caricature, are interwoven in the style of many of Khvylovy's works and result in unexpected artistic effects.

Khvylovy's active manifestation of his original conception allows him to bring balance to the amorphous plots of his works. Among the characteristic features of "classic" expressionist prose, especially the German, were an exotic plot (even and particularly in terms of the geographic setting) and the depiction of extraordinary passions and adventures. In Khvylovy's novelle the plot is, for the most part, hardly noticeable. His prose is tied thematically to post-revolutionary Ukraine, and the spatial-temporal parameters of the concrete action are not too broad. There are no distant wanderings or fantastic adventures typical of romanticism. However, numerous lyrical digressions and other extra-plot elements, whose role in the structure of the stories is exceptionally large, impress the reader with their uncontrolled abundance of "manifold analogies and associations" ("*strokatykh analohii i asotsiiatsii*"), as they are called in Khvylovy's "Arabesky" (Arabesques, 1927). It is there that the temporal frame of what is being depicted is widened through direct authorial interference. The poetics of these digressions are often expressionist. We see a fascination with exotic, distant lands and the heroic, perilous escapades of remarkable people during various historical epochs. In Khvylovy's early collections *Syni etiudy* and *Osin* his digressions are replete with exotic names and terms that are completely irrelevant to the basic action of the plot. In the novelle "Na hlukhim shliakhu" (Off the Beaten Track, 1923), for example, he writes: "Over there, somewhere in the Great Zondskys on the Volcano Smer."[17] In "Elehiia" (Elegy, 1924) he writes: "and the mountain grew, [becoming] taller than Havryzankar, [and] deeper than the ocean's depths."[18] Even in the later "Arabesky" he writes: "Then I love Spain because it is far away, because I am a fantasizer, because I recognize and adore the city not as others do, because the city is Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel, because during the battle of Lepanto, because captivity by Algerian pirates."[19]

17. Ibid., 177.
18. Ibid., 294.
19. Ibid., 301.

The direct parallels with various expressionists' invocations of historical figures and events are an interesting study in themselves. In Khvylovy's abundant use of names there is a marked preference for those associated with Romantic literature—the authors who he most frequently mentions are Gogol,[20] E. T. A. Hoffmann, and Cervantes. He also pays a great deal of attention to ideas and images that constitute his concept of the "Asiatic renaissance," of "awakened, universally significant Asiatic energy."[21] Both these traditions were very significant in the poetics of expressionism. The Romantic elements are linked, understandably, with the very origins of expressionism, while the slogan of activism and orientation on the strong, dynamic personality who determines his own fate conditioned an interest in "primal," "savage," unspent youthful energy not weighed down by the demands of civilization and humanity's various cultural taboos. In expressionism "the human being arrives at the point from which it began a thousand years ago. It is as free and naïve as a newborn child, and its joy of living is not clouded by issues concerning the conditions of earthly existence and inheritance."[22]

This kind of hero is most clearly depicted in Edschmid's *Timur* (1916), in Heym's "Der Irre" (1913), and in a number of Boris Pilniak's stories. Edschmid's Timur is truly a "free and naïve" person untrammelled by any socio-cultural restraints: "They sent him as a fourteen-year-old from the yurt on his first hunting trip. He killed thirteen deer in the hip-high snow. His uncle Haji Berlas smeared his thumb and gave him a wife. In the orchard by the river he played with her all evening. During the night he killed and ate her, swam across the river, freed a whole herd of horses, and galloped off like a whirlwind across the place called Kesh."[23] Heym also underscores the totally extra-social nature and barbaric, total permissiveness of his character, a patient who has spent many years in a psychiatric hospital and who, intoxicated after suddenly receiving the right to govern his own life, destroys everything that crosses his path: "It seemed to him that he was walking across a wide square. Many, many people were lying there, all of them having fallen to and facing the ground.... 'Kaaba, Kaaba,' he repeated with every step. He pronounced these words like a mighty curse, and each time he stepped right and then left on the myriad white heads. And then the sculls cracked; it sounded like someone breaking a nut with a hammer."[24] This

20. In *Über den Expressionismus in der Literatur und die neue Dichtung* (Berlin: Reiss, 1920) Kasimir Edschmid refers to Gogol as a forerunner of expressionism.

21. See Khvylovy, "Ukraina chy Malorosiia," in his *Tvory,* 2: 613–14.

22. *Ekspressionizm: Sbornik* (Petrograd and Moscow, 1923), 54.

23. Ihor Kostetsky, ed., *Vybranyi Kazimir Edshmid* (Munich: Na hori, 1960), 69.

24. Haim, *Novely*, 26.

widely used motif in expressionist literature appears in the title of one of Pilniak's stories—"Smertelnoe manit" (The Fatal Attracts, 1918).[25]

Khvylovy is much more restrained in the use of naturalistic details, and his heroes are less courageous in violating social norms and customs. In the lyrical authorial monologues incorporated into the structure of many of his stories, however, he often turns to similar historical figures—the carriers of a primeval, "pre-cultural" force and vitality. Usually they are Asiatic military commanders and rulers known for their ruthless tyranny and unfettered power, such as Tamerlane or the semi-legendary Attila. Perhaps the most characteristic example is found in this excerpt from "Na hlukhim shliakhu":

> [M]y dear friend, here is a miniature fragment from a forgotten lost poem called "Asia":
>
> ... In the fifth century—savage and distant—from the crests of the Ural mountains, from the cliffs of the Volga to the placid azure waters of the Danube: Huns, Sarmatians, Germans [came] ... And Mundtsuk's son killed his brother Bled. The rabid Attila, king of the Huns.
>
> ... Centuries passed. And a desolate century arrived—the fourteenth. And in the unknown Asiatic heights there arose the figure of Tamerlane."[26]

Khvylovy also searches in the Ukrainian past for symbols of jacqueries that destroy century-old restrictions and injustices: in "Redaktor Kark" he mentions "popular revolts, village uprisings, the Khmelnytsky rebellion, Pavliuk, Triasylo," Gonta and Zalizniak (of course, with their Romantic, Shevchenkian, halos intact), the "roar of the *haidamaky*," and, finally, the *Makhnovshchyna* as "the tragedy of Left-Bank Ukraine's intelligentsia."[27] This attention to times when elemental forces that have been dormant for centuries had awakened, and even though they were repeatedly anarchic and destructive, was one of the important features of the expressionist style.

A particular poeticization of the elemental, an unreflective submission to coarser feelings and instincts, is also evident in the expressionists' treatment of intimate themes. In this regard Khvylovy is sometimes close to Edschmid and especially to his Russian contemporaries Ivanov and Pilniak. In Edschmid love is often a duel, a contest between egotistical temperaments (for example, in Timur's relations with the female Chinese soothsayer). In "Maintonis Hochzeit" (1915) the character of the heroine, a submissive girl who is devoted in her love, suddenly appears in a contrasting light in the final episode. The shy betrothed is transformed into a ruthless avenger of the death of her beloved: "And then Maintoni did what was greater and more terrible than anything Rodriguez had

25. Originally published in the newspaper *Utro Rossii*, March 1918.

26. Khvylovy, *Tvory*, 1: 176.

27. Ibid., 138, 143.

given when he rescued her on the cliff ... she stepped broadly onto the face of the dying man; his head fell back awkwardly."

In various ways Pilniak emphasizes his characters' sensual, instinctive, animalistic feelings. A model for understanding the features of his approach to the theme of intimacy can be found in the early story "God ikh zhizni" (A Year in Their Life, 1917).[28] A settlement of hunters lives according to primitive, natural laws of survival. The author wants to give the impression of an existence that is outside society and separated from the world. The protagonists, a young married couple, are portrayed as symbols of this healthy, unspoiled existence, and there is no immersion into their individual psychology. There is also another protagonist—the tame bear Makar—and the internal world of all three of them receives equivalent treatment. "From the day she was born," the girl "grew like a thistle on a precipice, free and alone." The hero is "robust and broad-shouldered, with dark eyes that were large, calm, and kind. He smelled of the taiga, healthily and strongly. He dressed, as did all the hunters, in furs and in a homespun, coarse white cloth." The story of their love is accorded one sentence: "Demid went to the ravine to see the girls, took Marina from the ravine to his place ... and Marina became Demid's wife." The "love story" ends with a description of the births that are "accepted" by the bear, which then finally senses the call of freedom in the forest and disappears into the taiga.

There are more such examples in Pilniak's prose. The arbitrariness of instincts is poeticized in a juxtaposition to cultural conditioning and the superficial, unstable veneer of civilization. All of this echoes Pilniak's holistic view of Russian history, in which the revolution is seen as a return to the old, peasant Russia. The contrast between "civilization" and "nature" is a central feature of his work.

This opposition also occurs in Khvylovy's "Zhyttia" (Life, 1922) and "Legenda", but it is never a fundamental one. Interesting parallels can also be found by comparing his "Arabesky" and the works of central European expressionists. This novelle may be considered a key to many features of Khvylovy's style. It contains almost all of the basic ideas, conflicts and struggles, and even character types in his prose. The brief presentation of the love escapade of Brygita, the woodsman's daughter, is entirely in the expressionist manner. But the fundamental opposition in this story is not between the elemental and animalistic, on the one hand, and the civilizational and constraining, on the other, as is the case in Pilniak. It is between the freely taken individual choice and the decision taken under coercion. Near her hut, the solitary forest-dweller Brygita encounters a duke while he is hunting. Although he is as handsome as a "fairy-tale knight," he is a brutal ruler. Khvylovy borrows here from the poetics of

28. Published in *Almanakh Spolokhi* (Moscow) 11: 134–48.

knightly romances, in which great deeds and selfless service are as common as untrammelled violence. Although the duke initially says that she is as hideous as a monkey, gradually an instinctive attraction draws them to one another: "There she met the duke again. He climbed off his horse, patted his pointer, and walked up to Brygita. He pressed her to his breast and cried out. Brygita did not take fright, but merely sighed deeply. The young duke grabbed her and placed her on his horse. Then they trotted along the forest paths" to his estate. But the freedom—loving captive escapes from the intimidating duke, who puts all his faith in his unlimited powers. Back at her hut, however, "all night she thought about the duke. And in the morning she herself followed the tracks of the horse's hooves back to the duke's estate. There! And so my arabesques are suddenly *finis.*"[29] In the expressionist tradition this love story is presented as a duel of temperaments. The denouement does not present the triumph of a conqueror over a conquered victim, however, but the confirmation of individuals' rights to decide what is best for them in all circumstances.

Expressionist activism defined not just the specific type of protagonist but also the circumstances in which he or she acted and the entire temporal and spatial organization of a work. The exceptional, even excessive, interest of Ukrainian prose writers in the 1920s, particularly Khvylovy, in life's horrors (a trait also of expressionist poetics) has been much discussed by literary critics, both positively and negatively. The "primitivization" of the primeval, powerful, and totally uncontrolled hero understandably led to stylized settings and recreation of the horrific and monstrous in reality. (This was also a reaction to impressionism, which always preferred the colourful and festive side of life.)

The motifs of repeated destruction, of the death of the old, and the birth, in difficult convulsive sufferings, of the new were frequently suggested by the epoch of tectonic revolutionary shifts itself. In expressionism the beautiful and the monstrous are equals. What was important was not to represent reality as closely as possible—not to seek harmony—but to try to shock, to take what was being depicted beyond the mundane automatism of seeing things. Expressionist poetics are frequently founded upon the exceptional and the emphatically disharmonious, especially upon the contrast between the run-of-the-mill hero, who is typical of the masses, and unusual circumstances that demand heroic efforts and struggles. One contributor to the journal *Die Aktion*, Iwan Goll, stressed that the programmatic requirement of expressionism was: "The self-satisfied, sober person ought to learn again how to scream.... Art must transform the adult once more into a child."[30] Primitivization and the emphasis on grotesque details served as a device of illumination and sometimes even of agi-

29. Khvylovy, *Tvory*, 1: 316–17.

30. *Die Aktion*, 1917, 599.

tational schematization of a basic idea. This is probably why a tragic, somber tone dominated in German expressionism. A comparison with Ukrainian lyrico-expressionist prose of the 1920s bring us back again to the role of the author's lyrical voice.

In Khvylovy's early prose the contrast between the monstrous and the uplifting and beautiful is one of the basic expressionist devices that he uses. While affirming (generally through agitational declarations) the beauty of the just-born world and the future, he also contrasted this picture with a somber, naturalistic, and even sarcastic presentation of episodes from the past or of the "new savagery" that was starting to prevail despite romantic expectations. At the same time one senses an affection for all that was disappearing forever. Of course, it is precisely these motifs that bring together Khvylovy and Pilniak as closely as possible while also differentiating them.

Pilniak's revolution appeared to be a purificatory flood that had removed the thin layer of Europeanization and allowed the old, pre-Petrine Russia to be reborn. In those novelle by Khvylovy that are most expressionistic there is indeed a great deal that reminds one of Pilniak, particularly attention to the anomalous and horrific as characteristics of the time, and treatment of the present as the dissolute reign of the savage and Asiatic. Analogous references to *tatarshchyna* and *aziiatshchyna* occur in both writers. The exceptional, which has been reduced to the commonplace and even habitual, characterizes the entire transitional epoch, a chaotic "time of troubles" in which the established order has been destroyed and the customary hierarchy of values has been violated. All of European expressionism was based on such a perception of the world.

The hues in which Ukrainian post-revolutionary writers depict life are generally softer and more pastel–like. Khvylovy, for example, is almost never satisfied to use only monotonous, dark tones. He introduces lyrical authorial observations, commentaries, and landscape details that contrast with a story's primary emotional colouring. In most cases he brings the tragic finale out of the shadows and introduces a calming lyrical or sunny, invocatory mood. The concluding emotional shocks and black, gloomy tones that one finds in Edschmid and Pilniak are foreign to Khvylovy's poetics. The one exception is his entirely romantic novelle "Doroha i lastivka" (The Road and the Swallow) in *Syni etiudy,* with its pleasant and colourful memories of childhood, landscapes, and the swallow's beautiful view of a room decorated with refinement. The contrasting final note is therefore startling: "Then I picked up [the dead swallow] by the wings, contemptuously glanced at the wings, and threw it into the refuse pit where wandering city dogs scavenged."[31]

31. Khvylovy, *Tvory,* 1: 300.

In contrast, Pilniak often resorts to the most hideous and depressing naturalistic details. There are almost none of the bright and hope-engendering motifs that Khvylovy loves to insert. Edschmid is even bolder in his orchestration of the shocking ending. The often anthologized "Maintonis Hochzeit" and "Der Bezwinger" are classical examples of this expressionist stylistic element. In the latter we read: "Having approached the woman, who had fallen blinded, he raised her, took the cord from the fork of his bow and pulled it out and wound it around her neck. Then he gnawed into her [neck], took a mouthful of her blood, and gave the signal to raise the curtain, went down to the tents, completely inspired by the idol that had called forth and selected him, and in that finale his immortal face glowed like pure gold." In Edschmid elements of literary horror become indispensable devices of expression without which his experimental style loses its attraction. It is notable that in none of the quoted passages is there direct authorial intrusion into the narrative. In Khvylovy, however, contrasting bright colours are introduced in the author's or first-person narrator's voice.

Declaring a rupture with the preceding tradition, the expressionists sought new verbal devices, boldly reforming phraseology and syntax. In his manifesto *Über den Expressionismus in der Literatur,* Edschmid wrote: "Sentences lie bent in a rhythm differently than is customary. They are subordinated to a single intention, to that same current of spirit that only the distinctive can give.... Sentences serve ... the spirit that forms them.... Then filler words fall away. The verb is stretched and sharpened, taut, in order to grasp the expression clearly and properly. The adjective fuses with the carrier of the verbal idea. It too should not describe. It alone must convey in the most purposeful manner the essence and only the essence."[32] These thoughts are consonant with Khvylovy's many appeals to refuse customary, lifelike descriptions and with his treatment of romantic vitaism as an art of "new observation, new perception of the world, new complex vibrations."[33] The expressionist writer "never ever allows people to speak the way they would in reality—hesitantly, timidly, allegorically, haltingly, searching for words. On the contrary, the innermost feelings of these people burst out into the open with a frankness and clarity that would be impossible in ordinary life.... This transition-deprived precipitousness in the expression of a feeling is one of the most characteristic traits of such speech. Another is spiritually and musically distinct rhythmic separation."[34]

32. Quoted here from Kostetsky, *Vybranyi Kazimir Edshmid*, 10.

33. Khvylovy, "Kamo hriadeshy," 420.

34. Ihor Kostetsky, "Stefan George," in *Vybranyi Stefan George po-ukrainskomu ta inshymy, peredusim slovianskymy, movamy*, ed. Ihor Kostetsky (Stuttgart: Na hori, 1968), 147.

The weakening of the artistic structure on one level must in some way be compensated other levels. The amorphous plots of Khvylovy's novelle lead to a strengthening of the role of the text's rhythmic organization through refrains, leitmotifs, and descriptions of sounds. Lyrical refrains set the tone for the overall mood. In "Na hlukhim shliakhu," for example, the refrain is: "And the pines drone and drone. Why do the pines drone so? A tempest. Winds. Oh, you, my pines—the Asiatic land!"[35] In "Arabesky" fleeting visual images, "the Japanese lanterns," serve this function. This same structuring role is also played by literary associations or by musical or sound images, which are common in Khvylovy's early prose. The musical instrumentation of his novelle is evident on the compositional level and in the syntactic structure of his phrases and dialogues. (In the published versions of his works, Khvylovy to highlight this in the way punctuation and sentences were graphically presented). It is also evident in his frequent use alliteration and consonance—for example, the memorable "*Latviia — latattia*" in "Svynia" (The Pig, in *Syni etiudy*), or "*dzvonalna zvena*" in "'Liliuli'"— and in his passion for exotic names and terms, which were frequently selected only because of their sound,

A text's sound instrumentation was a primary device not only for Khvylovy but also for many other Ukrainian writers of the 1920s, particularly Iurii Ianovsky, Arkadii Liubchenko, and Mykhailo Ivchenko. It is, in fact, a fundamental trait of Ukrainian lyrico-expressionist prose as a whole. Ihor Kostetsky, the Ukrainian translator of Edschmid, drew attention to the similarities in rhythmic and syntactic patterns that can be found in Edschmid's "Der Bezwinger" and Ianovsky's *Vershnyky* (The Riders) and to the resemblance between the poetics of the battle scenes in Ianovsky, Dovzhenko, and other European works.[36] Expressionist influences are most remarkable, however, in the prose of Khvylovy. Although these influences did not develop into an independent trend in Ukrainian prose, the interweaving of expressionist and impressionist elements played an important role in the work of Khvylovy, Ivchenko, Holovko, Vasyl Vrazhlyvy, and Ivan Kopylenko.

The phenomenon of Ukrainian lyrico-expressionist prose deserves serious comparative analysis—one that is not limited simply to enumerating authorial influences, borrowings, and mimicry. This prose evolved out of a powerful national romantic tradition through the assimilation and transformation of various elements from different, sometimes "incompatible" stylistic systems, which at the time were making their mark in modern Ukrainian literature.

Translated by Myroslav Shkandrij

35. Khvylovy, *Tvory*, 1: 179.

36. Kostetsky in *Vybranyi Kazimir Edshmid*, 67.

The Rape of Civilization: Recurrent Structure in Myroslav Irchan's Prose

Myroslav Shkandrij

There is a recurrent pattern in Myroslav Irchan's storytelling: a relatively peaceful, if not entirely idyllic, existence is disrupted by a powerful and evil intruder. The latter is in most cases a war or a brutal colonization and conquest. In both scenarios the intervention is the product of hatred and greed, and the conflict rapidly dehumanizes the combatants.

The stories are framed within a larger question: whether contemporary civilization is fatally flawed. Irchan's most disturbing and brutal scenes deal with national, ethnic, and political violence, in which one side justifies the imposition of its will on the grounds of cultural superiority and the march of progress. The writer suggests that contemporary socio-political forces are indeed driving the world to destruction. Irchan's plot structures and endings incorporate his ultimate message of socialism, which he saw as the only idea capable of rising above national hatreds and ending class competition. His heroic characters typically look forward to a reconstructed, "new" world from which the horrors of armed conflict have been eliminated. There is no doubt that Irchan himself expected and encouraged such a Marxist interpretation of his work: he himself spoke of the "decoding" that his style required, suggesting in this way that it should be viewed as symbolic act and ideology.[1] However, whereas on the surface his

1. In his "Avtobiohrafiia" (Autobiography, 1927) the author explains that as a "proletarian writer" he "consciously sacrifices himself for his reader" because he tries "to write in a manner that corresponds to his [reader's] intellectual level. Therefore, in many cases I have not kept up with the modern way of writing" (Myroslav Irchan, *Proty smerty: Opovidannia* [Montreal: Ivan Hnyda, 1927], 157). In a second autobiographical sketch, "Pro sebe" (About Myself, 1932), he complains that almost no critic has "decoded [*rozshyfruvav*] from a reading of my works those ideas that gave birth to them" (Myroslav Irchan, *Vybrani tvory,* vol. 2 [Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhnoi literatury, 1956], 459).

message appears clear, a careful analysis of his form uncovers complicating messages that to a large degree subvert the stated intention.

The recurrent pattern can be detected in all of Irchan's major prose works.[2] The collection of reminiscences *V burianakh* (In the Weeds, 1925) is concerned with the war of 1919–20 between the Army of the Ukrainian National Republic and the Poles on one side and the Red Army on the other. Another such collection, *Tragediia pershoho travnia* (The Tragedy of May First, 1923), recounts the experiences of a regiment of Sich Riflemen in the same period; it charts and attempts to justify the evolution of a section of the army to Bolshevik positions. The story collection *Karpatska nich* (Carpathian Night, 1924) describes the destruction of a simple man's life during the First World War and his ensuing sufferings as an immigrant labourer in Canada. The story "Batko" (The Father, 1921) describes a poor Jewish trader whose happy family life and sanity are destroyed when a group of anti-Semitic soldiers rape and kill his two daughters. In "Moloda maty" (A Young Mother, 1923) it is a young woman who is robbed of her dream of family life when her husband is killed in a mining accident in Canada. "Smert Asuara" (The Death of Asuar, 1927) concerns the fate of an Inuit boy who, along with 248 other children, is forcibly deported from Alaska to the United States, placed in a non-native family, and robbed of his culture. The Inuit community is depicted as the victim of industrial development and cultural genocide.

In all of his works Irchan is mindful of the larger political message. For example, in *Kanadska Ukraina* (Canadian Ukraine, 1930), an essay on Canadian history and the role of the Ukrainian emigration, the connection between four hundred years of colonialism and the treatment of Ukrainian immigrant labour is made explicit. The Anglo-Saxon establishment is bent on exploiting and assimilating the new immigrant in the same manner as they earlier treated the native. As the author claims, this fact is frequently denied or ignored by Ukrainian writers familiar with Canada: "The Ukrainian intelligentsia, which went on tours to its 'brothers overseas' or settled in Canada, wrote only

2. His most important prose publications were: *Smikh Nirvany: Narysy i noveli* (Lviv: Komisariiat Ukrainskykh sichovykh striltsiv v Volodymyri Volynskim, 1918); *Filmy revoliutsii: Narysy i noveli* (Berlin and New York: Kultura, 1923); *Tragediia pershoho travnia: Spomyny z horozhanskoi viiny na Ukraini,* vol. 1 (New York: Molot, 1923); *Karpatska nich: Opovidannia* (Winnipeg: Robitnycho-farmerske vydavnyche tovarystvo, 1924); *V burianakh: Spohady z hromadianskoi viiny na Ukraini*, vol. 2 (Toronto: Komitet budovy Ukrainskoho robitnychoho domu v Toronto, 1925); *Proty smerty: Opovidannia* (Montreal: Ivan Hnyda, 1927); *Na pivdorozi: Narysy i opovidannia* (Kharkiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Ukrainy, 1930); and *Vybrani tvory*, 2 vols. (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhnoi literatury, 1956).

encomiums prepared in an English sauce and painted Canada as a real heaven on Earth."[3]

In all of these cases, the cruelty, violence, and ideological blindness of the disruptive force is stressed. Rapes, pogroms, and profiteering in wartime have their analogies in judicial murder, genocide, and the swindling of the labour force in peacetime. The deeper plot in these works is the discourse on civilization and savagery. The narrator intervenes at various points to express ironic commentary on the claims of the powerful to cultural sophistication; he exposes their faith in a "civilizing mission" as merely a pretext for conquest. Military intervention and assimilationist ideas provide the drive to dominate politically and profit economically. The veneer of gentility and respectability that covers representatives of the exploiting classes is a sham; beneath it lies a naked desire for personal enrichment. In *V burianakh* the narrator openly condemns the "pillars of Western European culture, the super-civilized bankers, factory owners, property owners, and 'holy' fathers, who ... howl about the wild East."[4] Later in the same work he expresses outrage at the behaviour of "cultured" Polish gentlemen. His Belarusian friend comments: "Those people are still living the 'holy' inquisition and consider themselves messiahs, the sole defenders of civilization against the Eastern Vandals. The present war against us is in their eyes a crusade."[5] In a similar vein, "Bila malpa" (The White Monkey, 1926) aims to show that the Anglo-Saxon middle class is shamelessly concerned with financial gain. Both men and women exploit immigrants to obtain the material possessions that they covet. In the story a beautiful and respectable woman living in an elegant home on Machray Avenue (at the time a middle class Anglo-Saxon enclave in Winnipeg's immigrant-dominated North End) accepts the sexual advances of the immigrant narrator, along with the expensive presents he gives her. She feels no pangs of remorse when her husband, George Murphy, returns. The Murphys are polite, understated and, above all, controlled in their behaviour. Both husband and wife accept the overriding importance of two precepts: the need to maintain respectable appearances and the desirability of acquiring possessions. The key to their characters, however, is the immigrant narrator's observation that nothing would ever penetrate George Murphy's sang-froid: he is incapable of compassion and self-sacrifice. Like the judge and the policeman in "Smert Asuara" who sent the hapless Inuit boy to the electric chair, he represents a complacency that depends on limited vision and an edited social conscience. It is these characters' atrophied moral sensibility that makes them defective and rather pathetic human beings.

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3. Irchan, "Kanadska Ukraina," repr. in his *Vybrani tvory*, 2: 340–1.
4. Irchan, *V burianakh*, 26.
5. Ibid., 44.

The hopes of humanity rest not with the exploitative and individualistic bourgeoisie or their servants, but with simple people who reject the gospel of acquisitiveness. They are the farmers, labourers, and traders who are linked to the land, their extended families, and their communities. In many cases the uprooting of their lives through war or emigration has caused a loss of bearings. Their integration into the world of foreign military adventures and industrial expansion, where they are to be mere cannon fodder or raw material for industrial production, has been a traumatic dehumanizing experience. Several stories describe the acculturation to the new reality as the indirect cause of personal tragedy. "Nadii" (Hopes, 1926), for example, is written with the purpose of demonstrating that two children of immigrants in Winnipeg's North End have been raised on false dreams of escaping from a life of labour. Their aspirations for professional careers as a musician and actress, respectively, are thwarted by poverty and lack of opportunity. At the same time, however, the children have turned their backs on their parents and their land of origin. They have assimilated the nativist contempt for immigrants. Cut off from the higher civilizing influences of both the old and the new culture, they are destined to lead spiritually impoverished, disappointed lives.

In "Apostoly" (Apostles, 1927), another story set in immigrant Winnipeg, it is a group of whisky-distilling Christians who represent the degeneration of the community: their faith is a parody of Christianity, a mind-befuddling opium. The equation of alcoholism and religion is a clear Marxist dismissal of false consciousness. The dying socialist at the story's conclusion juxtaposes the claims of this degenerate cult with the teachings of the great enlightener and social activist Ivan Franko, making it clear where true virtue and salvation lie.

In this way Irchan's stories set up an opposition between civilization and barbarism that reverses the habitual metropolitan representation of peripheral and defenseless "native" people as backward and the raw material for assimilation into a higher civilization. "Proty smerty" (Against Death), the opening story of the collection with the same name, distills Irchan's thoroughly orthodox Marxist philosophy into a parable.[6] It paints the development of humanity as a remarkable and wondrous phenomenon that has been poisoned by the desire of one class or nation to rule another. When this disfiguring and corrupting characteristic is eliminated, presumably after the construction of a socialist society, full human potential can be realized. Imperialist, metropolitan views might paint the resistance of colonized cultures as blind, anarchic, and chaotic forces whose passionate opposition to assimilation threatens to unleash destruction, but in Irchan this equation is reversed to portray the dominant power as the force of dissolution and anarchy, and the traditional cultures as forces for constructive

6. Irchan, *Proty smerty*, 5–12.

cultural life. This underlying structure enables him to link exploited nations and peoples in a perspective of global resistance.

The author does not accept a Schopenhauerian view that the blind Will that drives human conduct is a terrible and absurd force from which one must escape. His message is to urge the victims of war and class exploitation to resistance. The longer prose works reveal a kind of *Bildungsroman* structure in which the leading character reaches a higher sense of personal and political understanding at the end and begins waging a conscious struggle with political evil. Rather than negating the Will, the author's position drifts toward the Nietzschean embrace of the Will's power to effect change. The dull, inarticulate individuals who have lost all sense of history or have degenerated into alcoholism or violence can, in some cases at least, be rescued and made into a force for good. The thin, alcohol-distilling Indian whom the narrator finds fishing on the banks of the Red River in "Vudzhena ryba" (Smoked Fish, 1925) is described as an example of the degenerate condition to which the native population has been reduced. His counterparts can be found in the Inuit Asuar of "Smert Asuara," in the brutal Lithuanian of *Karpatska nich*, and in the psychotic Ostafii of "Za krov" (For Blood, 1923). However, although the native fisherman and the perverse Ostafii appear irredeemable, the Lithuanian undergoes a transformation that leads to a rejection of senseless and cruel violence. Asuar's act of murder is described as a conscious act of political revenge, with which the reader is led to sympathize. The law court and the judge, with their pedantic formalities and circumscribed field of vision, cannot understand the overriding issue of genocide or the reasons for Asuar's conduct: the facts of colonial expansion are not admissible as legal evidence, nor can their discomforting reality be allowed to impinge on the awareness of Western Canada's establishment.

The same closing of the mind that allows the objectifying of people is described in the pogroms of Jews and the Communist victimization of local Ukrainian villages in Western Ukraine in 1919 and 1920. These scenes are depicted with shocking candour in *Tragediia pershoho travnia*. The revolting attitudes and unspeakable acts of cruelty are, in fact, an important element in justifying the narrator's turn to communism. He makes it clear that he believes in the new Communist regime's will to restore "civilized" behaviour and end the violence. But the message is a wider one. Savagery, it is clear, can stem not only from upper-class prejudice and military aggression; it can rise from the unenlightened and oppressed village of one's compatriots. As he witnesses scenes of destruction, he remembers the description of the *haidamaka* uprisings in Polish literature and of lawlessness in Panteleimon Kulish's historical fiction. A fear of the blind violence that in the past accompanied the striving of Ukrainian peasants to overthrow their oppressors, which is inevitably released in times of war with ensuing decivilizing tendencies, haunt the writer.

The author's attempts at introducing this orthodox Marxist political message in his prose were not without complications. Firstly, he fails to achieve a tidy narrative closure. In however muted a form, he criticizes the violence and cruelty of the Communist side. It is the Bolsheviks of Jewish origin who poke out the eyes of the icons and forcibly requisition and sell peasant property for personal profit.[7] Behind the Bolshevik front lines there are hordes of useless "panic commissars" ready to line their pockets and then run at the first sign of danger. The lines between ethical and unethical conduct, between civilized and uncivilized behaviour, are not as clear as a rigidly partisan approach might require. It is, indeed, the confusion of these zones that makes Irchan's work particularly interesting and, of course, made him a suspect figure to the Soviet authorities.

The complications of the ideological plot are intensified by the author's choice of literary forms. Irchan's reliance on impressionistic devices frequently works against the projection of a simple, unambiguous message. In fact, it often produces inconsistencies. He himself noted in his "Avtoportret" (Self-Portrait, 1927) that there was an opposition in his work between class obligations and personal feelings. The typical modernist stress on the introverted, the psychological life of individuals, the narrow but intensely lived time frame, the flow of impressions, and the divided and conflicted consciousness were all part of his technique. Irchan articulates this interest in self-consciousness by deploying devices such as stream of consciousness, interior monologue, *style indirecte libre*, portrayal of the divided self, and fragmentary composition.

When he chooses common people for his heroes and heroines or depicts a group experience, he is describing one collective individual—the development of a social psychology. Sometimes, as in his descriptions of soldiers in combat, this technique of characterization is analogous to the portrayal of the collective hero in Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* or constructivist dramas of the 1920s. But impressionistic techniques are rather poor tools for didactic writing, which prefers the abstract and typical, eschewing the concrete and individual. Almost by definition, an impressionistic portrayal is limited and subjective, does not grasp the entire picture, and cannot, therefore, move towards easy and complete closure. Its organizing principle is, more often than not, the focus on the fluctuations in mood, often in a character who is not central to the political or historical events described. As he delves into individual psychology, the author's orthodox politics disintegrate.

"Avtoportret" captures the writer's own conflict between a sense of social responsibility and a self-exploratory urge. He admits that his consciousness has split. One persona requires him to write something that his public will recognize

7. *Tragediia pershoho travnia*, 78.

as socially significant in order to meet an editor's deadline. The other persona advises him to write about himself, to compose an individual portrait. "But then I shall be a futurist!" he declares. The role of futurism is identified here with self-promotion, self-indulgence, and egotism. His "futurist" alter ego, however, accuses him of cowardice and insists that only such self-examination will produce originality. The two egos co–exist. Together they succeed in composing a personal interview in which the individualist-subjectivist poses questions and the collectivist-rationalist responds. "Avtoportret" is an exploration of Irchan's personal dilemma. His prose does in fact demonstrate the presence of both personalities. This story is one of his most successful.[8]

The problem for Irchan lies not so much in the fact that this attention to psychology paralyzes the political energy of the individual as in the recognition that it becomes self-absorbing to the point of rendering the historical moment irrelevant. A typical setting for the impressionist exploration of the mind is to be found in the use of the *entr'acte*. This is usually a scene in which the hero has been cut off from normal existence because he is in hiding or because he has been forced into a period of detached reflection.[9] During these periods the hero's thoughts (Irchan invariably chooses a male protagonist) are often presented as a stream of consciousness or through *style indirecte libre*. His free-flowing, meditative, and detached observations drift into unexpected and seemingly irrelevant details and manifest a variegated consciousness that has to be brought back to "reality." The narrator reveals himself as primarily interested in the mingling of sense data as an end in itself. Most commonly these moments allow him to exploit two favourite devices of impressionism: the dream sequence and the hallucination.

A memorable moment of the *entr'acte* occurs in *V burianakh*. The hero is caught behind enemy lines and crawls into a thick hedge, where he hides for four days. The reader, like the hero, observes the war and the working of the character's own mind from this molelike perspective, in which the arrival of chickens seeking shade and the hoeing of a couple in a neighbouring field are

8. In "Pro sebe" (p. 442) the author notes that the piece was "honest" and that he received admiring letters from readers.

9. Vira Aheieva has written: "Time in the impressionist novella is often an episode of escape from society, from the habitual round of social and daily duties, tiresome traditions—a situation of temporary separation from almost all external relations. (A similar removal, dissociation from the social maelstrom, can be found in the novels of impressionists, even in one as voluminous as M. Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*.) The impressionists were interested not in the continuity of history, but the individual moment specially isolated from it" (Vira P. Aheieva, *Ukrainska impresionistychna proza* [Kyiv: Instytut literatury im. T. H. Shevchenka Natsionalnoi akademii nauk Ukrainy, 1994], 157).

the day's highlights. Hunger and delirium deform the hero's thoughts. A similar pattern occurs throughout Irchan's stories. The distorted perspective is often that of a character with limited understanding (as in *Karpatska nich* and "Asuar") or one who is at a distance and lacks familiarity with the details of the life being observed. The narrator in "Vudzhena ryba" views the old fort across the Red River, contemplating the fact that it is now a restaurant and place of upper-class amusement. In "Bila malpa" the disoriented narrator stands outside the house on Machray Avenue, from where he expresses his contempt for middle-class hypocrisy. These moments of reflection provide an opportunity for commentary on the history of native conquest in the first case, and on the false respectability of the Anglo-Saxon petit bourgeois in the second. However, typically, they also admit other "extraneous" material and are filtered through the confused haze of an unreliable consciousness, which is itself driven by jealousy, misunderstanding, or spleen.

The choice of simple, unsophisticated protagonists is limiting artistically. Firstly, Irchan restricts himself to portraying the milieu of the down-and-out labourer. The brief meeting with George Murphy and his wife in "Bila malpa" is an exception, but it fails to give a convincing portrayal of the two middle-class protagonists. We know nothing of the interior of the house on Machray or of the Murphys' milieu. The point of the story is the immigrant's disillusionment. Secondly, the limited consciousness of Irchan's protagonists and the unrelenting grimness of their fate leads to monotony. Unlike, for example, Upton Sinclair, with whom he was acquainted and corresponded and who influenced his portrayal of grim labour conditions,[10] Irchan does not describe immigrant leisure activities or the wider social life of the community. In each prose work we are given only the individual consciousness of a loner.

This becomes a greater flaw in a longer work, something the author senses when in *Karpatska nich* he appears to apologize for the limitations of his hero Matvii Shavala: "Matvii continued to live in far-off America, not knowing about anything. In truth he did not know America, even after living there for eight years. His world was small: the factory and the room. He was only interested in his work, in getting his pay, and chewed on his own pain without sharing it with anyone. He had not been to the city once because he had no reason to go."[11] This is a particularly narrow lens through which to view social life, and it is coupled with other drawbacks. There is little in the way of romantic interest: Matvii has no domestic obligations and almost no friends. He is as lost and emotionally isolated in Winnipeg as he was in the trenches during the First

10. See Mykhailo I. Kachaniuk, foreword to Irchan, *Na pivdorozi*, 13.

11. Irchan, *Karpatska nich*, 107.

World War. The same can be said of the autobiographical narrator of *V burianakh*.

The tension between the political imperative and the writer's desire to portray the conflicted individual consciousness surfaces powerfully when a character feels sympathy for the enemy. The hero of "Kniazhna" (The Princess, 1921), for example, admits his weakness—attraction to the opposite sex. We learn that beautiful aristocrats have always played a part in his fantasies; ever since he was a child he had listened to stories about princesses. In the incident described he resists the charms of a beautiful counter-revolutionary aristocrat who comes to him in the form of an apparition. In the end he shoots her. The hero, it is suggested, is trying to exorcise his attraction to the books and culture of the past. Upon seeing the art and lavish library in the palace where the revolutionary soldiers are billeted, he experiences a destructive urge: "We should dynamite all of it! Blow up the whole refined, sumptuous gentry culture! Tear down the expensive frescoes with our fingernails! They are not made with paint, but blood, the blood of millions. The wonderful carvings should be effaced with blood! The glistening floor washed in blood!"[12]

This passage has often been quoted. It has generally not been pointed out that Irchan's intention is ironic. It is a remarkably unconvincing manner of building "civilization" and one in which the narrator himself does not believe. Although he claims to understand the vandalizing "psychology of the masses," he clearly disagrees with it and feels a much more powerful attraction to literature and the "wonderful" art he sees in the palace. In this case the politically correct equation is again overturned: it is the masses who are destroying civilization, and even though it is the civilization of the rich, the narrator-hero, in spite of his bravado, is clearly disturbed. In later stories the author stressed the corrupt and unappealing nature of "bourgeois" culture, but in this early futurist piece the refined culture exercises a powerful attraction that the narrator struggles to overcome.

It is also clear from Irchan's portrayal of other acts against the landowners (*pany*) that his sympathies for the oppressed do not extend to condoning all acts of violence. The act of arson committed against the landowner's estate in "Zmovnyky" (Conspirators, 1923) is not a conscious political act and is opposed by the hardworking old peasant, Prokipchuk, who comments: "Even though it's the *pan*'s, it's still a sin. It's someone's labour."[13] Prokipchuk, who opens and closes the story, presents a counter-position to that of the arsonists. The critique of blind violence is, perhaps, most clearly made in "Za krov," a story omitted

12. Irchan, *Na pivdorozi*, 91.

13. Irchan, *Proty smerty*, 38.

from later Soviet editions.[14] Here the "protest" against Polish landowners is organized by a boy who pathologically detests girls. The attempt to abduct the landowner's little girl ends in a double drowning—hers and that of another boy-abductor who tries to save her at the last moment. The violence here is senseless, the product of an unreflecting hatred internalized by small children. The author's sympathies lie with the gentry family, whose civilized existence has been tragically and pointlessly destroyed.

The pressure of Irchan's political commitment weighed heavily on his later works, which, it is patently evident, were adapted to the Soviet line. His best passages remain the "impressionistic" renderings of individual consciousness. For this reason his early works, particularly the prose collection *Filmy revoliutsii* (Films of the Revolution, 1923) and *V burianakh*, are generally considered his most impressive achievement. They are full of the spontaneous flow of thought, feeling, and irreverent, sometimes frivolous and unexpected, ideas. In them the writer experiments with hallucinatory dream sequences, flashbacks, and sudden juxtapositions in a flow of creativity that was never again as untrammelled.[15] These early works still bear strong traces of the influence of Mykhailo Iatskiv, with whom Irchan was personally acquainted in the prerevolutionary years and whose symbolist prose he imitated,[16] and of the telegraphic style of the Ukrainian futurists, with whom he associated in 1921 and 1922.[17] These traces are evident in the impressionistic combat scenes in *Filmy revoliutsii* and *V burianakh* for which Irchan became famous.

The devices of flashback and hallucination also work to undermine any simple political message. Flashback allows Irchan to condense a decade or more into a narrow time frame in *Karpatska nich* and to capture a moment from the past in the stories "Prysmerky mynuloho" (Twilights of the Past, 1921) and "Tse bulo tak davno" (It Was So Long Ago, 1922). Hallucination is used to describe an apparition in "Kniazhna." The narrator's interpretation of these events,

14. Originally published in Irchan, *Proty smerty*, 39–50, it was dropped from *Na pivdorozi* and *Vybrani tvory*.

15. In his "Avtoportret" the author comments: "Many have said that my sketches and tales from the revolutionary period in Ukraine are the best things I wrote. I really wrote them in the maelstrom of the revolution. I wrote them because I was afraid that no one else would write about those small events, which took place before my eyes. Out of them was born a new life and a new word. We were all poets then, but our poetry was so powerful at that time that no one could ever convey its power and beauty" (Irchan, *Proty smerty*, 155).

16. See Vladen Vlasenko and Petro Kravchuk, *Myroslav Irchan: Zhyttia i tvorchist* (Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1960), 19; and Kachaniuk, 9. Irchan's first collection, *Smikh Nirvany* (The Laughter of Nirvana, 1918), was influenced by Iatskiv's symbolism.

17. See Kachaniuk, 10–11.

however, is questionable. The flashback might be a personal interpretation and editing of the past. In the last story he is not able to establish whether the apparition was "real" or a product of his imagination. In all cases where the drama of the doubting and confused mind is Irchan's interest, his prose takes on a richer texture and offers more possible readings and more complex interpretations.

This is also true of Irchan's impressionistic descriptions of nature. The picture of the midnight storm at the beginning of "Smert Asuara" is one of his finest passages. It is a prose poem of vivid, evocative imagery and considerable lyrical beauty. The eerie imagery of the stormy night sets the atmosphere and casts its reflection over the entire story. The ending, which links the storm's lightning to the execution of Asuar in the electric chair, is a not entirely successful attempt by the author to integrate the earlier imagery. The vivid details of the storm in the city capture the reader's imagination in a way that cannot be fully reconciled with the Irchan's didactic intent. The symbolism of a menacing natural phenomenon, by threatening to blindly sweep everything before it, particularly within the nighttime setting that he favoured, has a more metaphysical than political significance. The description of the night in "Taina nochi" (The Secret of the Night, 1922) and the approaching hurricane in "V poloni morskoi ordy" (Captive of the Sea Horde, 1928) are two further examples. Their meaning is ambiguous, but, partly as a result of this, a stronger aesthetic effect is created here than in the more polished stories over which the author laboured.[18] Here the power of nature escapes compartmentalization in the civilization/savagery dichotomy that underpins Irchan's ideology. It carries a disturbing, deeper message about the recurrence and strength of natural and, by implication, social disturbances.

Ukrainian modernism began as a protest of the free imagination against the stereotypes of populism and its pious calls to social activism and patriotism. A revelation of the complexities and contradictions of the inner life was one of its major contributions to literature and, more broadly, intellectual life. The analytical scalpel was put to various purposes. In Petro Karmansky's work it brought to the surface individual disgust with the pseudo-patriotism and hypocrisy of national leaders; in the writings of Lesia Ukrainka and Olha Kobylianska it revealed the discontentment with women's consciousness having been excluded from literature and history; and in Volodymyr Vynnychenko's prose the focus became the workings of "pathological" psyches. Irchan began as

18. In his second autobiography, "Pro sebe," Irchan explains that he studied the life of Alaskan natives and checked the details of his story assiduously. He reports that he even went to see a film four times because it had a short scene with an electric chair, an object he wished to describe in the story. See Irchan, *Vybrani tvory*, 2: 454.

an investigator of the inner voice of the oppressed individual from the masses. In the end, the ever more demanding strictures of the new social gospel to which he adhered hindered him from fully exploring the rich material he had unearthed.[19]

In the 1930s, after returning to the USSR, Irchan wrote reports of the successful collectivization of Soviet Ukraine and made favourable comparisons between Soviet and Canadian life.[20] He continued to hammer out the same message, but his prose was devoid both of the political honesty and the literary sophistication that had animated his earlier writings. Notably missing were precisely the devices of literary impressionism. Consequently, the later accounts fall remarkably flat. In the end Irchan's political orthodoxy did not prove enough to save him from arrest. In 1934 he was accused of terrorism and membership in a counter-revolutionary organization working on behalf of the Nazis. He was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment and sent to a concentration camp in the Solovets Islands. In 1937 he was tried a second time for "maintaining his counter-revolutionary activities" and executed.[21] These accusations were, of course, ridiculous. Irchan was a loyal Party man and an effective voice for the Communist cause. His "crimes" were an original manner of expression and a concern with the Ukrainian national identity.

19. Irchan looked to Western literature for spiritual enrichment in the same way that the above-mentioned writers did, but he lamented the fact that his social and political obligations prevented him from following modern trends more closely, declaring that "in many cases I have fallen behind the modern manner of writing" ("Avtoportret," 157). Karmansky summarizes the early modernist position in his *Ukrainska bohema: Z nahody trydtsiatlittia Molodoi muzy* (Lviv: Roman Kulchytsky, 1936), 114. For a recent study of the modernism of Lesia Ukrainka and Kobylianska as an opposition to "the patriarchal model of culture," see Solomea Pavlychko, "Modernism vs. Populism in Fin de Siècle Ukrainian Literature: A Case of Gender Conflict," in *Engendering Slavic Literatures*, ed. Pamela Chester and Sibelan Forrester (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 83–103.

20. See, for example, his "Kanadska Ukraina" and "Z prerii Kanady v stepy Ukrainy" (From the Prairies of Canada to the Steppes of Ukraine, 1930), repr. in his *Vybrani tvory*, 2: 335–62 and 363–430.

21. Irchan's arrest and sentencing was reported in a pro-Communist newspaper published in the United States by a Party member then visiting Ukraine. See Samitnyi [V. Rybak], "Kolektyvizatsiia i kliasova borotba na seli," *Ukrainski shchodenni visty*, 16 October 1934; and Peter Krawchuk, *The Unforgettable Myroslav Irchan: Pages from a Valiant Life* (Edmonton: Kobzar, 1998), 65.

Ielyzaveta Piskorska: A Rediscovered "Boichukist"

Nelli Prystalenko

Recent publications have shed new light on the early years of the Ukrainian State Academy of Arts—an institution formed in December 1917 after the collapse of the Russian Empire—and on the school of monumental art created by one of its founding professors, Mykhailo Boichuk (1882–1937).[1] The surviving work of the Kyiv artist Ielyzaveta Piskorska (1905–78) adds significantly to our knowledge of the Boichuk school. Unlike others from the cohort of outstanding women artists who came out of the school, namely, Oksana Pavlenko, Oksana Sakhnovska, and Sofiia Nalepinska-Boichuk, Piskorska has scarcely figured in art histories. The reason lies partly in the fact that her association with Boichuk prevented her from working as a professional artist and partly in the fact that she destroyed many of her works. Nonetheless, those works from the 1920s that have survived provide rare insights into the academy's activities and pedagogical practice.[2]

Piskorska was born on 6 October 1905 in Nizhyn, now in Chernihiv oblast. Her father was Volodymyr Piskorsky, a professor of world history at Kazan University and later Kyiv University and one of the founders of Hispanic studies in Russia and Ukraine. In 1910, when she was six years old, her father was killed in a railway accident at the age of forty-three. Her mother, Zinaida (née Andriienko), worked as a librarian at Kyiv University. Librarianship was also the profession that her two older sisters, Nina and Olena, took up upon completion

1. See in particular O. Ripko and N. M. Prystalenko, *Boichuk i Boichukisty: Boichukism* (Lviv: Lvivska kartynna galereia, 1991). Serhii Bilokin has prepared a monograph in Ukrainian on the painter.

2. Fragments of her autobiography have been published. See Ie. V. Piskorska, "Navchaiuchys, ia perezhyla kilka reorhanizatsii vuzu," in *Ukrainska akademiia mystetstva: Doslidnytski ta naukovo-metodychni pratsi*, issue 1 (Kyiv, 1994), 107–9; and Ihor Dychenko, "Nezhasne svitlo liudianosti," *Radianska osvita*, 28 January 1981. The full text of her autobiography, with a commentary by her daughter Olena Novikova, is in my possession.

of their post-secondary education. After the 1917 revolution, although all three of them continued to work, the family suffered greatly from hunger and cold. More importantly, they were psychologically unprepared for the social cataclysm that followed the Bolshevik revolution and found themselves unable to cope with the new circumstances.

It was the young Ielyzaveta's resourcefulness and determination that enabled them to deal with the crisis; notwithstanding her typical *intelligentsia* education, she moved quickly and decisively to rescue the family. In her memoirs she recalled:

> I was around sixteen at the time. I witnessed the turbulent years of the civil war and all that went with it. Sometimes I would carry a sack barefoot to the villages in order to exchange salt for potatoes, because there was enough salt in the city but no bread or potatoes. The rationing allowed for 200 grams of bread made from peas per person. And we were terribly hungry! I would sometimes ride the buffers of trains and sometimes on the roof of the wagons. We would eat like sparrows on a reed. People would say: "Here come the speculators ..." What kind of speculators were we! I soon had enough of this infamous existence and decided to become a teacher.[3]

Although she had completed only the gymnasium and technical school, she sensed within herself a talent for teaching and decided to apply for a job to the Department of Education. Piskorska succeeded in obtaining a position in a school on the Dnieper's Left Bank in the settlement of Mykilska.

Before completing university, her older brother Kostiantyn, later a lawyer, had studied in the Ukrainian State Academy of Arts with Heorhii Narbut in 1918. After Narbut's death in the following year, he began teaching language, mathematics, and art history in the village of Sovky on the outskirts of Kyiv. Under his guidance his students published a newspaper and organized a drama group and an art group. Ielyzaveta frequently visited her brother and the school. She exhibited remarkable talents in a variety of subjects. As a child she was known for her ability to calculate enormous sums in her head and to imagine letters and words in colour. In the 1920s she was active in a famous Kyiv choir, wrote poetry, and corresponded for a time with Pavlo Tychyna. On her visits to Sovky she helped her brother to decorate the school and performed other tasks. Under his influence she also began to develop a serious interest in art. Kostiantyn's death in 1922 from typhoid at the age of thirty–four was a painful blow to her and the entire family.

The artist Vasyl Chaliienko, a friend of her brother and a school inspector for Kyiv and the outlying region, was also a frequent visitor at Sovky. It was on his recommendation that she enrolled in the Academy of Arts. Here she studied for

3. Piskorska's autobiography, 2.

a short time with Fedir Krychevsky and Vadym Meller. She also attended the academy's preparatory courses taught by Serhii Kolos, who was an adherent of the Boichuk school; it was there that she became acquainted for the first time with Boichuk's formal manner. In 1922 the academy was reformed under the Bolshevik administration and renamed the Kyiv Institute of Plastic Arts. Piskorska continued to study there with Vasyl Krychevsky, Mykhailo Boichuk, and Sofiia Nalepinska-Boichuk. Not all went smoothly, and her studies were interrupted when she was expelled because of her father's profession under the old regime. It was also alleged (on the basis of his having published a book dealing with the laws concerning serfdom in Catalonia in the Middle Ages) that he had been a serf owner. In fact, Piskorsky was the only professor at the Nizhyn Historical-Philological Institute to support the student demonstrations in 1905, and later he had worked for the release of imprisoned political prisoners.

By the time Piskorska was able to complete her studies at the institute's printing faculty in 1930, the school was called the Kyiv State Art Institute. Her delayed graduation probably saved her from further persecution, but her association with the so-called Boichukists was enough to curtail her career as an artist. The first wave of arrests under Stalin's regime were then engulfing Ukraine. Having suffered persecution and witnessed at first hand the attacks on her teacher Boichuk and his most prominent students, Vasyl Sedliar and Ivan Padalka, which had begun in earnest in 1927 and continued to gather force in subsequent years, Piskorska was well aware that as a "Boichukist" she would be prevented from working professionally. Therefore she took a job teaching painting in the same school where she had already taught while still a student. Several years later, in 1936, the Palace of Pioneers was created and Piskorska was hired to head the art studio there. She held this position until her retirement thirty-two years later.

Piskorska proved an excellent instructor; in a long and distinguished career she trained numerous painters, sculptors, architects, and educators. For a time she also served as a senior assistant in the Ukrainian Pedagogical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR. A resourceful woman, she overcame many personal tragedies and difficulties: difficult illnesses and deaths in the family; evacuation to the East in the Second World War, during which she and her children almost died of hunger; and nursing and caring for her son after he was badly wounded and was bedridden for three years.

Piskorska's connection with the important developments in Ukrainian art of the 1920s and 1930s was rediscovered only in 1991, when her work "In the Pasture" was posthumously displayed at an exhibition entitled "Boichuk and the Boichukists: Boichukism" mounted at the National Art Museum in Kyiv. Not

many of Piskorska's works from that period have survived.[4] Those paintings, sketches, and graphics that remain and are now preserved in the above museum testify to the influence of the Boichuk school on her work. Among them are the drawing "Crucifixion" (ca. 1922; figure 1) and sketches of two horses that appear to be copied from an early Renaissance work (1922; figure 2). These works are important because they are among the few surviving examples of analytical drawing, a specialized study of the elements of composition that Boichuk assigned his first– and second-year students. While copying the work, Piskorska was instructed to study the nature of the expressive line, its character, and rhythm in order to employ the knowledge acquired in composing her later work "In the Pasture." This watercolour drawing exhibits an unhurried rhythm of flowing lines and subtle hues of green, azure, and yellow conveying a sense of harmony between nature and the village worker without recourse to strong effects.

Several nature sketches that Piskorska made during this time—also as assignments in Boichuk's studio—demonstrate the school's avoidance of secondary detail in favour of an expressive primary line. In this they resemble surviving sketches made by other Boichukists such as Serhii Kolos, Hryhorii Pustoviit, Oleksander Kravchenko, and Vira Bura. Among Piskorska's works are three sketches for a portrait of a youth (probably the artist Ivan Tryhub, her husband). Two are in the early stages of development. The first captures the artist's intention of portraying a contemporary by working from early Egyptian rules of form-creation; it exhibits a bold geometrical, simplified treatment of characteristic facial features. The second is a drawing of a man's head resting in the man's hands. It represents Piskorska's attempt to portray a cartoonlike image of an individual who is observant, somewhat spiteful, but rather helpless. These works from her sketchbook demonstrate Boichuk's belief in the importance of assimilating the international artistic heritage, beginning with the most ancient works. His own lectures and his students' recollections attest to this fact.[5]

Boichuk's pedagogical system paid special attention to the "higher mathematics" of art—the rhythmic harmonization of compositional elements. A work that appears to have been prepared as a book cover attests to Piskorska's grasp of this difficult science. It is an ornamental composition in which an unusual interpretation of the Biblical subject, "The Meeting of Maria and Elizabeth," plays the chief role (figure 3). The figures of the two women facing one another are

4. Her daughter reports that Piskorska destroyed many works with which she was dissatisfied, but kept those early student works of which she was fondest. See Piskorska's autobiography, 25.

5. See "Mykhailo Boichuk's Lectures on Monumental Art," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 61–6.

Piskorska and her family. Left to right: her sister Nina, ?, her mother Zinaida, Ielyzaveta, and her brother Kostiantyn.

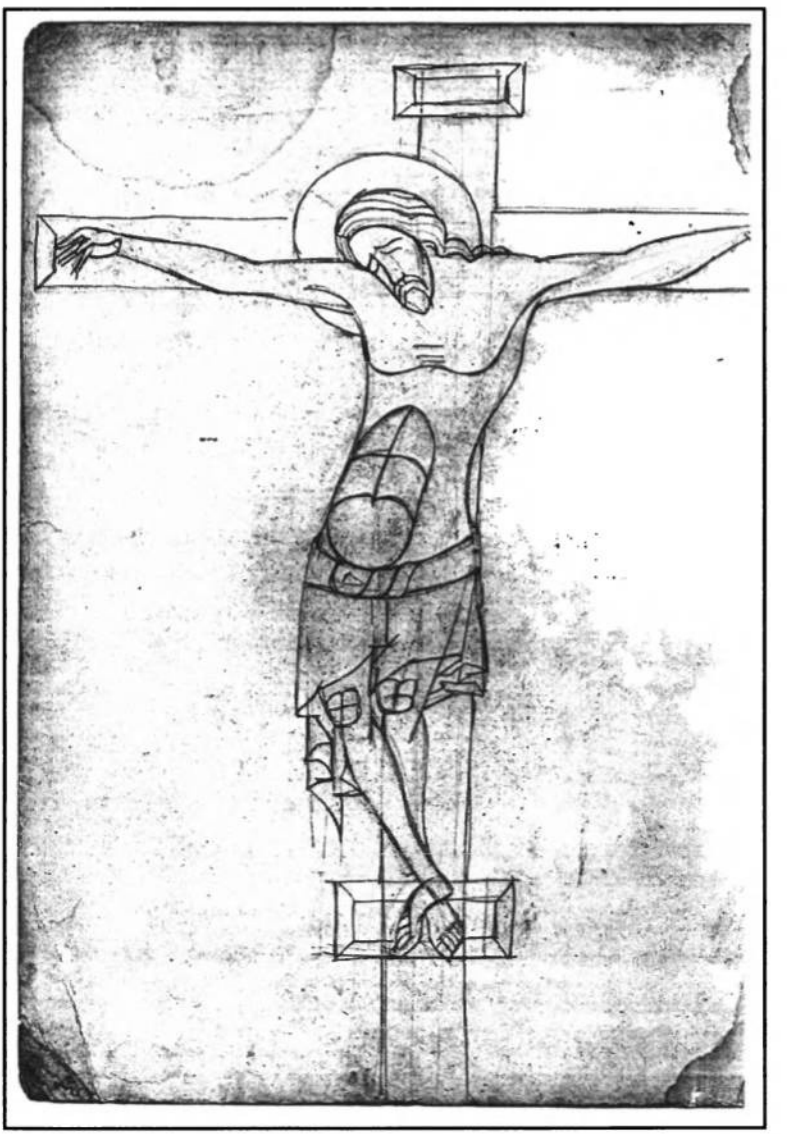


FIGURE 1
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, sketch done while studying with Mykhailo Boichuk.
National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv.

FIGURE 2
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, *A Pair of Horses* (1922). Pencil on paper.
National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv.

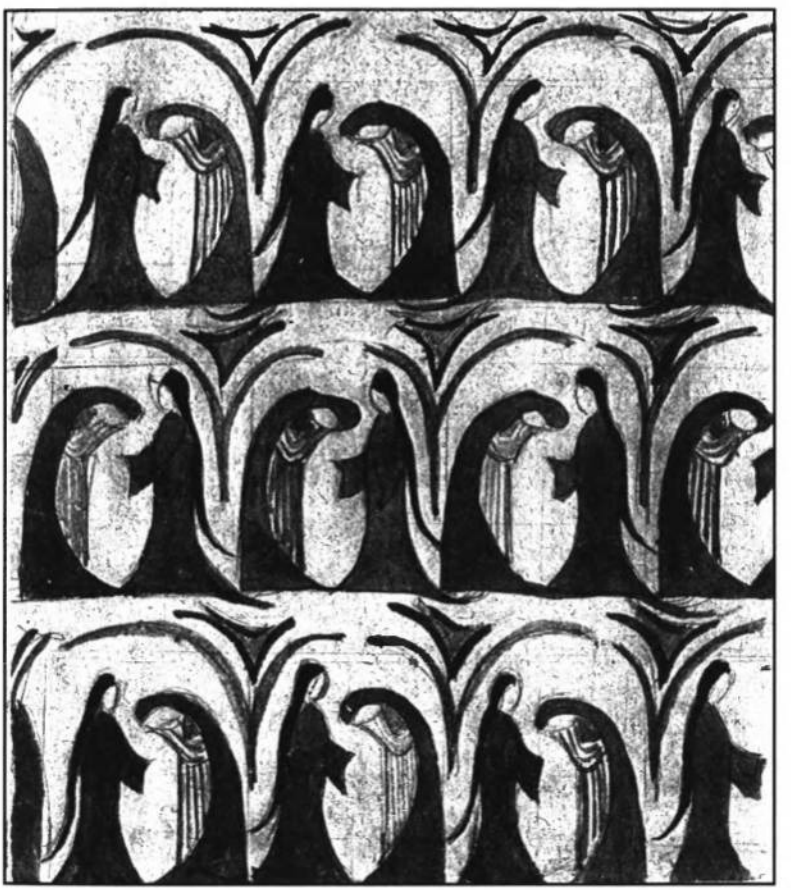


FIGURE 3
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, flyleaf. National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv.

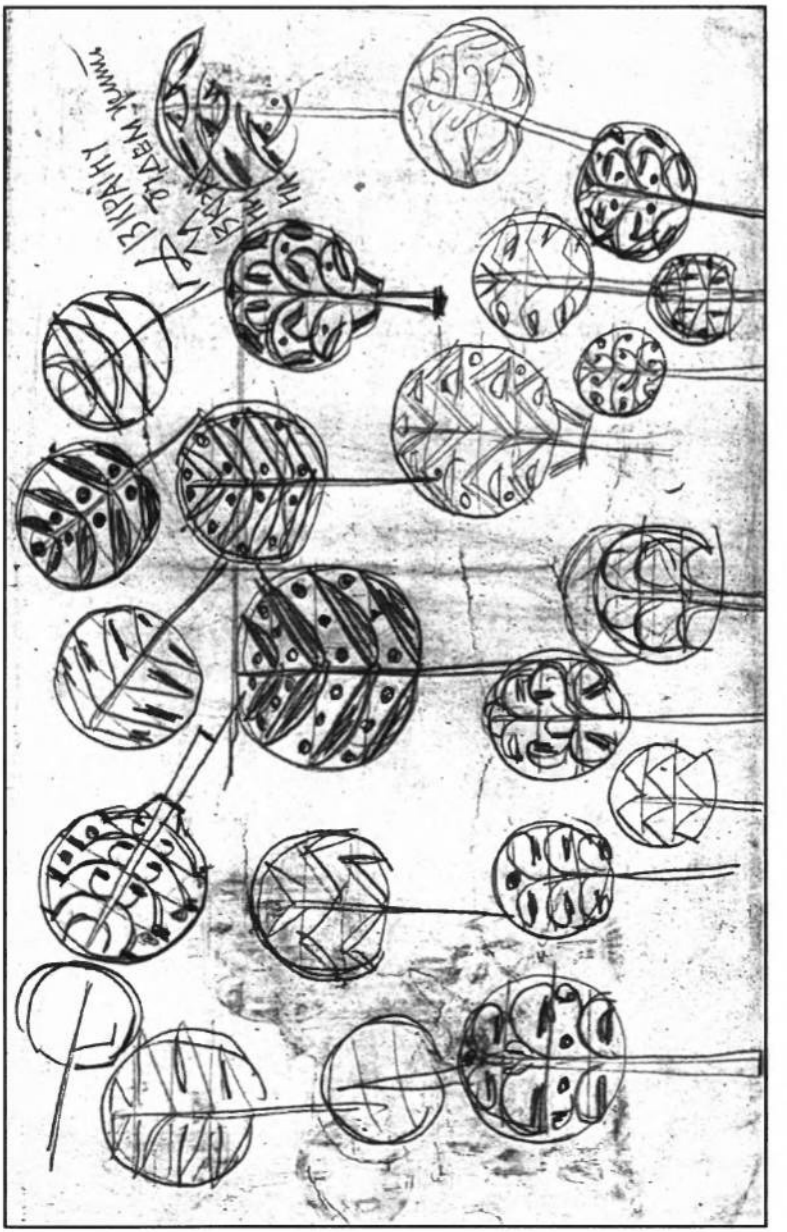


FIGURE 4
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, ornaments (early 1920s). Pencil on paper.

FIGURE 5
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, project for an interior. Pencil on paper.

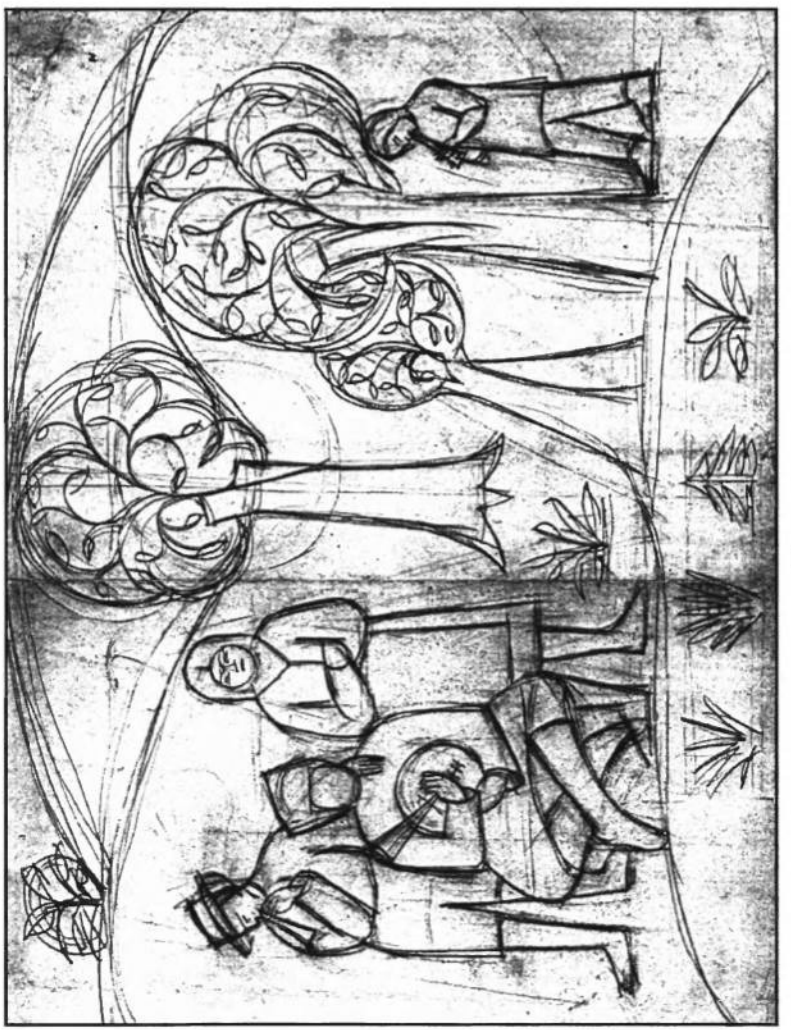


FIGURE 6
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, *Peasant Music* (early 1920s). Pencil on paper.

FIGURE 7
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, flyleaf. National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv.

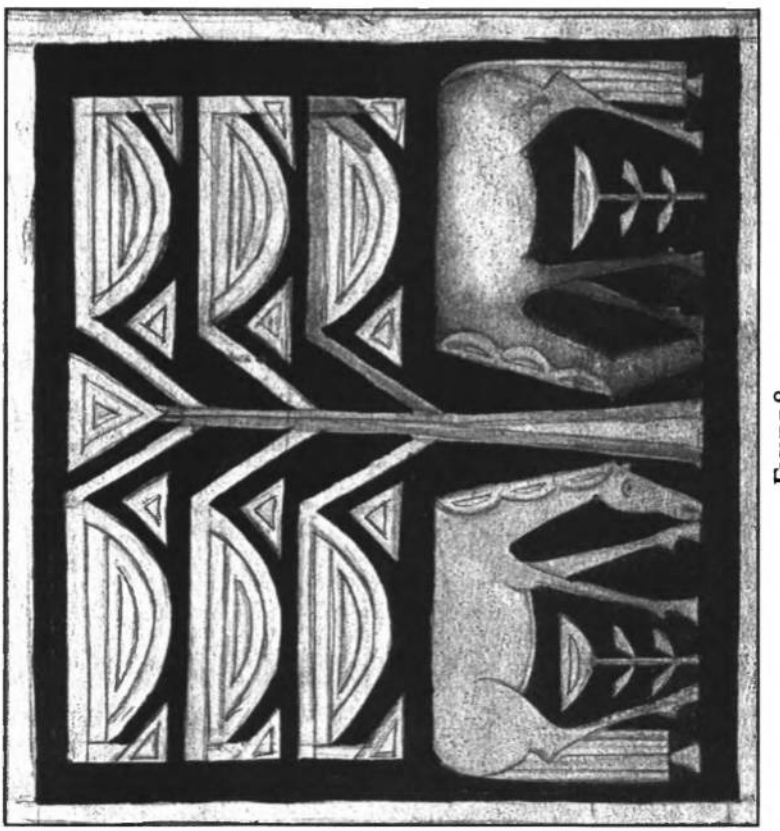


FIGURE 8
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, kilim design (early 1920s). Watercolour and pencil on paper. National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv.

Сонце сховалось за хмарами. Вони разтяглися немов крила величезного птаха і тихо сунули на північ, залишая тонесеньке пірря, хаотично разкидане на ясній блакіті. Шелестіло листя на разхристанних деревах і чекало ясного золотисто ніжного проміну. Київ стояв як зачарованний красун п'яний весняним повітрям і чекав сонця. Молодий вітер разносив свавольно і сміло сивий дим який буйно вилітав з димарів Київських фабрик. Гучно разносився цокот машин в яснім веснянім повітрі, який вилітав з богатьох заводів Подолу. І здавалось, що Київ стогнав, кричав простягаючи черні димарі і шукаючи сонця і ясної весняної ласки. І тягне на волю, в степи, де сміло гуляє вітер, туди де розкинулись безкінечні простори, туди де відпочине сердце і око

FIGURE 9
Ielyzaveta Piskorska, book illustration.
National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv.

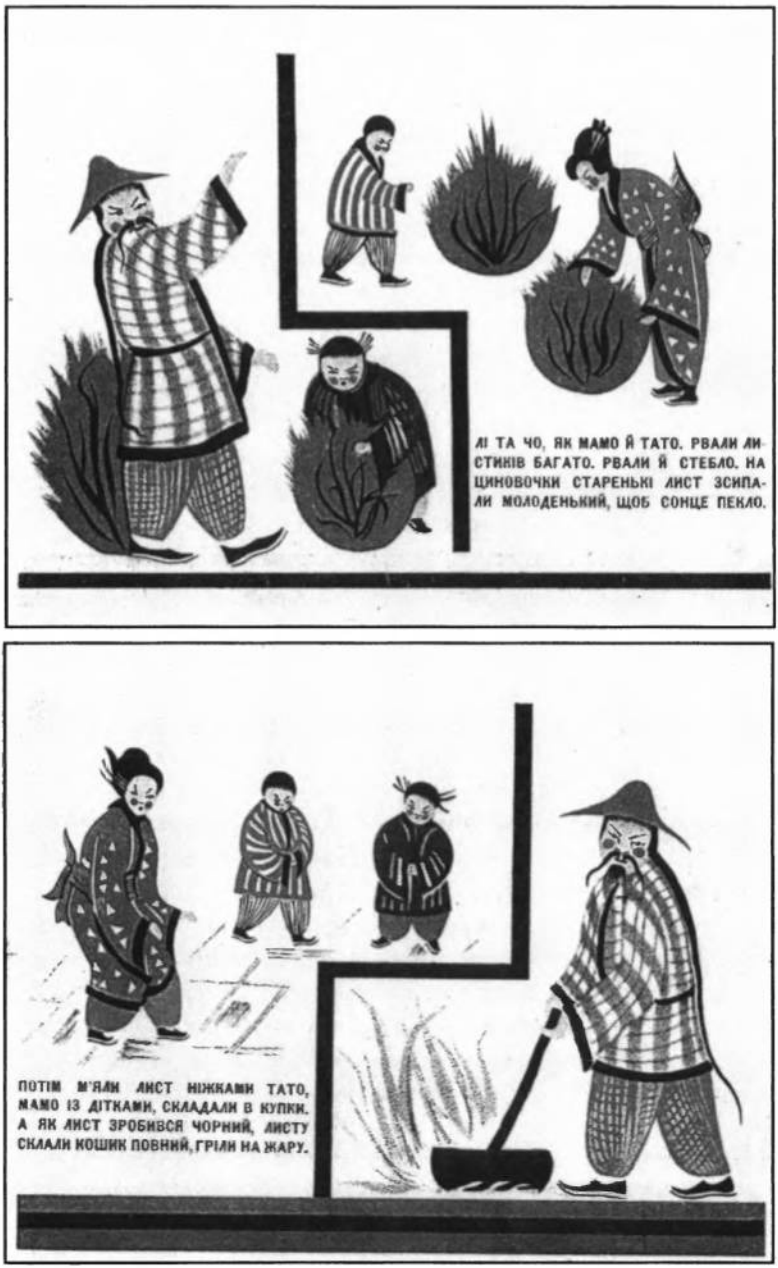
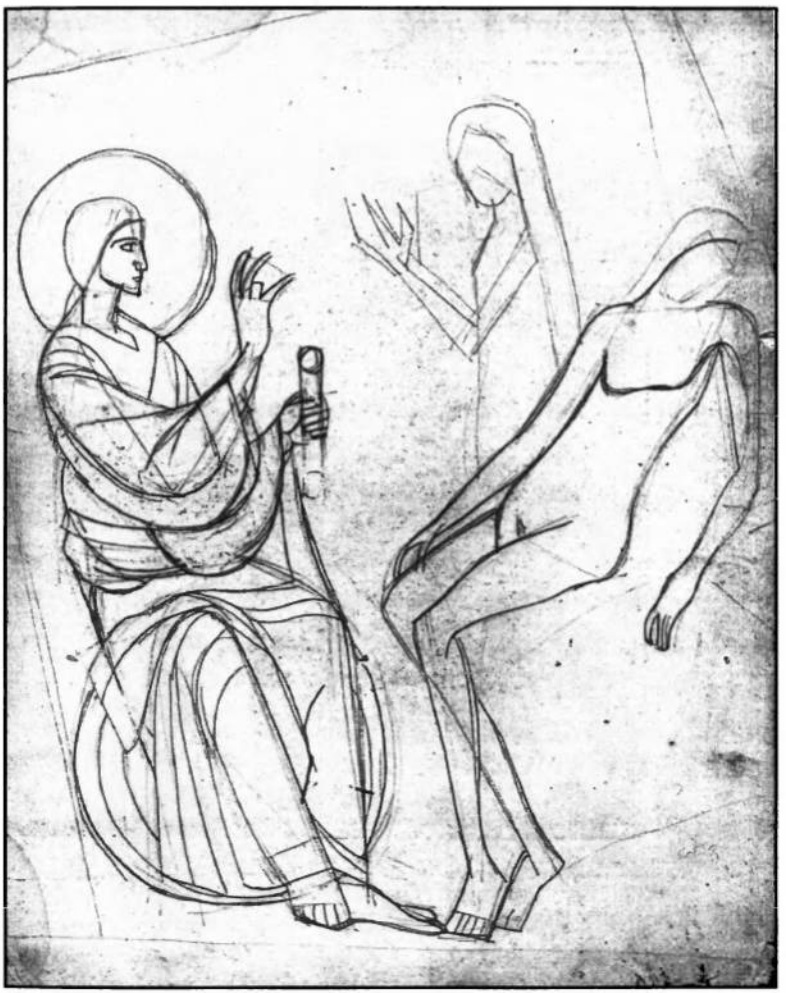


FIGURE 10

Ielyzaveta Piskorska, illustrations to Oksana Steshenko's *Chai*. Lithographs.



Ielyzaveta Piskorska, *The Healing Paper.* Pencil on paper.

simplified into contours and geometrical shapes. Coming together, the lines form one continuous pattern in which the blue and brown colours of the women's clothing alternate with the black of Maria's hair. The entire piece produces a powerful sense of movement.

In other works Piskorska reveals the influence of Vasyl Krychevsky. Several pages are densely covered with countless ornamental improvisations (e.g., figure 4). They are, in fact, notes from Krychevsky's lectures on the composition of the ornament. The sketches of a Ukrainian interior, with a stove and bench under the window, a sideboard, a covered table, and kilims on the wall and floor constitute an attempt at interior design (figure 5). There are also many drawings of trees with similarly rounded tops, in which various floral ornaments are visible. These same patterned trees figure in another sketch, an elegiac, pastoral composition in the "Boichukist" manner (figure 6). It depicts a man playing a bandura, boys playing flutes, and a sorrowful girl listening to them against a background of low hills and trees with the same ornamental branches.

One finished ornamental composition by Piskorska has been preserved (figure 7). It is composed of cleverly interlaced undulating lines that dissect the page vertically and horizontally; within these lines are contained stylized representations of birds and plants. Painted in tempera, it is notable for its use of colour. Only three colours are used: grey for the background, azure for the birds, and sepia for the plants, but the page produces a sumptuous impression. The browns in this colour combination have the appearance of burnished gold or ancient bronzes, and are set off against a vibrant azure. The artist was tapping into the secrets of anonymous Ukrainian folk artists to which she may have been guided through studying the graphic art of Narbut and of her brother. The high degree of stylization in the composition corresponds to the technology used for preparing woodcuts for textile printing; the background colour also conforms to that of homemade linen. Most probably the work was conceived as part of a book decoration in the style of a folk textile print.

In Krychevsky's studio students used a kilim-making loom to develop projects based on their own sketches. Until now our conception of the earliest examples of such work had been based on the Serhii Kolos's well-known small tapestry entitled "The Branch" (1922). Now we are able to supplement this evidence with Piskorska's small kilim "The Bird," which was most likely produced in Krychevsky's studio in the early 1920s. The kilim is important for the study of Krychevsky's pedagogical method and, more generally, for an understanding of the development of twentieth-century Ukrainian decorative art. Piskorska made it on a simple peasant loom. Its aim was to convey a harmony of subdued tones and a limited number of colours, in which only a delicate bright orange accent stands out. The colour scheme, the rhythmic harmonization of compositional elements, and the nature of the line that gives dynamism to the bird's silhouette are all elements derived from folk kilim-making. This unassuming work reflects

Piskorska's brief but happy period of creative freedom and exploration as a student at the academy.

A kilim sketch by Piskorska is equally interesting (figure 8). Two horses are depicted as stylized geometrical forms that resemble wood carving and conform to the technical requirements of kilim production. The sketch is characterized by a typically Ukrainian lyricism. At the same time it may be considered representative of the period, when the countryside was recovering from the revolution and ensuing war and collectivization and industrialization had not yet taken their toll.

While studying at the printing faculty in the mid-1920s, Piskorska mastered various techniques of graphic art that were taught there. Engraving on wood was covered in the first year, and Piskorska mastered the technique by producing still lifes. Her own "Still Life with a Woven Basket and Pot" is characterized by a simplified form and strong black-and-white contrasts. A second study piece was a designed book, complete with illustrations and a typeface. She composed a short story about Kyiv, devised the printed form of the text, and then transferred the drawing to the lithographic plate (figure 9). When printed onto paper, the text was accompanied by illustrations. Everything in these illustrations—the buildings, trees, sky, and earth—was based on strong black-and-white contrasts suggesting a struggle of sunshine with darkness.

Piskorska's graduation assignment was the design and preparation of Oksana Steshenko's *Chai*, a children's book. Her illustrations ran parallel to the story in verse of a Chinese family that grows, harvests, and prepares tea leaves (figure 10). The drawings are rather detailed in places, probably in order to capture a child's interest. At the same time, however, they are quite in tune with the "Boichukist" understanding of composition, which stressed the generalized form, active line, and expressive silhouette. Besides producing the cover and the illustrations executed in ink and watercolour, she also printed out the final page proofs. This work demonstrates Piskorska's skill not only as a book designer and illustrator but also as a print artist.

Translated by Myroslav Shkandrij

Demythifying a Universal Hero: Spyrydon Cherkasenko's Vision of Don Juan

Robert Karpiak

Although the myth of Don Juan may not have had as strong an impact on the literature of Ukraine as it had on the literatures of Western European countries, it is noteworthy that at least two major works of drama in the Ukrainian language have been directly inspired by the famous legend of the Spanish seducer. In 1912 Lesia Ukrainka (1871–1913) completed her play *Kaminnyi hospodar* (The Stone Host), to be followed about fifteen years later by a reprise of the universal hero in a "dramatic novel" by Spyrydon Cherkasenko (1876–1940). Although it is undeniably overshadowed by the artistic pre-eminence of Lesia Ukrainka's masterpiece, Cherkasenko's *Espanskyi kabaliero Don Khuan i Rozita* (The Spanish Caballero Don Juan and Rosita),[1] written in Uzhhorod in 1928, merits attention not only as an important Ukrainian variation on one of the world's great literary themes, but also as an interpretation consonant with the postmodernist decline of Don Juan from the stature of a Promethean rebel to that of a contemptible libertine. Although the variance in the plots of these two plays is substantial, it is essentially the difference between the authorial conception of Don Juan as the "knight of freedom" in *Kaminnyi hospodar* and the "cynical seducer" in *Don Khuan i Rozita* that constitutes the fundamental distinction between the Ukrainian versions, ultimately leading to the degradation of the archetype.

From the very beginnings of its existence in dramatic literature the myth of Don Juan established itself as a tragedy of retribution. *No hay deuda que no se pague*—no debt shall remain unpaid—is not only the title of one of the earliest Spanish versions of the legend, but also the stern warning proclaimed from the

1. Spyrydon Cherkasenko, *Espanskyi kabaliero Don Khuan i Rozita* (Lviv: Novi shliakhy, 1930). Henceforth the title will be abbreviated to *Don Khuan i Rozita*. All quotations are taken from this edition.

theatre stage of Don Juan dramaturgy in every age and literary movement. Immorality, murder, sacrilege, and anarchism are offences that must be punished on earth, in purgatory, or in hell. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Don Juan's Nemesis was almost invariably the Avenging Statue, which, representing divine justice, executed retribution in the name of slain fathers and violated daughters, of outraged husbands and abandoned wives. And yet, despite the fact that the main sins of Don Juan were crimes against his fellow man, more so than blasphemous acts against God, the morality and theatrical tastes of the classical age maintained that nothing less than the powers of heaven could put an end to a "larger-than-life" protagonist. The victims of Don Juan's excesses would have to await the advent of a less tradition-oriented epoch before playwrights would yield to them the right to requital.

However, the seeds of human initiative in the theme of retribution in Don Juan literature were already sown in Tirso de Molina's *El Burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra* (ca. 1618). In this, the earliest of the Don Juan dramas, the seduced and abandoned fisher-girl Tisbea, for all her social unimportance and physical helplessness, is resolved to seek revenge in the presence of the king himself.[2] Subsequently, in Mozart and Da Ponte's operatic masterpiece *Don Giovanni* (1787), Elvira swears to "tear out the heart" of her unfaithful lover.[3] Similarly, Donna Anna, epitomizing the plight of the dishonoured and orphaned daughter, will know no rest until the blood of her father is avenged. Still, despite their unremitting and frantic efforts, not one of these unfortunate victims is destined to savour the taste of personal triumph, for it is once again the stone Commander who arrives to fulfill his divine commission.

Indeed, the "democratization" of Don Juan's punishment did not manifest itself until the theme had advanced into the period of romanticism and, in particular, when it encountered the influence of positivistic views. However, the progression of the theme of a woman's outrage and revenge is already discernible in Alexandre Dumas's play *Don Juan de Marana* (1836).[4] In contrast to the hysterical Tisbea and the grieving heroines of *Don Giovanni*, we discover in Dumas's Inès the prototype of the calculating female fully prepared to commit cold-blooded murder in order to avenge her dishonour. Having coerced him to kill Don Sandoval, the lover who betrayed her, Inès offers Don Juan a goblet of poisoned wine. Ironically, it is she who becomes the victim of her own scheme:

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2. Tirso de Molina, "El Burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra," in *Don Juan y su evolución dramática*, vol. 1, ed. Arcadio Baquero (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1966), 224.

3. W. A. Mozart, *Don Giovanni* (New York: Dover Publications, 1964), 96.

4. Alexandre Dumas, "Don Juan de Marana ou la chute d'un ange," in *Théâtre complet de Alexandre Dumas*, vol. 5 (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1876), 1–100.

she dies while the astute Don Juan, familiar with the wiles of women, mockingly refuses to drink the deadly potion.

The motif of administering poison to Don Juan's drink recurs in Sigismund Wiese's drama *Don Juan* (1840), but this time he does not escape its pernicious effect.[5] Alexandra, seduced and abandoned by Don Juan and driven to madness by her despair, succeeds in murdering her tormentor together with his new mistress. A similar climax concludes Braun von Braunthal's drama *Don Juan* (1842).[6] The young Rosa is seduced by Don Juan in the very cemetery where her fiancé lies buried. She too is forsaken shortly thereafter, but fate ordains another crossing of their paths. Several years later Don Juan is granted a rendezvous with the mistress of a grandee. She offers him wine and then entices him to follow her to the cemetery where two freshly dug graves await them. The woman is none other than Rosa and the wine they shared was envenomed.

The poisoned goblet is but one of several stratagems to which the victims of Don Juan resort in their bid to avenge an offence. Later, with the appearance of the desperate, volatile women typical of the post-Romantic versions, the subtlety of the poisoned drink gives way to the deliberate flash attack with a weapon. For example, in Armand Hayem's drama *Don Juan d'Armana* (1886), the betrayed Sahèle returns to plunge a dagger into Don Juan's heart and then into her own.[7] Similarly, in Oskar Schmitz's drama *Don Juan und die Kurtisane* (1914) Miraflores vows that if she is not to possess Don Juan, then no other woman shall. To assure herself of this, she, with calculated sang-froid, dispatches her inconstant lover with her stiletto.[8]

The theme of a virtuous woman's vengeance on a perfidious lover is precisely the basis of Cherkasenko's *Don Khuan i Rozita*, a work that occupies a prominent place among those versions whose intent is to impugn the qualities of courage, rebellion, demonic fatalism, and individualism inherent in the donjuanesque character. It thus continues the realist reaction against the Romantic idealization of the archetype and seeks to topple Don Juan from his position of a tragic hero and the world's greatest lover. Like George Bernard Shaw's John Tanner in *Man and Superman*, conceived thirty years before *Don Khuan i Rozita*, and Max Frisch's *Don Juan; oder Die Liebe zur Geometrie*, written some thirty years after, Cherkasenko's Don Juan is clearly a misogynist.

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5. Georges Gendarme de Bévotte, *La Légende de Don Juan*, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1929), 99–102.

6. Ibid., 102–5.

7. Ibid., 179–82.

8. Martin Nozick, "The Don Juan Theme in the Twentieth Century," Ph.D. diss. (Columbia University, 1953), 214–15.

As in many a Don Juan play, the plot of *Don Khuan i Rozita* revolves around the hero's last amorous adventure. As part 1, act 1 initiates the action of the drama, we encounter a Don Juan who has grown weary of the haughty and superficial ladies of the Spanish court. Seeking relief from his boredom in a royal hunt near the banks of the Guadalquivir, Don Juan encounters and is instantly captivated by the youth and natural beauty of Rosita, daughter of the poor fisherman Pablo, a Christianized Moor. How delightfully different, he muses, is this raven-haired, almond-eyed "child of nature" from the pale, pomaded noblewomen of Madrid! And yet the apparent innocence and candour of Rosita are but a mask disguising a penchant for evil. "I truly do not know," he confesses, "what it is that she embodies more—sincerity and innocence, or savage, primeval malice."[9] Rosita is attracted by Don Juan's masculine beauty, but she remains effect of her resistance to his advances is only to intensify his desire and obsession with the peasant girl.

As act 2 opens, Don Juan has totally ignored his many mistresses at the court since his meeting with Rosita. So contemptuous is he of their complaints of neglect that he plays a cruel trick by inviting them to a rendezvous with him—all at the same time. The women, having recognized each other as unfaithful wives and duped rivals for Don Juan's attention, scatter in shame, cursing their perfidious lover. Not to be mocked in this way, however, is Donna Anna, the widow of the Commander de Bobadilla, whom Don Juan has killed in a duel. He dare not cast her aside like the others, she warns him, for their union was consummated by the blood of her husband: "It is not to be mocked by you that I, stepping over the dead body of my esteemed and noble husband, threw myself into the arms of you, his murderer."[10]

The Commander's death was achieved in order to clear the way for the marriage of Don Juan and Donna Anna, but now his love has gone the way of all his former paramours. He claims to have loved her, but for Don Juan true love is but an illusion, and when the cup of passion is drained, nothing is left.

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9. О мила дівчино ... Дитя природи ...
   Чарівне, хоч лукаве, сотворіння!
   І вже не знаю я, чого в ній більше —
   Безпосередности і простоти.
   Чи дикого, природного лукавства?... (p. 20)
10. Хуане, стережись ... Чи ти забув,
    Що нас звязала кров?... Я не на те
    Тобі в обійми кинулась одважно,
    Переступивши через труп свого
    Достойного й значного чоловіка
    Щоб ти, його убійник, жартував.
    Щоб грішним грався ти моїм коханням! (p. 38)

"Constancy is my enemy," he says, "it is the grave of love." Spurned and humiliated by Don Juan's preference for Rosita, whom she calls "that savage with the goats," Donna Anna swears vengeance.

Act 3 advances the action to the *Casa Santa* of Seville, where the Holy Tribunal is in session. The Inquisitor deplores the expense of the daily burning of heretics—destitute Moriscos and shabby "witches." It is high time, he says, that an apostate with lands and wealth be brought to the auto-da-fé. It is as if Fra Bartolomeo's prayers are answered by the arrival of Donna Anna, who has come to denounce Rosita as a witch. Upon learning that the nobleman whom Rosita has "bewitched" is none other than Don Juan, the Marquis de Tenorio, the Inquisitor assures Donna Anna of his full co-operation. This will be a double prize for the Inquisition: a sorceress for the stake and a grandee's treasure for the coffers.

By the time that act 4 begins, Don Juan's persistent courtship of Rosita has brought him to the brink of success. Before surrendering to him completely, however, she imposes a condition on her love: Don Juan must swear an oath of constancy and fidelity—on his very life. Her love must never know a past:

> В "було" нема життя для мене.
> Для мене "єсть" — з тобою, а без тебе ...
> "Було" я й миті не переживу,
> Але ... й тобі не дам його зазнати!...
> Нового "єсть" не буде по мені ... (p. 61)

Never before has a woman spoken to Don Juan in this manner. But the threat implied by Rosita's words serves only to increase his desire, and he swears the fatal oath. At that moment Don Juan's servant Catalion enters to inform his master that the Tenorio castle is under siege by the Inquisition. No sooner do they ride off to Madrid to seek intervention from the king than three masked figures in black capes rush out of the woods and abduct the frantically struggling Rosita.

At the opening of part 2, act 1 Don Juan has come to the Tavern of the Three Cats—a refuge of bandits, prostitutes, and vagabonds—in order to engage a band of desperados to help him liberate Rosita from the Inquisition. Coincidentally, Paquita, a *fille de joie* and a former lover of Don Juan, devises a plan to abduct Fra Bartolomeo as a hostage to be exchanged for the release of Rosita. As Don Juan waits in the tavern, his attention is captured by the virginal beauty and timidity of the innkeeper's daughter, Laura. With Rosita now banished from his thoughts, he musters all of his charm and guile for a seductive attack on the barmaid, only to be interrupted by the return of Paquita's party with the bound and blindfolded Inquisitor.

Act 2 returns the spectator to the *Casa Santa,* where Rosita now stands before the Holy Tribunal as an accused witch. Like a cornered tigress, her dark eyes flashing hatred and contempt, she defies her tormentors. As she is about to be

placed on the rack, a bandit from the Three Cats bursts in and hands the procurator a letter from Fra Bartolomeo ordering Rosita's immediate release.

Rosita is now liberated, and in act 3 she is brought to the tavern, where Don Juan waits. But her joy at being reunited with her lover is short-lived. Rosita's instincts tell her that something is dreadfully wrong, and one comprehending glance at Laura reveals everything. The dreaded realization that her love has receded into the "past" descends upon her, and it takes all of Don Juan's eloquence to alleviate her suspicions temporarily.

In order to pursue his new passion, the nubile Laura, more conveniently, Don Juan has sent Rosita to his castle in Cadiz. But several weeks have passed since his promise to join her, and despite the danger of remaining in Seville—he has had to kill three would-be assassins sent by the Inquisition—Don Juan still enjoys the favours of the innkeeper's daughter. In the concluding fourth act a servant arrives from Cadiz to report that Rosita has disappeared and is feared drowned in the sea. Initial pity turns to cold contempt for such "foolishness." Don Juan dislikes such clumsy dénouements to his love affairs. On the other hand, it is time to put these opportunistic peasant girls and barmaids in their place. "Did she really imagine that I would marry her? Now there would be a quaint couple," he scoffs, "a grandee of the court and a wench out of the woods, the daughter of a Morisco fisherman to boot."[11]

No sooner does Don Juan decide to depart for Madrid than Donna Anna arrives to inform him of her forthcoming marriage. Her parting declaration of love rekindles for a moment the old passion he once felt for her. As they seal a pledge to resume their clandestine relationship in Madrid with an ardent kiss, a terror-stricken Catalion rushes in crying: "It's the witch! She is coming!" Indeed, it is Rosita who enters like a revenant from beyond the grave. Startled, Don Juan draws back, sensing the grim purpose of her return. With vain arguments he rationalizes and excuses the breach of that oath of fidelity he once made upon his very life. His words are cut short as a stiletto flashes in Rosita's hand and plunges into his heart. Futile cries for help are answered only by ironic contempt and revulsion:

> О, ні, рятунку вже не сподівайся,
> Високородний гранде: добре цілить
> Розіта й слів додержує своїх!
> Заприсяглась і я полинути разом

11. Гадала,
Що шлюб, чи що, візьму я з нею?... От би
Була цікава пара: гранд двірський
І з лісу дівка ... ще й дочка мориска.
Рибалки!... Бракувало ще цього!... (p. 117)

У небуття, але ... у товаристві
Такому ... гидко ... (p. 123)

As Rosita rushes out, Donna Anna collapses upon Don Juan's corpse.

The unheroic end of Don Juan in Cherkasenko's drama is highly representative of the author's view of the theme and the hero, views that he expresses in his preface to *Don Khuan i Rozita*. In this auto-commentary the writer proclaims his profound disagreement with those of his precursors who "perceived an awesome philosophical and mystical depth" in what is nothing more than a "simple, unpretentious folk legend." He similarly rejects out of hand the theory contending that the theme of Don Juan purports to resolve the "so-called 'problem of the sexes.'" Don Juan, in Cherkasenko's estimation, is simply "an impudent and cynical voluptuary" who receives too great an honour by the insinuation that his punishment was in any way supernatural or miraculous:

> ... що ж до чудесного покарання безличного й цинічного зальотника камінною подобою Командора, то це, на думку автора, звичайний народній забобон ... і гріхи не тільки легендарного, а й усіх мільйонів інших донжуанів, коли карається часом, то не небом, а завжди далеко природніш і тому вульгарніш; і що в ділі цинічних зальотів жадною філософією, містикою, демонізмом, чи якоюсь "проблемою" взагалі й не пахне.[12]

With this intent in mind, the author deliberately divests his version of all "heavy philosophical and mystical artillery" and attempts to substitute in its place the qualities demanded by the contemporary theatre: staginess, lightness, excitement, dynamism, and "a modicum of healthy morality." The result, as might be expected, is the "debunking" of a universal myth. The hero, who for centuries had incarnated not only the principle of sensuality but also of courage and revolt, is reduced here to the level of a petty scoundrel with the complexes of a wilful juvenile. Gone indeed is any suggestion of the diabolical fatalism and mystique of the Romantic Don Juan. Gone also is the elemental charisma of the classic Spanish *burlador*. The success of the romantic intrigues of Cherkasenko's Don Juan is attributable to nothing more than his handsome features, wealth, and social status. Before she dispatches him, Rosita accuses Don Juan of having "violated" her with his beauty. "Destiny gave you an excess of it," she avers, "and therefore you have never encountered resistance from a woman." But there is nothing new in this revelation; a prostituted physical beauty and a gift of eloquence have been a feature of the donjuanesque personality since Tirso's Tisbea was swept away by the "most handsome of men." Even the limited perspicacity of Don Juan's servant, the bumbling, dull-witted Catalion, is sufficient to divine the secret behind his master's success as a seducer: "They

12. Cherkasenko, "Zamist peredmovy," n.p.

swarm around him like bees round a hive ... and how does he seduce them? With honeyed phrases. No matter if she's a noblewoman or a peasant lass, she'll melt from them like a tallow candle from the flame."[13]

The eloquence of Don Juan is invariably the eloquence of cultivated insincerity and calculated falsehood. In contrast to his precursors of the Romantic age, who were themselves transported by the inspiration and poetry of their words and no less deceived by them than were their victims, the hero of *Don Khuan i Rozita* is a cunning and compulsive hypocrite. In order to seduce Rosita Don Juan pledges on his life to remain faithful to her, a vow that he has not the least intention of honouring: "If there be craft or cunning deceit in my words, then may my life be cut off at the very moment I betray them!"[14]

The swearing of this perjurious oath proposes itself as a motif analogous to Don Juan's invitation to the Statue in the traditional versions. They are both acts of desecration of something sacred, and the punishment of Don Juan, whether by natural or supernatural agents, stems directly from the commission of this act. In both instances the hero mockingly brings destruction down on his head.

As in several anterior versions, we find the hero of Cherkasenko's drama challenged by a woman of strong character and independent will, who ultimately triumphs over him. This recalls in particular Lesia Ukrainka's *Kaminnyi hospodar* and the role of Donna Anna. Donna Anna challenges Don Juan's power by demanding that he surrender Dolores's ring as a pledge of his sincerity. Rosita also demands her pledge—the unconditional renunciation of his donjuanism. The hero of *Kaminnyi hospodar* hesitates; a principle he himself is unable to comprehend prevents a false promise. Cherkasenko's Don Juan, however, knows no such principle and swears the oath that seals his doom.

As one of the powerful recreations of the myth in the modern age, it is not surprising that the influence of *Kaminnyi hospodar* would be reflected to some extent in *Don Khuan i Rozita*. There are indeed several discernibly analogical moments in the two plays. One might cite, for example, the philosophy of unrestrained personal liberty espoused and proclaimed by Lesia Ukrainka's

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13. І що вони знаходять в нім? Як бджоли
Круг улика, так вони круг нього!
А головне, — як той мисливий добрий —
Аби угледів — вже й його! А чим
Бере? Солодкими речами. Й де
Береться? Чи грандеса то, чи дівка —
Розтопиться від них, як лій од світла ... (p. 115)

14. Коли в словах моїх було лукавство
І підступна неправда, то нехай
Життя моє урветься в тую ж мить
Як не додержу або зраджу їх! (p. 64)

conception of the "champion of free will." In a parodistically cynical echo of this salient motif, Cherkasenko's Don Juan reveals to Donna Anna his philosophy of reckless self-gratification as he reneges on the promise of marriage that he had sworn to her over the corpse of the Commander. "To be free of everything—that is life," he adjures her. "Sail to where the current of delights carries you, to where new pleasure ever shines."[15]

Similarly Don Juan and Catalion's dialogue about the duel with the Commander evokes a scenario quite reminiscent of the murder scene in act 4 of *Kaminnyi hospodar*. Although, as in the tradition of Molière, Pushkin, and others, the death of the Commander occurs as a flashback in *Don Khuan i Rozita*, we discover that the duel took place in the boudoir of Donna Anna, where Don Juan arrived for a nocturnal rendezvous. As in Lesia Ukrainka's version, the Commander's inopportune return and challenge to Don Juan cost him his life. The motif of a marital instead of filial relationship between Donna Anna and the Commander, first introduced in Pushkin's drama *Kamennyi gost* (The Stone Guest) and preserved in Lesia Ukrainka's *Kaminnyi hospodar*, recurs in Cherkasenko's version and suggests once again the influence of the anterior Ukrainian drama.

In accordance with the views expressed in his prefatory note, Cherkasenko's rendition of the theme of Don Juan is strongly inclined towards a satirical and sarcastic interpretation. The blend of tragedy and irony that elevated the tone and intensified the emotive quality of *Kaminnyi hospodar* is virtually non-existent in Cherkasenko's drama. Where Lesia Ukrainka had created the anarchist and individualist, the exponent of personal freedom above all else, Cherkasenko's Don Juan is but an advocate of his own licentious and unbridled self-indulgence. Where the hero of *Kaminnyi hospodar* proudly proclaimed that he gave women "all that they were capable of sustaining," the Don Juan of Cherkasenko's drama merely seeks to satisfy his lust and greed. He must be the first to possess a beautiful woman, and in this predilection he recalls the Don Giovanni of operatic fame, whose dominant passion is the "*giovin principiante*"—the beginner in love: "Whenever I lay eyes on a beautiful woman, I covet her and desire to be the first to possess her. After that, I care nought for what happens!"[16]

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15. Що мені
До світу нашого? Чи кращий він
За нас з тобою?... Вільним треба бути
Од всього — в цім життя. Пливи туди,
Куди несе утіхи течія.
Туди, де сяє все новеє щастя,
Нове все раювання!... (p. 38)
16. Коли дивлюся на якусь красуню,
То вже її ревную я до того,

Indeed, once the victim has succumbed to his seductive hypocrisy, physical charm, and promise of untold happiness in the lap of luxury, she is callously spurned:

> До чорта! Час позбутись їх ...
> ... І гидко й нецікаво,
> Коли ти жінку знаєш всю напам'ять,
> Як старець зна свою торбину. (p. 33)

Cherkasenko's Don Juan is a compulsive seducer, a "pig," and a "he-goat," as his own lackey contemptuously calls him. But beneath the facade of the sensualist there lurks a cynic and misogynist who fears and despises womankind. In this expression of suspicion and mistrust we recognize a feature of the romantic seeker for the absolute initiated in E. T. A. Hoffmann's tale *Don Juan* (1813). Cherkasenko indeed did not fail to include in his version a deliberately sarcastic reference to the theme of idealism. His Don Juan purports to be on a quest for the supreme woman, and his justification for abandoning one woman after another is that he had, as he says, "avidly emptied the costly cup of passion and found it incapable of intoxication" (p. 39).

Cherkasenko's work reflects a patently parodistic treatment of the theme of the idealistic Don Juan. Having rejected the "awesome philosophical and mystical depth" with which writers of the nineteenth century had invested the legend, he satirizes that ennobling yet sinful aspiration that had aggrandized and destroyed many a Don Juan of the Romantic age. As an ideal-seeker, the hero of *Don Khuan i Rozita* is a brazen impostor. He harbours not the slightest trace of the tragic victim of a primordial cosmic conflict between the forces of heaven and hell as described by Hoffmann.[17] He is but a fop and a "scoundrel"—to apply the author's own epithet—bored with the facile conquests that he has made over women as shallow as himself, but ever on the alert for a new adventure of seduction.

As a representative of the Don Juan type, Cherkasenko's hero proves to be ineffectual, for he has been stripped of those essential and irreplaceable traits that have assured his popularity for almost four centuries—his courage and indomitable will. In fact, this Don Juan cannot be credited with a single act of manliness or bravery in the course of the entire drama. Even while Rosita is being rescued from the Inquisition by a motley band of robbers and prostitutes, Don Juan sits idly in the tavern and flirts with the barmaid. When his death is

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> Кому вона достанеться. І я
> Хотів би, щоб усяка з них спочатку
> Належала мені ... а потім — все одно! (p. 109)

17. E. T. A. Hoffmann, "Don Juan," in his *Poetische Werke,* vol. 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1957), 73–88.

imminent, he shares nothing in common with the defiant rebel who scorns submission and repentance even as the Statue drags him into the inferno. Instead he grovels and whimpers his reluctance to die for his crimes.

The period of realistic interpretations of the Don Juan myth in literature is a period of paradoxes: the theme flourished, but the hero did not fare well. While literary creations in his name proliferated, Don Juan himself was held up to disparagement and sometimes to ridicule. The legend was exploited, but the classic Don Juan type rarely emerged. With the attenuation of the irrational and supernatural element in the interests of realism, the hero declined in stature and mythical significance. He, who at one time could be destroyed only by an act of God, became vulnerable to the vagaries of vindictive monks, mutinous henchmen, or peasant girls with daggers in their skirts. Briefly stated, the essential connection with the classic hero who engendered and propagated the myth became weak. A number of writers seem to have declared a personal ideological war against a protagonist whose fame was founded to a large degree on his antisocial behaviour. Whether motivated by hedonism or the illusive search for feminine perfection, Don Juan was regarded as a dangerous phenomenon who threatened the security of societal values by murdering men and dishonouring women. Such writers would choose a powerful man in order to render him weak; they would choose a great lover in order to show a man despised. The symbol of corporeal fortitude would become a body wasted by excesses; a charismatic youth would end his days as an old rake.

The theme of compulsive infidelity depicted in *Don Khuan i Rozita* represents a significant departure from the thematics of Cherkasenko's dramas of the 1920s. As a playwright he passed through periods of ethnographic realism—depicting the life of Ukrainian coal miners during the revolutionary events of 1905–7 in plays such as *Zhakh* (Horror) and *Khurtovyna* (The Snowstorm)—and modernism (e.g., *Kazka staroho mlyna* [The Tale of the Old Mill]). From 1916 on he created historical dramas based on the Cossack period of Ukraine's past, such as *Pro shcho tyrsa shelestila* (About What the Feather-Grass Whispered) and a succession of plays dealing with prominent figures of that heroic and turbulent epoch: *Severyn Nalyvaiko*, *Velmozhna Pani Kochubeikha* (The Grand Lady Kochubei), and *Bohdan Khmil.* His Don Juan drama, which stands prominently apart from historical Ukrainian subjects, ventures into the realm of universal thematics and poetic myth. In this regard, the critic Oleksa Myshanych observes that "Cherkasenko's dramatic writing is a fascinating phenomenon in Ukrainian literature. It inscribes itself into the record of ideological and artistic strivings of Ukrainian dramaturgy in the first half of the twentieth century and stands on a

par with the poetic achievements of Lesia Ukrainka, Oleksander Oles, and Volodymyr Vynnychenko."[18]

Cherkasenko's version of Don Juan also has merit as a representative phenomenon in the periodization of the myth. Having declined innovative socio-psychological poignancy as well as traditional mythopoesis, the dramatist undertook essentially a characterological transformation of the donjuanesque type, unmasking his superficiality, egocentrism, and moral bankruptcy. It is important to observe, however, that in demythifying Don Juan, Cherkasenko resurrected and breathed new life into the legendary hero. He readily acknowledged his "profanation" of the legend, but recreated the hero notwithstanding. It is evident from this that Don Juan continues to inspire supporters and detractors alike. Glorified or maligned, after three hundred years and three thousand versions, his myth is sure to endure into the next millennium.

18. Oleksa Myshanych, "V bezmezhzhi zym i chuzhyny ... Povernennia Spyrydona Cherkasenka," in Spyrydon Cherkasenko, *Tvory v dvokh tomakh*, vol. 1 (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1991), 31.

The Soviet Ukrainian Whimsical Novel

Marko Pavlyshyn

Oleksandr Ilchenko's *Kozatskomu rodu nema perevodu, abo zh Mamai i chuzha molodytsia* (There's No End to the Cossack Clan, or Mamai and the Female Stranger) was published in 1958, some three years before the post-Stalin thaw had a perceptible impact on Ukrainian prose. The novel's subtitle, "Khymernyi roman z narodnykh ust" (A Whimsical Novel from the Oral Folk Tradition), gave rise to the concept of the "whimsical novel," which has since come to be widely applied by Soviet Ukrainian critics.[1] The term "*khymernyi*," translated here as "whimsical," but meaning also "chimerical," "strange," and "fantastic," proved useful to describe a trend in Ukrainian prose fiction that became especially productive in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Ilchenko's aesthetically unremarkable book was part of the aftermath of the 1954 celebration of the third centenary of the agreement of Pereiaslav by which the Ukrainian Cossacks accepted the suzerainty of the Russian tsar. Pereiaslav was the chief symbol of the Ukrainian variant of what Lowell Tillett called the myth of the great friendship between Russia and the non-Russian peoples of the U.S.S.R.[2] In Ilchenko's novel this notion is illustrated in each of two main plots. The first has as its central figure the Cossack Mamai, the most popular subject of Ukrainian folk painting. Endowed with supernatural powers, Mamai mysteriously appears at some time in the second half of the seventeenth century in the town of Myroslav to help its citizens resist the insurgency of a villainous Ukrainian hetman against the tsar. The second narrative line concerns the journey of a young messenger to Moscow with a plea for the tsar's assistance; the novel ends abruptly amidst euphoric renderings of the mission's success. The work's

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1. Anatolii Pohribny, in "Moda? Novatsiia? Zakonomernost? O 'khimernom' zhanre v ukrainskoi proze," *Literaturnoe obozrenie*, 1980, no. 2: 24–8, gives an account of the genesis and the most useful analysis of the features of the whimsical novel.

2. Lowell Tillett, *The Great Friendship: Soviet Historians on the Non-Russian Nationalities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 299 ff.

affective structure is simple enough: while eliciting the pathos of East Slavic brotherhood, anti-Western xenophobia, and class resentment, the novel serves the reader's pleasure through colourful ethnographic material (descriptions of folk custom, lore, superstition, and material culture), humour (comical names, burlesque action, indecent allusion, grotesque characterization, and jovially mannered style), and the coincidences and convolutions of a plot that is indebted to the Gothic novel, the *Schelmenroman*, and the historical romance.

The whimsical mode became fashionable only in the 1970s.[3] Although Ilchenko's successors, on the whole, created novels of greater sophistication, their works contained the same components: a rural setting facilitating the presentation of Ukrainian ethnographic detail; historical reference, especially to the Cossack period; fantastic and supernatural motifs, most often from the repertoire of Ukrainian folklore; the admission of non-realistic notions of causality; eccentricity of style, often accompanied by waywardness and whimsy in narrative technique; erotic allusion; and humour. These ingredients are mixed in a wide variety of combinations, but a distinction may be drawn between two prevailing tones: the comic and the mysterious. The comic tendency dominates in Ilchenko, in Vasyl Zemliak's *Lebedyna zhraia* (Flight of Swans, 1971) and *Zeleni Mlyny* (1976), Ivan Senchenko's *Savka* (1972), Pavlo Zahrebelny's *Levyne sertse* (Lion Heart, 1977), and Ievhen Hutsalo's trilogy *Pozychenyi cholovik* (The Borrowed Husband), *Pryvatne zhyttia fenomena* (The Private Life of a Phenomenon), and *Parad planet* (Parade of Planets), published between 1980 and 1984. A more eerie, even Gothic, atmosphere pervades Roman Ivanychuk's *Manuskrypt z vulytsi Ruskoi* (The Manuscript from Ruska Street, 1979) and Valerii Shevchuk's *Dim na hori* (The House on the Hill, 1982). Some novels, such as Volodymyr Iavorivsky's *Avtoportret z uiavy* (An Imaginary Self-Portrait, 1981), do not fall easily into either group, but are clearly whimsical by virtue of their unorthodox and playful construction.

The proliferation of the whimsical novel was a development of some significance in Ukrainian cultural history. In the first place, it represented a departure from socialist realist tradition toward greater formal freedom. Anatolii Pohribny, in his extensive and useful discussion of the "whimsical genre," speaks of its "free but deliberate deformation of spatio-temporal relationships."[4] By focussing on such technical characteristics, he highlights the challenge that the whimsical novel presented to the formal conservatism of the mainstream Soviet novel.

3. The 1960s were not productive in terms of whimsical prose. A notable exception was Iurii Shcherbak's "*povist*" *Khronika mista Iaropolia* (A Chronicle of the City of Iaropil, 1968), which, however, was passed over in silence in discussions of the whimsical until much later; see, e.g., Mykola Zhulynsky, "Masshtaby suchasnosti, hlybyny istorii," *Kyiv*, 1986, 2: 136.

4. Pohribny, "Moda?" 25.

Departures from the probable, mythologization, and the increased complexity of narrative structures acquired a legitimacy that they had not enjoyed since 1934; the "master plot" and the positive hero were abandoned.[5] No doubt in order to protect this "liberal" position from potential future accusations of formalism, the champions of the whimsical novel asserted that it remained subject to the requirements of a realist aesthetics: Pohribny argued that the subgenre justifiably utilized more complex methods in order to apprehend the "essentiality of being" in an increasingly complex world,[6] while Mykhailo Strelbytsky, when relating the whimsical to the grotesque, defined the grotesque as an especially incisive implement for the reflection of reality.[7]

Furthermore, the distinctive features of the subgenre are unambiguously Ukrainian: the fantastic elements are drawn from Ukrainian folklore, the historical background and the ethnographic detail are Ukrainian, and the humour (according to both authors and critics) continues Ukrainian literary and folk traditions. Soviet critics acknowledged the affinity of the whimsical novel to the European comic novel, notably Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel* and Cervantes's *Don Quixote*; they acknowledged the existence of similar phenomena in other contemporary literatures, but claimed for the whimsical a special domestication in Ukrainian tradition.[8] The authority of "Bakhtin himself" was quoted in support of the view that the whimsical has a unique relationship to the Ukrainian "national character."[9]

The whimsical novel burgeoned in the context of other, related developments in the cultural sphere. First, Ukrainian Renaissance and baroque literature, to whose form, style, and world outlook many whimsical novels have more than a passing affinity, became a legitimate area not only of scholarly interest but of publishing.[10] Second, the books translated into Ukrainian during this period included European works not dissimilar in character to the local whimsical production: the more myth-oriented line of the whimsical novel later pursued by Ivanychuk and Shevchuk was adumbrated by the appearance in 1978 of a translation of Hermann Hesse's *Das Glasperlenspiel*, while E. T. A. Hoffmann's

5. For an authoritative account of the conventional structures of the Soviet socialist realist novel, see Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1981).

6. Anatolii Pohribny, "Suchasnyi styl: Vdumlyvist poshuku i pidstupnist mody," *Vitchyzna*, 1984, no. 12: 145–52, here 147.

7. Mykhailo Strelbytsky, "Vysokosnyi rik romanu," *Zhovten*, 1982, no. 1: 105–13, here 111.

8. Pohribny, "Moda?" 24.

9. Strelbytsky, "Vysokosnyi rik romanu," 111.

10. Nataliia Pylypiuk, "Nove v staroukrainskii literaturi," *Suchasnist*, 1985, no. 5: 20–33.

Kater Murr (the translation appeared in 1983) augmented the comic strand.[11] Finally, Bakhtin's notion of carnivalized literature, to which the whimsical novel, at least on the surface, seems clearly to have an affinity, was reintroduced in 1977 into the discussion of Ukrainian literature through Mykola Iatsenko's Bakhtinian rereading of Ivan Kotliarevsky's *Eneida*[12]—the still popular travesty of Virgil's *Aeneid* that became the first published work in vernacular Ukrainian (1798).

All of these events took place within the broader cultural and political framework of what, after the arrests and purges of early 1972 and the succeeding years of extreme pressure by the Party and state on the creative intelligentsia, some Western observers concluded to be a new rapprochement between the two sides.[13] However, it is symptomatic of the limited nature of official concessions under this truce that, for all their formal innovativeness, the whimsical novels published after 1978 were ideologically as orthodox as their predecessors. Ilchenko had lauded the Russo-Ukrainian "great friendship" in 1958, but so did Ivanychuk in 1979, in his much more philosophically ambitious novel on the sixteenth-century Lviv Brotherhood of the Dormition. In 1971 Vasyl Zemliak's *Lebedyna zhraia*, a novel remarkable for its comic characterization, rehearsed the officially binding account of collectivization and dekulakization in the 1920s and 1930s, not excluding the ogrish stereotype of the kulaks and the apologia for their liquidation as a class. But a decade later Hutsalo, in *Pryvatne zhyttia fenomena*, presented his reader with a no less doctrinaire—and, indeed, explicitly propagandistic—attack on the ideology and culture of North America. Whatever was carnivalesque about the whimsical novel did not lead to an irreverent or even light-hearted attitude toward authoritative principles or symbols.

I

These introductory observations give rise to the question with which the present discussion is chiefly concerned: what meaning should we ascribe to the whimsical novel, a phenomenon both innovative and perceived as nationally

11. Herman Hesse, *Hra v biser*, trans. Ievhen Popovych (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1978); Ernst Teodor Amadei Hofman, *Zhyttieva filosofiia kota Mura razom z uryvkamy biohrafii kapelmeistera Iohanna Kreislera* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1983).

12. M. T. Iatsenko, *Na rubezhi literaturnykh epokh: "Eneida" Kotliarevskoho i khudozhnii prohres v ukrainskii literaturi* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1977).

13. See, e.g., Myroslav Shkandrij, "Literary Politics and Literary Debates in Ukraine, 1971–81," in *Ukraine after Shelest*, ed. Bohdan Krawchenko (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1983), 55–72, here 67; and Roman Solchanyk, "Politics and the National Question in the Post-Shelest Period," in the same collection, 1–29, here 12–13.

specific, within the context of Ukrainian culture in the Soviet Union in the late 1970s and early 1980s—in the period, that is, preceding the cultural ferment inaugurated by the Twenty-seventh Congress of the CPSU in 1986? We shall suggest in the following that it would be a misinterpretation to regard the whimsical novel's construction of national difference as a between-the-lines argument for Ukrainian cultural integrity or equality, or as the symptom of a swing of the nationalities-policy pendulum away from its dominant tendency of favouring the generalization of Russian culture as the culture of the USSR. It is implicit in the rhetorical notions of *auctoritas* and *aptum* that the persuasiveness of an argument depends in large part on the prestige for a given audience of the medium in which the argument is formulated.[14] The potential prestige of the whimsical subgenre as determined by its practitioners would appear to have been low, and its net argumentative force operated against the interests of national culture rather than for it.

Let us consider the probable meaning and value of some of the whimsical novel's features for the Soviet Ukrainian audience of the time.

Take, first, the use of history and the ethnographic. Almost all of the novels named at the beginning of this essay are fascinated by the activities and rituals of rural life and the material things with which it is filled. For Ilchenko, Hutsalo, and Zemliak the marketplace is a favourite object of description. Zemliak incorporates into his narrative a description of the blessing of the waters at the feast of the Baptism, Zahrebelny gives accounts of weddings and funerals, and Hutsalo enhances local colour with proverbs and other folk locutions. There is a more organic use of the folkloric in Shevchuk's *Dim na hori*, where motifs from folk tales and superstitions are incorporated into the tension-generating structures.

History is also an important presence in the whimsical novel. Ilchenko's novel and half of Shevchuk's are set amidst the seventeenth–century Cossacks, who also make an incursion, through the technique of the explained supernatural, into Hutsalo's ultramodern rural landscape. Zahrebelny's village, Karpiv Iar, was founded by the Cossacks, and genealogical speculation is one of the population's favourite pursuits. Bohdanivka, the home village of Kateryna Bilokur in Iavorivsky's *Avtoportret z uiavy*, dates back to Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky's days—a fact that motivates imaginative excursions into the past.

At first sight the whimsical novel might appear to have been a place within Soviet Ukrainian literature where some affirmation of national cultural uniqueness was possible.[15] The combination of history and the ethnographic

14. See Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik* (Munich: Max Hueber, 1960), 140–6.

15. Such an acceptance in principle of national styles within "multinational Soviet

may be the source of a powerful symbolism of national identity, and so it had been in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. At that time Ivan Kotliarevsky, in his *Eneida*, had fused the anarcho-autonomist image of the Cossacks with images of the prosperity and vitality of peasant life, creating a rallying-myth for the deculturated Ukrainian social elite and nascent intelligentsia and thus initiating their transformation into a literary audience ripe for romantic nationalism.[16] But Kotliarevsky's formula was valid only at the initial stages of cultural self-definition; once a modern national identity had been established, the self-same combination of the historical with the ethnographic, especially in the stylistic proximity of humour, came to be perceived as anti-modern and even offensive. Cossack history as a symbol of national cohesion located the source of identity in the past and with a defunct social order. Worse still, the symbolism of local colour was, and remains, a symbolism of marginality—the ethnographic in its realization as the local is quaint and a source of amusement. Such nineteenth-century Ukrainian critics as Panteleimon Kulish perceived the pitfalls of such manifestations of national culture and therefore railed against Kotliarevsky's numerous imitators, claiming that they limited and debased the potential of Ukrainian literature.[17] The whimsical novel, however, was in almost every case an anachronistic reactivation of the old Kotliarevsky mania.

Similar things could be said of the use of the countryside as setting. One line of Western critical thinking about Soviet (particularly Russian) "village prose" of the 1960s and 1970s has attributed to it the underlying structure of the idyll: the moral values and life virtues of the country are rediscovered in opposition to the city experience.[18] Such a city-village opposition presupposes as its point of departure the recognition (and criticism), whether explicit or implicit, of the city, modernity, and civilization. Not so the whimsical novel. Here the humorous depiction of the countryside had as its substructure not the opposition of city and village but of metropolis and province. It was the village that was negatively evaluated as backward, barbarian, and, by civilized standards, hilarious.

The imagery of provincialism is legion in the whimsical novel. It includes the five kilometres of mud that separate Zahrebelny's newly constructed village

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literature" was regarded as an advance over previous, more monolithic notions of Soviet literature. See, e.g., V. A. Shoshin, "Vzaemodeistvie natsionalnykh literatur i sovremennoe sovetskoe literaturovedenie," *Russkaia literatura*, 1982, no. 4: 7–27, here 15.

16. See my article "The Rhetoric and Politics of Kotliarevsky's *Eneida*," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 10 (1985), no. 1: 9–24.

17. See, e.g., "Why Shevchenko is a Poet of Our People," in *Shevchenko and the Critics, 1861–1980*, ed. G. S. N. Luckyj (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 57–63, here 58.

18. E.g., Geoffrey Hosking, *Beyond Socialist Realism: Soviet Fiction since Ivan Denisovich* (London: Granada, 1980).

of Svitloiarsk from the nearest asphalt; the attitudes of fellow villagers to Bilokur's paintings in Iavorivsky's *Avtoportret*; the rejection of a mural by the inhabitants of Hutsalo's Iablunivka because the cow represented in it is not up to the most modern standards of breeding; and the rural opulence of the Vavilon ball in Zemliak's *Zeleni Mlyny*. The countryside is the province, the antithesis of what is urban, modern, and relevant; at the same time it is the seat of national identity, the matrix from which emerge those "national characters" in whom critics saw one of the whimsical novel's chief ornaments and, indeed, even its primary purpose.[19]

These national characters—the self-made philosopher Fabian with his goat of the same name in Zemliak, or Hutsalo's Khoma Pryshchepa, the possessor of an encyclopedic wisdom expressed entirely in folkloric clichés, or Zahrebelny's Diadko Obelisk, who would destroy the bullock and the horse "as a class" and "in their honour erect an obelisk"—are the source of considerable reading satisfaction: their eccentricity both gives rise to the unexpected and generates the pleasure of recognition at each of their appearances. But it is these attractive originals, harmless *Sonderlinge*, standing remote from the mainstream social reality—not above it, like the seer in Shevchuk, but outside it—who were perceived even in professional literary criticism as in some sense typifying the national substance.

This manner of construing the national difference has as its first major statement Nikolai Gogol's stories with Ukrainian settings—the collections *Vechera na khutore bliz Dikanki* (Evenings on a Farm near Dykanka, 1831–32) and *Mirgorod* (Myrhorod, 1835), which express toward Ukrainian folklore and history a profoundly ambivalent attitude: affectionate, yet ironically dismissive to the point of caricature.[20] The numerous allusions to Gogol in the whimsical novels are therefore wholly appropriate: Ilchenko's town is called Myroslav, perhaps in deference to Gogol's Myrhorod; and Zemliak's regional capital, Hlynsk, expresses its provinciality by having, like Myrhorod, a vast puddle in the main square.

In the context of such signals indicating the provincialism of the country setting, the assertion that its localism may be transcended in the interests of a more general meaningfulness can be made only humorously or ironically. Hutsalo's comparison of the mores of New York with those prevailing in the village of Iablunivka is (intentionally) funny because of the shrieking difference

19. Pohribny expresses this view in "Suchasnyi styl," 150. Hutsalo, in his appreciation of Zahrebelny's *Levyne sertse*, regards the "image of the national character" as one of the heroes of the novel; see his "Roman, gde vlastvuet smekh," *Literaturnoe obozrenie*, 1978, no. 6: 51–3, here 51.

20. See George S. N. Luckyj, *Between Gogol' and Ševčenko: Polarity in the Literary Ukraine, 1798–1847* (Munich: Fink Verlag, 1971), 106 and 114–15.

in scale between the terms of the comparison. Zemliak gives his fictional village the name of Vavilon (Babylon), both to underscore the comic self-importance of the residents and as an ironic concession to his readers that the village, as a seat of wealthy peasants, is a microcosm of the universal in one respect alone: it harbours the class enemy and is, in that sense, like the Babylon of the Book of Revelation, "the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth."

The whimsical novel, then, defined national difference in terms of quaintness, outdatedness, and rustic provinciality—qualities that perhaps had a certain Old World attractiveness but were, even as notions, the opposites of modernity and relevance for the Soviet Ukrainian readership, as for any other. In doing so the whimsical novel promoted a deprecatory provincial self-stereotyping against which Soviet Ukrainian critics and writers eventually began to protest, though in the context of discussions of other matters than the whimsical novel. Iurii Shcherbak complained that three quarters of Ukrainian short stories are set in the village;[21] Leonid Korenevych lamented the underdevelopment of Ukrainian city prose;[22] and Iurii Mushketyk, at the Eighth Congress of the Soviet Writers' Union in June 1986, accused Soviet critics of perceiving in Ukrainian contemporary literature only its "romantic dimension."[23] All of this unease could be summarized as an expression of discontent with the marginalization of Ukrainian literature and, more generally, culture.[24]

II

Some whimsical novels, however, did challenge the dominant culturally evaluative tendency of the subgenre, and it would be instructive to consider two such works—Zahrebelny's *Levyne sertse* and Shevchuk's *Dim na hori*—in

21. Shcherbak pointed out at the Ninth Ukrainian Writers' Congress that eighty of the 123 short stories published in the annual *Opovidannia* for 1981, 1982, 1983, and 1984 were set in the village. See "Obrii khudozhnoi prozy," *Literaturna Ukraina*, 21 August 1986.

22. In his article "Tvoryty filosofiiu doby," *Kyiv*, 1984, no. 8: 85–91, Korenevych agreed with V. Panchenko that urban prose did not yet exist "as a phenomenon" (p. 85) and observed that prose set in the city still had no urban idiom of its own (p. 90).

23. "VIII z"izd pysmennykiv SRSR: Vystup Iu. Mushketyka," *Literaturna Ukraina*, 3 July 1986.

24. Such discontent was expressed without resort to euphemisms at the November 1986 plenary session of the Union of Writers of Ukraine by the Transcarpathian delegate Vasyl Vovchok: "We believe that provincial narrow-mindedness misdirects many of our writers to the periphery of issues and, therefore, of life. It is against this marginality that we must struggle first of all, in order to place ourselves at last at the cutting edge of our age" ("Myslyty perspektyvno, pratsiuvaty po-novomu," *Literaturna Ukraina*, 27 November 1986).

juxtaposition to Hutsalo's more mainstream though no less remarkable *Pozychenyi cholovik.*

Zahrebelny's questioning of the whimsical novel comes within the context of a Menippean challenge to the expectations that a reader accustomed to socialist realism might have of the genre of the novel. Like Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, Zahrebelny's *Levyne sertse* delights its readers by frustrating them with its eccentricities. The plot, which flirts with the love-plot of trivial literature, defies popular conventions of plausibility, or even continuity (the heroine wavers between two suitors and then abruptly marries a third, who had scarcely figured in the narrative); the narration barely advances for digressions (like Sterne, Zahrebelny has a long digression concerning digressions); there is play with the sequence of chapters (Zahrebelny has unnumbered chapters in parentheses); and the notion of psychological causality is lampooned (the narrator identifies two major motives for the conflict: wheat stubble and ice cream). The narrative persona, who shares the name "Zahrebelny" with the author, has an alter ego, Varfolomii Knurets, a "doctor of erudite sciences"; the latter serves as a conduit for arcane information concerning astrophysics, syntax, animal husbandry, the theory of laughter, Virgil's *Aeneid*, and a score of other subjects, generating the impression that the ordering principle of the novel is serendipity. Non-fictional elements find their way into the novel: real critics (Novychenko, Syvokin) are mentioned by name, and fellow authors are quoted. Various modes of discourse (speech, editorial, scholarly discussion) are parodied. The result is a mannerism one critic that has called an "anti-style," an appropriate term for an approach to writing that aims to put into question as many forms of writing as possible, including the author's own.[25]

In the course of this global deconstructive project, Zahrebelny also undermines the convention to which his own book is closest—that of the whimsical novel. In doing so he exposes (while also continuing to promote) its established provincializing argumentation.

Zahrebelny parodies the rustic fixation of the genre and of Ukrainian prose as a whole by insisting that his Karpiv Iar (later called Svitloiarsk and still later Veseloiarsk) is at the very midpoint of the Ukrainian literary countryside: "Світлоярськ розташований на однаковій відстані від Вітрової Балки Андрія Головка і Груні Остапа Вишні, від Байгорода Юрія Яновського і Червонограда Івана Сенченка, від Бродщини Олеся Гончара і Зелених Млинів Василя Земляка ..."[26] Yet Zahrebelny does not desist from deriving

25. Pohribny, "Moda?" 26.

26. "Svitloiarsk is situated equidistantly from Andrii Holovko's Vitrova Balka and Ostap Vyshnia's Hrunia, from Iurii Ianovsky's Baihorod and Ivan Senchenko's Chervonohrad, from Oles Honchar's Brodshchyna and Vasyl Zemliak's Zeleni Mlyny" (Pavlo

humour from the contemplation of provincialism. Typical in this respect is the episode concerning the bitumen road laid down in Svitloiarsk (not, nota bene, connected to the national highway network): every operator of a motor vehicle in the village, whether of a car or agricultural machine, drives up and down it obsessively, savouring the flavour of modern civilization. What Zahrebelny *does* attack is the patronizing, pseudo-metropolitan attitude that simulates high regard for the rural, but in fact holds it in contempt. He parodies the pious ideologization and poeticization of the countryside in a mock-eulogy in newspaper style on an ephemeral record harvest, and he allows banal official reverence toward the ethnographic to parody itself. (To this end he quotes verbatim, with ironic admiration, from a book released by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences' publishing house, Naukova dumka.) The argument of such parodies works as follows: certain texts are hypocritical in their praise of the rural; their subtext is contempt for the rural; and their attitude is itself contemptible and worthy of unmasking.

History as a natural source of colourful details suitable for humorous treatment also comes in for reassessment in *Levyne sertse*. The plot-as-intrigue (the heroine's unmotivated marriage) provides a parallel to the novel's formulation of the discontinuity, indeed impotence, of history. Svitloiarsk is part of a historical landscape; indeed, it is rumoured to have been founded by the Cossacks. Yet it is to be inundated by a new Dnieper River dam, a representation of the power of the historical present, inevitable and beyond discussion. In this sense *Levyne sertse* provides a pessimistic answer to Honchar's *Sobor* (The Cathedral, 1968), in which the preservation or destruction of the past symbolized by the cathedral was an issue of debate and the basis of conflict between the antagonists.[27] In Zahrebelny's novel, in contrast to Ilchenko's or Hutsalo's, the use of history for comic effect is justified not so much by its attractiveness as a source of exotic, colourful, and exciting material as by its ephemeral and impermanent quality and its consequent unseriousness. On two occasions the novel uses the motif of the document that disproves a cherished or popular belief—concerning the Cossack ancestry of the hero in one case and of the narrator himself in the other. For the contemporary human being history is disqualified as a source of identity, but historical discourse retains its affective utility: the discredited information loses none of its validity as joke or anecdote.

Zahrebelny, *Levyne sertse: Roman* [Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1978], 13).

27. See my article "Honchar's *Sobor* and Rudenko's *Orlova balka*: Environmental Conservation as Theme and Argument in Two Recent Ukrainian Novels," in *Slavic Themes: Papers from Two Hemispheres*, ed. Boris Christa et al. (Neuried: Hieronymus, 1988), 271–88.

The narrator's account of the etymology of his own name is a case in point: Zahrebelny is derived from Sakrebelny, which in turn is based on the expression *sacre bleu*, used to excess by an ancestor visiting the court of Louis XIV with a Cossack delegation; an Italian branch of the family subsequently modified the surname to Zagribaldi and eventually begat "so famous a man as Giuseppe Garibaldi."[28] Overvaluation of the significance of the past for the present, whether by Svitloiarsk residents who base their claim to importance on alleged descent from Cossack colonels, or by the narrator, in his elaborate project for a speech at the opening of an imaginary museum, is always comically undermined. The novel prefers to suggest, rather, that the postulation of links, especially causal ones, between past and present is an arbitrary and uncertain matter. Symbolic of this uncertainty is the attribution by one of the characters of pollution and ecological damage in the iron-and-steel belt along the Dnieper to the cooking and fishing activities of the Cossacks three centuries earlier.

The novel's parody of literary historicism is also a self-parody by Zahrebelny not as persona, but as author: by 1977, when *Levyne sertse* was published, he had written four large novels set in medieval Rus'. Zahrebelny later wrote two other historical novels set in the Cossack period, including *Ia, Bohdan* (I, Bohdan, 1983), his excellent literary portrait of Hetman Khmelnytsky. In short, Zahrebelny makes explicit (and, by exposing, criticizes) the cavalier attitude toward history implied, but seldom discussed, in the whimsical novel.

By reflecting critically on the premises of the subgenre, Zahrebelny takes his novel outside its conventional argumentation. In general the mere representation of the rural and the historical in a humorous context in Ukrainian literature, we argued earlier, constitutes a reiteration of the deprecatory stereotype of Ukrainian culture. Zahrebelny, without challenging the stereotype itself, challenges the modes of representation by which it is reinforced.

III

In 1978 *Levyne sertse* was reviewed by Hutsalo, who admired above all the freedom that Zahrebelny asserted in his treatment of form and his use of the details of life not for their own sake, but as materials for an overarching aesthetic purpose.[29] Subsequently Hutsalo's own *Pozychenyi cholovik* and *Pryvatne zhyttia fenomena*, published together in 1982 as a "dilogy," also strove for similar goals in not dissimilar ways. The narrators, the eccentric collective farmer Khoma Pryshchepa in the first volume and the persona of the writer in the second, are as garrulous and digressive as Zahrebelny's narrator. The plot, as in Zahrebelny, is a skeleton to be fleshed out with heterogeneous content: in

28. Zahrebelny, *Levyne sertse*, 37.

29. Hutsalo, "Roman, gde," 52.

Pozychenyi cholovik Pryshchepa is lent to the market speculator Odarka Darmohraikha against the security of a thoroughbred calf and later returned to his lawful wife; in *Pryvatne zhyttia* Pryshchepa travels to the United States, while the writer's persona reports on events in Iablunivka and, among other adventures, encounters Cossacks and Tatars.

Hutsalo's overarching aesthetic purpose, it appears, was to create a mythical portrait of the Ukrainian collective farmer as a representative of the Ukrainian people as a whole. The pathos of the concluding chapter on the "inexhaustible creative genius of the Ukrainian people"[30] certainly suggests this:

> Літні села я сприймав як безмежну книгу рідної землі і рідного народу. Кожне село — наче окремий і неповторний розділ. Такий, як Яблунівка ... із роботою на полях і на фермах, із новими та старими обрядами і звичаями, з народженнями людськими й смертями, з пригодами химерними й непорозуміннями ще химернішими, з піснями, з лукавим сміхом та зі словом — дотепним і розумним, веселкової барвистості і небесної незмірної глибини! І якщо розділ цей багатий і невичерпаний, то яка ж казково багата й невичерпна вся книга ...[31]

For Hutsalo the book of Ukrainian culture, clearly, is a volume unrelievedly bucolic.

The chief implement in Hutsalo's mythogenic endeavour was to be style. The style, as we remarked earlier, is as folkloric as possible: proverbs, riddles, fixed similes and metaphors, and other folk locutions formulate most notions and offer a commentary on most events, and they form a substantial part of the novel's bulk.[32] They are also genuine, as attested by the standard reference sources.[33] The dilogy, one suspects, was intended to make this compendium of folk wit and wisdom the major feature of an attractive, colourful, and interesting literary

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30. Ievhen Hutsalo, *Pozychenyi cholovik; Pryvatne zhyttia fenomena: Roman-dylohiia* (Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1982), 706.

31. "The villages in summer I apprehended as the infinite book of our native land and people. Each village is like an individual and unique chapter, such as Iablunivka ... with its labour in the fields and on the farms, with new and old rituals and customs, with people being born and dying, with strange adventures and even stranger misunderstandings, with songs, cunning laughter and words—witty and wise, colourful as the rainbow and deep as the unfathomable heavens! And if the chapter is rich and inexhaustible, then how fabulously rich and inexhaustible is the whole book" (ibid., 709).

32. The claim, however, that folk sayings account for more than half of the novel (e.g., by Mykola Riabchuk, "Osiaiannia i siaivo prozy," *Zhovten*, 1981, no. 6: 131–7, here 135), is an exaggeration.

33. Hutsalo closely follows the text of *Ukrainski narodni prysliv"ia i prykazky: Dozhovtnevyi period* (Kyiv: Derzhlitvydav, 1963) and *Zahadky* (Kyiv: Akademiia nauk Ukrainskoi RSR, 1962).

world, as rich as that of Kotliarevsky's *Eneida*;[34] it was also to utilize the resources of folk idiom and ethos to formulate an ideologically acceptable satire of capitalism and American culture.

These designs proved difficult to accomplish. The amplification of folkloric commonplaces produces an impression not of the natural philosophical sovereignty of the folk mind, but rather of the opposite. Folk wisdom emerges instead as chaotic, archaic, and pre-modern in character, a consequence that, though wholly consistent with the generic drift of the whimsical novel, caused at least one critic's discomfort. "While reading *Pozychenyi cholovik*," wrote Mykhailo Strelbytsky, "you truly have the impression of being in the embrace of a sea. [But then] you wade into it, and it's only up to your knees."[35] The sense of insufficient depth is understandable. The folkloric locution transposes every idea into images of material things, especially those familiar to an agricultural society (animals, plants, implements), as in the following riddle to which the answer is "a human being": "Стоять два стовпи, на стовпах діжа, коло діжі ручка, на діжі макітра, на макітрі ліс, а у лісі є кувіка, що кусає чоловіка.[36] Moreover, the proverb and riddle, based as they are on similitude, generate only that pre-modern, pre-Enlightenment knowledge of the world that Foucault described as "plethoric yet poverty-stricken": it is purely additive and incapable of creating a hierarchy of insights linking the simple to the complex, the particular to the general.[37]

But the unsatisfactory resolution of the novel's philosophical aspirations is not, ultimately, a result of its archaic quality. It is conceivable that a novel should be written as the idyll of a pre-rational (indeed, folk-based) "naturalness" of thought. What deprives the novel of credibility, and makes of it an anachronism, is its failure to perceive itself as archaic. It is this naïveté of the dilogy's attempt at a new myth of the countryside that ensures that, instead of an apotheosis of "the people" consistent with the socialist realist principle of "*narodnist*," what emerges is a more profound definition of underdevelopment and provincialism.

IV

We have said that the argument of the subgenre of the whimsical novel diminished the prestige of the cultural process of which it was part by associating

34. Thus it is apprehended by Zhulynsky in "Masshtaby suchasnosti," 130.

35. Strelbytsky, "Vysokosnyi rik romanu," 112.

36. "There are two posts, on the posts a barrel, beside the barrel a handle, on the barrel a pot, on the pot a forest, and in the forest a creature that bites a man" (Hutsalo, *Pozychenyi cholovik*, 177).

37. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 30.

this process with low-status versions of the key topoi of country, folklore, and history. Hutsalo's novel illustrated the triumph of this predetermined argument of the subgenre over what seem to have been the quite different intentions of the author. Zahrebelny's *Levyne sertse*, in a manoeuvre of self-irony, both retained and criticized the whimsical novel's persuasive thrust. Was there a possibility of writing within the subgenre without adopting its cultural value judgments? Valerii Shevchuk's *Dim na hori* suggests that this question may be answered in the affirmative.

The novel, which in its subtitle calls itself a "novel ballad," is in two parts, the first half providing the frame narrative for the collection of twelve short stories that form the second. Within the frame narrative there is a deliberately obfuscating movement backwards and forwards in time, from which there gradually emerges a simple, indeed schematic, sequence of events centred on the house on the hill. The narrative covers the years 1911–63. During that period the house, located in the country near an unnamed town, is inhabited by a single family line of mothers and daughters, one woman in each of four generations. Two kinds of males seek out the house on the hill. One ascends the hill, accepts a proffered cup of water, and remains in the house as the husband of the woman who at that time is of marriageable age. Of such unions are born daughters who inherit the house. But prior to this event, as each woman reaches sexual maturity, she is visited by the other kind of male being: a grey-suited dandy with impeccable manners and lacquered shoes. This footwear is always preternaturally free of dust, as the dandies descend from aloft in the form of eagles.

The transformation from eagle to dandy is at first only hinted at, then directly referred to, and finally described in detail: "Черкнувся підошвами лискучих туфель і звільна пішов по ній до самого будинку на горі... Птах ішов по стежці й помалу втрачав пташину подобу: пір'я на його голові стало кучугурою кучерявого волосся, крила руками, і поклався йому на плечі той-таки неодмінно сірий костюм."[38] In each case this avian incubus strives to seduce the woman; sometimes he succeeds, and the progeny in these cases is always male. Such men leave the house early and eschew social normality, for they are seers endowed with privileged insights into the nature of things. The stories of the second half were written by one such seer, the goatherd Ivan Shevchuk (he was a government clerk until possessed by the Vision), and edited by his grandnephew, also an offspring of the demonic conception. (As in *Levyne sertse*, the narrator bears the author's surname.)

38. "The soles of his shining shoes scuffed the path, and he slowly walked along it to the lonely building on the hill.... The bird walked along the path and gradually lost its ornithic appearance: the feathers on its head became a heap of curly hair, its wings became arms, and that self-same grey costume descended upon its shoulders." (Valerii Shevchuk, *Dim na hori: Roman-baliada* [Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1983], 229–30).

These stories are more highly saturated with the fantastic than the frame narrative; they are set in the seventeenth century in Cossack milieux, and the fantastic in them is constructed of motifs borrowed from Ukrainian folklore.

Among the novel's striking Romantic features is the motif of the genesis of the romantic artist. Both Ivan the goatherd and his later editor, the Boy, are offspring of a supernatural conception; each discovers himself to be receptive to epiphanies of the Essence; each chooses to become a social outsider; and the Boy embarks on that most Romantic of enterprises, the journey into the unknown distance, which is also a journey homeward. The vision shared by the Boy and the goatherd has a close affinity to that of a Schlegel or a Novalis, even down to individual symbols and ideas:

> Здалося йому, що все навколо різко освітилося, сяйво те попливло з неба і все єство його почало насичуватися дивовижним яскравим спокоєм. Всі чуття його обернулися у це єдине — наслухання й теплу радість. Бачив скелі, що нависали навколо, безладно громадячись одна на одну, відчував небо, що приспустилось і лягло йому на душу; пізнав раптом увесь світ, засіяний тим-таки світлом, повний гармонії, але сплетений у надзвичайно складний вузол. Здавалося, душа його розширюється, роблячись безмежно широкою; відчув пульс дня, що ожив отут, на цій землі,— з'єднання всього живого, неба й землі, води й землі, а також води й неба — чудовий вогонь запалював усе це, напоюючи й живлячи. Побачив він, як рухається сік від коріння до стебла в траві та гіллі кущів...[39]

The harmony and unity of the universe, the identity between the world and the human soul, the organic connection between living things, the symbolism of fluidity and light, the motif of the interpenetration of the four alchemical elements: these familiar Romantic elements form the cosmological dimension of the privileged vision that Ivan encapsulates in the symbol of *spokii*—tranquillity. The vision also has a moral dimension, symbolized by the term "love," which guides the human individual toward the attainment of *spokii*. The carriers of this vision are scions of the house on the hill, for which reason Mykola Zhulynsky

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39. "It seemed to him that everything around had become starkly lit, [that] this illumination flowed from the heavens, and his whole being began to fill with a strange, luminous tranquillity. All of his sensations became one: intentness and fervid joy. He saw the crags that loomed around him, haphazardly crowding one another, he sensed the sky that seemed to have descended and covered his soul; he suddenly apprehended the entire world, sown with that self-same light, filled with harmony but woven into a preternaturally complicated knot. It seemed that his soul was expanding, becoming immeasurably wide; he sensed the pulse of the day that had come to life here, on this earth—the union of everything animate, of sky and earth, of water and earth, and also of water and sky—[and] a marvellous blaze inflamed it all, imbuing and nurturing them. He saw how the sap moved from the roots to the blades of grass and the branches of bushes" (ibid., 115).

has interpreted the hill as a Parnassus and the women who inhabit it, mothers of visionaries, as muses.[40]

The function of this, perhaps unexpected, revisitation of contemporary Ukrainian literature by Romanticism becomes more transparent if we consider aspects of the style and construction of the novel. Several elements of the frame narrative impart to it a mysterious, rarefied, abstract, or, to use a term favoured by Soviet critics, "mythologizing" character. The first among these is Shevchuk's style, which is poetic in the sense that it excludes the impression of randomness and fortuity. In Shevchuk's deliberate, measured, even solemn diction, words are replete with associations; the reader is encouraged by the seriousness of the style to believe that each image has its place within a dense and thought-through system of symbols. Second, the connection of the narrative to the real world is the object of mystification, which distances the narrated events from "public" history and places them in an abstract sphere of their own. (Shevchuk frequently gives exact numbers of years between events, but rarely historical points of reference; thus, while a chronology may be constructed through the careful collation of such clues, the reader is frequently at sea as to the narrative "now.") Finally, the frame story is, in an important respect, archaic: it presents a narrative that consists of a ritual reiteration of the known. The myth of the house on the hill is directly enunciated by one of the characters, and subsequent narration confirms the truth and reliability of the myth.

The second half of the novel, notwithstanding its seventeenth-century setting and fantastic subject matter, is much more modern in narrative structure. Its twelve constituent stories are *Novellen*—narratives of linear structure that arrest the reader's interest through unusual themes, dramatic tension, and unexpected twists and resolutions of the plot. Their supernatural content, derived from Ukrainian folklore, ensures the sensation of pleasurable fear. They presuppose a modern reader-as-consumer who demands effects: excitement, wonder, delight.

The twelve stories are excellent exemplars of their genre—an assertion that, unfortunately, cannot be demonstrated within the compass of this study. The world that they delineate contrasts with that of the frame narrative: it is a realm of uncertainty and dread, often depicted as grotesque or absurd, in which the boundary between good and evil is unstable and in which the human being is possessed by unfulfillable (often erotic) desire on the one hand and inexplicable evil on the other.

If we recollect that the stories are the product of the creative labours of Ivan the goatherd, then it becomes reasonable to suggest that they represent an interpretation of the (riven, tortured, fragmented) "modern" world from the

40. Mykola Zhulynsky, "... I spovishchaie nam holos travy," afterword to Shevchuk, *Dim na hori,* 468–86, here 479.

perspective of the (harmonious, humane) archaic Romantic vision of the seer, their seventeenth-century settings notwithstanding.

Yet, if this is all the argument of *Dim na hori*—a critique of modernity and a plea for a more archaic ideal of human life, another delayed neo-Romanticism like that of, say, Hermann Hesse (whose style Shevchuk's at times distinctly resembles)—then the accusation of excessive abstraction and remoteness, which is sometimes levelled at Shevchuk,[41] would have some substance. Read on this level, the work appears, in addition, excessively generalized: the "modernity" that emerges from the stories applies equally to many cultural milieux since the 1880s. It is the attribute of every place and time—and therefore of none.

But such a reading would be incomplete—indeed, it would ignore one of the argumentative strata of the novel. For the work is, above all, a polemic against the whimsical novel, the subgenre whose defining topoi—country, folklore, fantasy, history—it takes over and imbues with new meaning. The non-urban space (it seems scarcely appropriate to call it "countryside") is *not* village, *not* province, but *landscape*, in which symbolic places and things (hill, road, river, mist, sunset) are located. History is no longer a museum to be plundered for colourful costumes and quirks of Old World behaviour or for confirmation of politically expedient myths, but an alienating background that permits the sharper formulation of issues and problems from an unexpected, non-contemporary perspective. The ethnographic is not local colour, but a medium that releases the plot from realistic reference and opens it up, like the *Kunstmärchen*, to a multitude of readings. Humour—the element that above all is the medium for the dismissive, trivializing, and prestige-denying treatment of the history-folklore-country complex—is necessarily absent.

The aesthetic strategy embodied in *Dim na hori* permitted an escape from the judgment of national culture, which was conventional in the whimsical novel. Shevchuk's work unambiguously marked its participation in a national literary tradition, freed its thematic and motivic markers from their standard negative associations, and thereby proposed the tradition to be a viable and natural medium for a literature open to any self-defined literary tasks.

41. See, e.g., Mykola Riabchuk, "Te, shcho vyvyshchuie liudynu," *Ukraina*, 1984, no. 45: 11.

The Function of Time in Lina Kostenko's Dramatic Works

Walter Smyrniw

Немає моря глибшого, ніж Час
(There is no deeper sea than Time)
Lina Kostenko

References to time are infrequent in Lina Kostenko's first three poetry collections, *Prominnia zemli* (Rays of the Earth [Kyiv: Molod], 1957]), *Vitryla* (Sails [Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1958]), and *Mandrivky sertsia* (Wanderings of the Heart [Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1961]). But a notable change is evident in her next, much later, collection, *Nad berehamy vichnoi riky* (On the Banks of the Eternal River, 1977). There the references to time are not only much more numerous but focussed on various perceptions of time, on its impact on the lives of individuals, societies, and nations. For example, Kostenko states the following about the role of time in contemporary life:

> Шалені темпи. Час не наша власність.
> Фантастика — не мріяв і Жюль Верн.
> Кипить у нас в артеріях сучасність.
> Нас із металу виклепав модерн.[1]

Similarly, in another poem in that collection she asserts that "Життя іде і все без коректур. / І час летить, не стишує галопу ..." (Life goes on without any proofreading. / And time flies by without slowing its gallop ...) and "Не знаю я, що буде після нас, / В які природа убереться шати,..." (I do not know what shall come after us, / What finery nature shall don"; and in another

1. "Frenzied tempos. Time is not our property. / It's science fiction—Undreamt of even by Jules Verne. / The present is boiling in our arteries. / Modernity has wrought us out of metal" (Lina Kostenko, *Nad berehamy vichnoi riky: Poezii* [Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1977], 19).

stanza she observes: "Буває часом дивне відчуття,— / що час іде, а я собі окремо" (At times I have a strange feeling / that time is passing but I am not a part of it).[2] Kostenko makes analogous comments about time in her fifth collection of poems, *Nepovtornist* (Uniqueness, 1980). There she also makes astute observations about the impact of time on human life. To cite but one example:

Не час минає, а минаєм ми.
А ми минаєм ... ми минаєм ... так-то ...
А час — це тільки відбивання такту
Тік-так, тік-так ... і в цьому вся трагічність.
Час — не хвилини, час — віки і вічність
А день, і ніч, і звечора до рання —
це тільки віхи цього проминання.[3]

Kostenko's preoccupation with the phenomenon of time can also be discerned in her next collection, *Sad netanuchykh skulptur* (The Garden of Unmelting Sculptures, 1987). But there she no longer limits herself to depicting time's effects on various aspects of life. By way of striking metaphors and direct allusions she touches on several temporal notions, including cyclical time, linear time, the bidirectional time flow, and space-time continuum.[4] Whereas some of the above concepts are derived from theoretical physics, others are taken from the linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure, who introduced in his *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916) diachronic and synchronic concepts of time. He employed the term "diachronic" to designate the chronological and historical evolutions in languages, and the term "synchronic" to describe the structure of a language at a given point in time. Evidently Kostenko is well–acquainted with these concepts of time, since she employs de Saussure's terminology in an allusion to Homer's *Odyssey:* "То добре, що в гекзаметрах синхронно /

2. Ibid., 41, 44.

3. "It's not time passing but we who are passing. / And we are passing ... we are passing ... Just like that ... / And time is but tapping out the measure / Tick-tock, tick-tock ... and that's the whole tragedy. / Time is not minutes, time is eons and eternity. / And day, and night, and from nightfall to dawn / Are but markers of this passage of time" (Lina Kostenko, *Nepovtornist: Virshi, poemy* [Kyiv: Molod, 1980], 61).

4. The following examples are from Lina Kostenko, *Sad netanuchykh skulptur: Virshi, poema-balada, dramatychni poemy* (Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1987). Cyclical time: "Для грека час не мчався. Навпаки. / Час був циклічний" (p. 118). Linear time: "усі ідуть за часом, як за плугом" (p. 7); "Час пролітає з реактивним свистом" (p. 9). Bidirectional time: "Конвеєр часу — тільки врізнобіг — один в минуле, другий у майбутнє" (p. 190). Space-time continuum: "Тим часом ми проходимо крізь час" (p. 10); "зустріч в просторі і в часі" (p. 95); "на місці їде віз, / І все з ним розминається" (p. 180); "протікання в часі кількох процесів" (p. 201).

живі і мертві води жебонять."[5] One should note here that Kostenko uses the term "synchronically" to characterize both the linguistic forms and architectonic aspects of this literary monument.

A close reading of *Sad netanuchykh skulptur* reveals that during the 1980s Kostenko continued to reflect on various concepts of time and to integrate them into the architectonic features of her works, especially in her "dramatic poems" "Snih u Florentsii" (Snow in Florence, 1983–85) and "Duma pro brativ neazovskykh" (*Duma* about the Non-Azov Brothers, 1984).[6] These narrative poems represent the point where Kostenko's diverse comments about the impact of time on life and art, the temporal concepts derived from de Saussure, and some scientific theories about time converge.

On the first page of "Snih u Florentsii" Kostenko states that the drama's setting is a monastery in Tours, France during the sixteenth century. By the end of the work it is clear that the events transpire in a single night. Thus, the three-act structure of the poem encompasses a short time period and offers only a glimpse into the lives of three monks living at the monastery. But within this brief span of time Kostenko also manages to present a much more extensive period of time from the life of the Old Man who is staying at the monastery. She reveals that his real name is Giovanni Francesco Rustici, an Italian sculptor of the Renaissance (1474–1554). In short, Kostenko utilizes the time sequence of one night to present historical events that transpired during a previous period. As a rule authors employ the flashback technique to interject events from the past into another time frame. But Kostenko does not employ this literary device to such ends. Instead she offers the present and the historical time sequence simultaneously. On the whole she achieves this by utilizing the synchronic and diachronic concepts of time.

The synchronic parameters of "Snih u Florentsii" can be discerned in the flow of real time during the three acts, which extend from nightfall to dawn, whereas diachronic time prevails only in act two. Therefore the progression of synchronic time is both continuous and concrete, whereas diachronic time is an abstract form of historical time and, as such, can be disrupted, resumed, and even traversed in a backward and forward direction. This is repeatedly demonstrated in act two of "Snih u Florentsii" as the reader is reminded of the abstract nature of diachronic time by the intrusions of chronological events. For example, while the events from Rustici's life are being presented diachronically, an apple drops from a tree,

5. "It's good that in the hexameters / [both] vital and dead waters murmur synchronically" (ibid., 97).

6. Traditionally the "*duma*" has meant a folk epic about Ukrainian Cossacks that is usually recited to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument (either a *kobza* or a *bandura*). But Kostenko employs the term to delineate a dramatic depiction of the valour, altruism, and self-sacrifice of the Cossacks in the seventeenth century.

Brother Dominic comes and asks the Old Man to whom he is speaking, and later one hears the splashing of oars, the barking of dogs, the falling of another apple, and the crowing of a rooster.[7]

The recurring dances of the nine muses, the chants and laments of the statues, and the comments from the "Shaggy Demon" provide further digressions and disruptions in the historical and abstract rendition of time. Moreover, by way of an authorial comment, Kostenko interjects more than four centuries of future historical time into the diachronic rendition of Rustici's biography. When Rustici declares that he is a worthless sculptor and that it is not even known that he had cast the bronze figures standing at the Baptistery of St. John in Florence, Kostenko repudiates this with the following authorial assertion:

> Десь високо вгорі — у відсвітах пожеж —
> скульптурна група: *бронзові фігури,*
> котрі вивершують вже майже п'ять сторіч
> портал північної церкви Сан-Джованні.[8]

It is worth noting that Kostenko not only presents the above vision of the sculptures of John the Baptist, the Levite, and the Pharisee, which have survived for nearly five centuries, but goes on to comment about the impact that the inserted vision makes on the historical event: on seeing the time-tested vision of the sculptures, the "Shaggy Demon" goes up in smoke and disappears, whereas Rustici "побожно дивиться на свій же власний твір" (piously contemplates his own creation).[9]

The main source of the historical time and the biographical information on Rustici is the celebrated *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* by Giorgio Vasari (originally published in 1550 and 1568). A former student of Michelangelo and a highly successful painter, Vasari was personally acquainted with many of the famous artists about whom he wrote, and his work was enthusiastically received by his contemporaries and highly acclaimed thereafter. Kostenko acknowledges this source by alluding to the writings of the "genius Vasari." Utilizing the biographical information in her work, she transforms the chronological structure of the prototype into a dialogical rendition of Rustici's life, which entails two temporal perspectives. Hence in "Snih u Florentsii" Rustici's life and career are highlighted, scrutinized, and evaluated simultaneously from the points of view of a young Florentine and the Old Man,

7. Kostenko, "Snih u Florentsii: Dramatychna poema," in her *Sad netanuchykh skulptur*, 139, 146, 153, 167.

8. "Somewhere high above—in the reflections of fires— / stands a group sculpture: *bronze figures* / that have crowned for almost five centuries / the northern portal of St. John's Church." (ibid., 145).

9. Ibid.

both of whom personify the alter egos, or rather the youth and old age, of Rustici himself.

During the course of the dialogue the Florentine and the Old Man dwell not only on the most important events in Rustici's life and his creative accomplishments and failures, but also on the impact of time on the fate of artists and their works. In their arguments both are given to contentious claims, but as a rule the Old Man's views carry more weight since they are based on observations and first–hand experiences with the deleterious effects of time. He points out how some works of art never reach posterity because the artists may be compelled to create something that cannot last beyond the present day. The Old Man illustrates this by alluding to an episode described by Vasari. As Vasari puts it, "One winter, when much snow fell in Florence," Michelangelo's patron, Piero de' Medici, "caused him to make in his courtyard a statue of snow, which was very beautiful."[10] Vasari makes no mention of it, but the Old Man points out that it was a colossal statue that lasted only until the sun began shining.

From this laconic episode in Vasari's biography of Michelangelo, Kostenko derives not only the title for her dramatic poem but also its focal imagery. The thawing snow and melting statues metaphorically represent the masterpieces that have disappeared in the course of time. In the dialogue between the Florentine and the Old Man the fact that many of Rustici's works did not survive the ravages of time is repeatedly accentuated. Drawing on this metaphor, the Old Man states that often he too had to sculpt snow in marble ("Ліпити сніг у мармурі"),[11] and he mentions a number of his works that were destroyed, disappeared without a trace, or could not be completed owing to unexpected developments. With the passage of time not only do the statues vanish, but their sculptor also disappears. In the beginning of act two Rustici declares: "Мене немає. Був. / Під впливом часу камінь розкришився."[12]

Adhering to the biographical details provided by Vasari, Kostenko concentrates on the events in Rustici's life that contributed to the loss or destruction of his art. However, unlike Vasari, she presents an alternative to such a fate by introducing the notion of an eternal preservation of art forms. This too is expressed through a striking metaphor conveyed by the Old Man:

> Душа б зазнала цих тортур,
> якби на світі десь лишився
> мій Сад нетаничих Скульптур?![13]

10. Giorgio Vasari, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, vol. 9, trans. Gaston du C. De Vere (London: Macmillan, 1912), 11.

11. Kostenko, "Snih u Florentsii," 144.

12. "I am no longer here. I was. / Under the influence of time the stone has crumbled" (ibid., 134).

13. "Would [my] soul have known these tortures / if somewhere in the world there still

The "Garden of Unmelting Sculptures" represents an ideal that could not be attained in Rustici's life. His awareness of this turns into spiritual anguish, for he realizes that since his statues have melted like snow, in posterity there will be no trace left of his creative endeavours, no true measure of his artistic stature.

Through the dramatic rendition of Rustici's life Kostenko touches on various phenomena that emanate from the passage of time. Prominent among them is the notion of existence per se, for Kostenko prompts the reader to consider the following possibility in the life of an artist: if his works of art do not survive in time and space, will posterity be able to appreciate their structure and aesthetic qualities, or, for that matter, have any respect for the creator of such art? Having read "Snih u Florentsii," one cannot reflect on this problem without taking into account Rustici's case history. First of all, in the first act the reader discerns that the monks do not know his true identity, but believe that the Old Man was not a bad artist in the past since he did carve an excellent set of chess figures for them. By the same token, in the last act, when the Old Man vanishes and the statue of Mariella suddenly appears, the monks are enraptured by the beauty of the sculpture, but they do not know that this is the work of Rustici. Under such circumstances the monks, that is, the beholders of art at this point in time, are incapable of duly appreciating the statue or its creator because they do not know the real identity of either of them.

Kostenko's formulation of the above philosophical question, or, more precisely, her postulation of the ontological problem, reverberates with several notions that have emanated from existentialist philosophy. Although we lack adequate information about Kostenko's reading preferences and her literary and philosophical interests, there is reason to believe that she is acquainted with some of Jean-Paul Sartre's writings, because his famous philosophical axiom, "existence precedes essence," and its inherent implication that "man negates the nothingness of the world by creating an essence for himself and a structure for the world"[14] is certainly questioned, if not repudiated, through the depiction of time in "Snih u Florentsii."

In contrast to "Snih u Florentsii," where both the time and place are specified from the very start, the setting of Kostenko's second dramatic poem is not spelled out. But its title, "Duma pro brativ neazovskykh," and the list of well-known historical figures serve as clear signals to informed readers that the events transpire in the seventeenth century. Later, this is confirmed by an explicit reference to 1638, the year when Hetman Pavliuk and his loyal friends were betrayed by their fellow Cossacks, taken to Poland, and executed. But at this

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remained / my Garden of Unmelting Sculptures?!" (ibid., 168).

14. Quoted in William L. Reese, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1980), 509.

point the historical setting is suddenly distorted, because the scene shifts to a later period in which a "contemporary" woman is rocking a baby carriage and studying the historical events recorded in the Lviv Chronicle under the year 1638. In the next instant the setting changes once again, and for the first time the reader realizes that this dramatic poem is set not in the historical past but in the twenty–first century.

As this is an extraordinary and unprecedented treatment of time in Ukrainian literature, it has surprised and confused not only regular readers but also highly respected literary scholars. Mark Holberg, for example, has concluded that the temporal shifts disrupt the unity of the work;[15] similarly, V"iacheslav Briukhovetsky is of the opinion that the poet is inserting "motifs from the twentieth century" to show how the Lviv Chronicle is read in our era by people who subject the text to computer analyses.[16] These inferences stem from a misreading of the text or, more precisely, from a disregard of authorial comments about the setting and the function of time.

The opening statement of the dramatic poem, "На місці їде віз" (At a standstill a wagon is travelling) is repeated several times to alert the reader that time is not flowing in the customary manner. Furthermore, Kostenko underscores the fact that she is not presenting a realistic account of history when she alludes to a windmill, "not necessarily a realistic one," that Don Quixote attacked in Ukraine and consequently was trapped there forever because his spear got stuck in the vane of the windmill.[17] But the reason for the temporal shifts and distortions remains unclear until the reader encounters a computer speaking with an "electronic voice" and a programmer identified as "a person from the twenty-first century."[18] Only then does it become apparent that the hitherto presented kaleidoscope of time was generated by a computer running a program designed to download vistas from the historical past.

From the programmer's interaction with the computer in the futuristic setting the reader gradually becomes aware of the factors facilitating the procedure that can best be described as time processing or the capture of what Lina Kostenko calls the "winds of history." Although the programmer's explanations, such as "протікання в часі кількох процесів" (the flow through time of multiplex processes), sound as baffling as any computer jargon of our time, the main clues about this computer project are not given in the programmers' discourse but in the authorial comments that Kostenko provides. From them one can surmise that

15. Mark Holberg, "'Dusha tysiacholit shukaie sebe v slovi': Rozdumy nad knyzhkoiu Liny Kostenko 'Sad netanuchykh skulptur'," *Zhovten,* 1988, no. 6: 100–9.

16. V. S. Briukhovetsky, *Lina Kostenko: Narys tvorchosti* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1990), 234.

17. Kostenko, "Duma pro brativ neazovskykh," in *Sad netanuchykh skulptur*, 189.

18. Ibid., 200.

the future project is operating in accordance with some theories of time that were formulated in our century. One of them pertains to the relativity of time, to which the poet alludes explicitly when she states that "На місці їде віз, і все з ним розминається — / дерева, люди, обрії, зірки" (At a standstill a wagon is travelling, and everything is passing by it— / trees, people, horizons, stars).[19] This is not the place to dwell on the theory of the relativity of time, but it may be in order to state that, in the context of this theory, it is deemed "possible for an event to take place in the 'past' of one observer and in the 'future' of another."[20] The other twentieth-century scientific theory of time mentioned in this dramatic poem pertains to the flow of time, which, according to some physicists, entails a movement of time in different directions. Kostenko refers to it in the following comment through the image of a "conveyer of time" that is moving the people in opposite temporal directions:

А може, це *кобзар* їх проминає
Конвейєр часу — тільки врізнобіч —
один в минуле, другий у майбутнє.
Отак всі й розминаються навік.[21]

The depiction of scientific concepts of time and even advanced technology indicates that, as a contemporary poet, Lina Kostenko is capable of conceiving the possibility of a future technology that would make it possible to access, save, and store the historical currents of time. But it is also apparent that she does not have a high regard for the role to be played by future historians. She shows that after capturing the data from the "winds of history" they are incapable of understanding and evaluating the information because they fail to comprehend the significance of the antithesis between the selfish and cowardly acts exemplified by the Azov brothers (the data derived from the *duma*) and the valour displayed in real life situations by the non-Azov Cossack brethren, Pavliuk, Tomylenko, and Sakhno. In the end, all that future technology-oriented historians can infer from the new data is that it would be desirable to have a *duma* also about the non-Azov Cossacks, and hence they relegate the task of writing it to the computer. Kostenko spares no irony or sarcasm in the depiction of the *duma* about Sakhno Cherniak composed by the electronic *kobzar* (bard) of the twenty-first century:

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19. Ibid., 180.

20. Richard Morris, *Time's Arrows: Scientific Attitudes toward Time* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 157.

21. "But perhaps it's *the bard* passing them. / A conveyer of time, only in opposite directions— / one into the past, another into the future. /That's how we all pass each other into eternity" (Kostenko, "Duma pro brativ neazovskykh," 190).

З комп'ютера чутно якесь потріскування.
Крізь технічні шуми й потік інформації прориває́ться
трагічний речитатив *думи*:
«Із города Боровиці (Черкаська область) то не тумани
великі вставали,
То Павлюка (гетьман нереєстрового козацтва)
із Томиленком (початок XVII століття)
уночі безоружних ізв'язали ...
Два брати кінних, а третій піший-пішаниця,
За кінними братами поспішає,
За стременечка хватає ...»[22]

From this recitation it is quite obvious that the logical but mindless machine only repeats and crudely distorts the data stored in its memory (the same verses of the seventeenth-century *duma* about the Azov brothers that the reader encountered a few pages earlier).

One should note that the preceding illustrations of the function of time in Kostenko's dramatic poems are by no means exhaustive. But even a limited number of examples illustrates how the poet uses various temporal concepts in the architectonic features of her works, in the dramatic rendition of the impact of time on the characters, and in the delineation of the relevance of time to philosophical issues pertaining to human existence. Inasmuch as Kostenko designates both "Snih u Florentsii" and "Duma pro brativ neazovskykh" as dramatic poems instead of plays, there is reason to believe that she intended these works to be read rather than performed. Kostenko's intention to familiarize her readers of belles lettres with some of the major concepts of time that have evolved in our century is certainly a significant innovation in Ukrainian literature. But it does not follow from this that the above dramatic poems are unsuitable for staging. They could, perhaps, be adapted for the stage with much greater success than Kostenko's novel in verse *Marusia Churai* (1979) if, in the future, a gifted director, brave and imaginative, rises to the challenge of effectively showing on stage the many aspects of time or what Kostenko's programmer calls the "flow through time of multiplex processes."

22. "*From the computer* some sort of crackling noise is heard. / Through the technical noise and flow of information breaks out / a *duma*'s tragic recitation: / 'From the town of Borovytsia (Cherkasy oblast) it was not / great fogs rising / But Pavliuk (hetman of the unregistered Cossack army) / and Tomylenko (turn of the seventeenth century) / unarmed being bound at night ... / Two brothers were on horseback, while a third on foot was going, / Hastening after [his] mounted brothers [and] / Grabbing hold of their stirrups " (ibid., 203).

The Poetry of Kostiantyn Moskalets, Natalka Bilotserkivets, and Viktor Kordun

Halyna Koscharsky

The delegitimation of the Communist regime in Eastern Europe in the 1980s was accompanied in Ukraine by a populist mobilization that in effect deprived the writer, and particularly the poet, of his previous role as a political voice. The countless new democratic political parties that quickly came into being were often organized and led by the country's literary figures, who were translating their earlier literary activity into political energy.[1]

The reading public may have expected the literary freedoms of a newly independent country to ensure a surge of emotive and thematically nationalistic writing.[2] Especially in the poetic genre, there was the expectation of a wave of celebratory, sentimentally nationalistic verse. But the result, has increasingly been poetry dealing with themes such as everyday existence, the philosophical questions of life and death, religion, the nature of humanity, personal relationships, and nature—that is, themes concerned with the self, with social and individual problems, that are mostly inward looking and largely oblivious of the nation as an entity.[3] In fact, the practical use of nationalism in writing is now

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1. At the time George S. N. Luckyj wrote that "The new atmosphere of openness and free discussion has been very stimulating for the flow of new ideas, but less so for creative writing. Many authors, busy with politics, have no time or desire to write" (*Ukrainian Literature in the Twentieth Century: A Reader's Guide* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992], 106).

2. For a discussion of literary theme and its impact on national consciousness before independence, see my article "Literaturna tematyka ta ii vplyv na natsionalnu svidomist," in *Ukraine in the 1990s*, ed. Marko Pavlyshyn and J. E. M. Clarke (Clayton, Vic.: Monash University, Slavic Section, 1992), 110.

3. Cf. Michael Naydan's analysis of prose themes in "Ukrainian Prose of the 1990s as It Reflects Contemporary Social Structures," *The Ukrainian Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 45–61.

limited. It still finds a voice in the poetry of Dmytro Pavlychko, Antonina Lystopad, Volodymyr Zatulyviter, and Olha Strashenko, for example, but the evocation of nationalist sentiment on a grand scale now rightly belongs to political parties and no longer to the writer.

Having passed that initial "post-colonial moment,"[4] the writer has turned to "normal" themes, thereby hoping to address a number of publics, among them an international audience. As Michael Naydan puts it, "the current political realities do not particularly interest today's reading public".[5]

In an article that provides a general socio–linguistic analysis of the work of nine young poets of the 1980s,[6] Attyla Mohylny lists the following overriding themes: folklore (with subcategories of demonology, musical intertextuality, Cossack and insurgent folklore, urban and romantic folklore, that which concerns the folk calendar, folk customs, and folkways); myth–making; national trades; occupations and commerce; biblical motifs; the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; personal everyday life; antiquity and the ancient world; native literature,; the Second World War; music; art; references to Communist society; the era of the princes and principalities; twentieth–century European art; and the politics of the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. Mohylny makes the point that these themes reflect, at least partially, "the social stereotype of associative technique, since part of them may be identified as direct reference, or reference by association, to the authority of the source of the poetic text (motifs from the Bible, from antiquity and the princely era, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance, and so on)."[7] These texts were published between 1982 and 1987 and would have been written mainly during the first half of the decade, just before the literary and political thaw resulting from glasnost. Therefore their authors tended to avoid openly political themes.

In comparison to these texts, those published during the years 1993–96 are characterized by melancholy, pessimism, and often a cynical tone.[8] Death,

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4. Marko Pavlyshyn discusses Ukraine's "post-colonial moment" in "Postkoloniialna khvylyna: Ukrainska kultura pislia SRSR," in *Ukraine Today—Perspectives for the Future: Proceedings of the Conference "Ukraine Today—Perspectives for the Future," 19–21 June 1992, Macquarie University, School of Modern Languages, Ukrainian Studies Centre, Sydney, 1993*, ed. Halyna Koscharsky (Commack, N.Y.: Nova Science Publishers, 1995), 149.

5. Maikl Naidan [Michael Naydan], "Dvoie ukrainskykh poetiv: Attyla Mohylny i Oksana Zabuzhko," *Suchasnist*, 1993, no. 7: 77.

6. Attyla Mohylny, "Sotsiolinhvistychnyi analiz molodoi poezii visimdesiatnykiv," *Slovo i chas*, 1995, no. 2: 49–52. The nine poets he discusses are Iurii Andrukhovych, Vasyl Herasymiuk, Oleksandr Hrytsenko, Oksana Zabuzhko, Ihor Malenky, Ivan Malkovych, Petro Midianka, Ihor Rymaruk, and Oksana Chubachivna.

7. Ibid., 53.

8. I have focussed mainly on poetry that was published in *Suchasnist* from January

symbolic or actual, combined with a questioning of human nature, leads to ironic conclusions regarding the purpose of life. Rather than an expression of joy at new-found freedom, there is an all-pervasive sense of loss—both in personal relationships and in the wider context. The visual form continues to develop along postmodern lines; often a complete absence of punctuation provides the text with a sense of visual openness that contrasts strongly with the hermetic nature of its highly symbolic expression.

A sense of deepening cynicism and disillusionment was already evident in Kostiantyn Moskalets's meditative poetry of the 1980s:

> ... Поглянь,
> Де ми знаходимось — ти
> погодишся: тільки хоробрий і чесний народ
> міг опинитися тут.[9]

The irony of these words, coming at the end of a sensitive overview of Ukraine's history, is replaced in the 1990s by an authoritative omniscience in the long poem "Dlia troiandy" (For the Rose):

> Люди не ті, за кого їх вважають;
> не ті, за кого видають себе;
> . . . . . .
> Постійно стережися
> великої зараженості і заразності
> кожної людини
> без винятку
> . . . . . .
> Люди дуже люблять завдавати біль;
> муки подібних їм і неподібних
> приносять людям насолоду;
> що більші муки, то більша насолода;
> . . . . . .
> Недобросовісність,
> відсутність культури духу та мислення
> витворили огидний світ,
> у якому існує людина.[10]

1993 to April 1996.

9. "...Observe / Where we find ourselves—[and] you / will agree: only a brave and an honourable nation / could have found itself here" (Kostiantyn Moskalets, "Iz tsyklu 'Dumy', VIII," in *Visimdesiatnyky: Antolohiia novoi ukrainskoi poezii*, ed. Ihor Rymaruk [Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1990], 132.

10. "People are not as we imagine them; / not those they pass themselves off to be"; "Guard constantly / against great contamination and infection / by each person / without exception"; "People really love to inflict pain; / the sufferings of those like them and

Moskalets's view of humanity and the extended definition of reality that follows these words are presented in a repetitive, sermonlike fashion. It gives way to a different style in an untitled text in the section called "Spalennia knyhy" (The Burning of the Book)[11] from "Knyha radosty" (The Book of Joy): here he combines the biblical with the everyday, consciously creating a scene that causes the reader some discomfort by treating Mary and Jesus as if they were indistinguishable from the crowd, and with very human reactions to everyday situations. Mary is hesitant about crossing the River Seim, so the writer, who "had already learned how to hold infants," "will bravely take God in my arms" to cross the frozen river with her. The writer's description of Jesus's reaction at being left behind with the donkey—"and Jesus will watch with his grey eyes / like an ox who has been left on the bank / touching the ice with his boot / unable to resolve to walk across"—suggests a postmodern approach that purposely "undermines" the traditional authority of the subjects, combining the divine with the everyday and constructing new relationships.

These relationships, to which Moskalets usually refers in the first person by Moskalets, transcend accepted notions: in "Dlia troiandy," for example, the writer addresses a rose as his first love. Although aware of the rose as a symbol of purity in opposition to humanity, whose hypocrisy the writer despises, the reader nevertheless finds this protracted address strange ("these loathsome slaves were jealous of our love, / rose ... my love ..."). Moskalets's development of constructed relationships cuts across concepts of time, juxtaposing divine entities with his own mortal self in a contemporary setting. This "undermining" of conventional attitudes in literature extends to a partial deconstruction of the image of Christ at the crossing of the river, in what may seem an irreverent way: "and little Christ will cry / and we will rejoice." Since the entire scene takes place at Christmas, the chronological incongruity of Moskalets's picture of Jesus left behind crying on the bank of the river combines with the knowledge that the setting is Baturyn. The name of this town is known to the Ukrainian reader as a seventeenth–century Cossack company centre and the Left-Bank hetman's capital; in 1708 it was sacked and burned by Russian troops for its inhabitants' support of Hetman Ivan Mazepa. This knowledge creates a complex historical background to the simple story of the river crossing, the word "rejoice" contrasting starkly with the historical reality of the region.

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those unlike them / brings people pleasure; / the greater the sufferings, the greater the pleasure"; "Unscrupulousness, / the absence of culture of spirit and thought / have created a repulsive world, / in which the individual exists" (Kostiantyn Moskalets, "Dlia troiandy," *Suchasnist*, 1993, no. 1: 5, 8, 9).

11. Kostiantyn Moskalets, "Spalennia knyhy," in *Suchasnist*, 1994, no. 10: 9–10.

The scene on the river is described in the future tense, thus adding further tension to the concept of time. The intertextual references—some biblical, such as the book the writer is completing while anticipating this simple scene, and others historical, for example, the name of the town and the river, or relating to Ukrainian traditions and customs—are introduced in a particularly understated manner, thereby indirectly making these historical and religious events appear as a natural component of everyday life. The idea that the writer anticipates taking the place of Jesus as part of the trinity that enters the church (the other two members being the traditional Mother of God and God the Father) also creates tension, but the character of the tension depends entirely on the reader's religious or non-religious persuasion. The writer is visible only as an innocent and fairly naïve character in the scene; the reader is left to construct the discourse according to his own interpretations, with little assistance from authorial comment. The historical significance of Baturyn is not referred to. The interweaving of historically significant names with insignificant, everyday events and the mention of an infant's tears in the absence of any reference to the massacre of thousands at Baturyn may be regarded as a postmodern version of a tale based on the Bible.

Although political realities may not interest today's reading public in the same way that they did before independence, social realities do. Natalka Bilotserkivets's cynical, sometimes devastating poetic account of life in Ukrainian society was, in the 1980s, "a very bitter but also very sober recognition that she is opening the way to a courageous awareness of [her country's] fate."[12] Six years later her poetry reflects the disillusionment and absolute dullness of life after independence. References to earlier days "lived out by us," to days when "greasy bloody stains covered the pavement — / the rains washed them away" (alluding to the Soviet era), run parallel with "the demagogues and democrats — / still lazy and obtuse, / and sometimes one just wants to vomit / over the golden *sharovary,* over the laws, retouched with paint — / the miserable goods, corruptly bright ..."[13]

Despite the dominant cynicism of her early poetry, Bilotserkivets does occasionally express some hope for her country.[14] Her newer poetry, though critical of society, sometimes ends on a positive note: "Will we survive long enough to see Washington? / we will survive to see it some day!"[15] This is in direct contrast to the 1980s text with its black prediction: "ми помрем не в Парижі тепер я напевно це знаю / в провінційній постелі що потом

12. Mykola Riabchuk, "'My pomrem ne v Paryzhi,'" preface to *Visimdesiatnyky,* xiv.
13. Natalka Bilotserkivets, "Alergiia," *Suchasnist,* 1994, no. 9: 5–6. My trans.
14. See, for example, her poem "Kalyna" (A Guelder-Rose), in *Visimdesiatnyky,* 11.
15. Bilotserkivets did, in fact, visit Washington in 1994 and 1995.

кишить і слізьми."[16] "Paris," representing a city of highly developed culture, stands here in binary opposition to "the provinces"—a cultural desert that may exist anywhere, even within the boundaries of a large city.

But the new sense of optimism belongs to only one side of a thematic dichotomy in Bilotserkivets's poetry. It may be said that "our socially given identities as feminine and masculine, and the differential access to social power and privilege those identities entail, shape the writing and reading of texts of all kinds, including poetry."[17] Bilotserkivets's poetic voice is, on the one hand, the voice of the sophisticated, detached writer. On the other, she is the harassed mother of small children who symbolizes, at least in part, what Marko Pavlyshyn refers to as "after an eternal and tragic attachment to the past and the future, the arrival of the present."[18] The listing of the difficulties of inner-city living (allergies, queues, illnesses, the loud television, communal washing of clothes, housework) and the frequent references to modern phenomena keep the reader focussed on the present, everyday personal relationships, and social problems, particularly as they are viewed from the female standpoint.

In contradistinction, Viktor Kordun's poetry never anchors itself to the present long enough to focus on the mundane aspects of life. Kordun, whose work was first published in the 1960s, a decade before Bilotserkivets's debut and even more in the case of Moskalets, was absent from the literary public arena for seventeen years (1966–82) because his writing was unacceptable to the Soviet authorities. His poetic world remains largely unaltered.[19] The new freedom of expression, however, has added another dimension to his invariable themes: he now writes psalms that openly address the higher power present, but unnamed, in earlier texts. "Try psalmy" (Three Psalms), part of the cycle "Slid pivnichnoho vitru" (Traces of the North Wind), succinctly pose the basic philosophical questions with which much of Kordun's earlier poetry is concerned: what is the world, what is my place in it, what is memory, and where is the beginning of my

16. "we will die not in Paris I now know this for sure / [but] in a provincial bed steeped in sweat and tears ("Natalka Bilotserkivets, "***," in *Visimdesiatnyky,* 8). Note the absence of punctuation in this poem.

17. David Buchbinder, *Contemporary Literary Theory and the Reading of Poetry, with a Chapter on Poetry and Gender by Barbara H. Milech* (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1991), 120.

18. Pavlyshyn, "Postkoloniialna khvylyna," 149.

19. Lina Kostenko suffered a similar fate at this time. As Jaroslav Rozumnyj points out, "in her writings, Kostenko adheres to the principle that an artist has an obligation to reflect reality and to galvanize the reader to action on crucial problems" ("Lina Kostenko's Dramatic Poems: Metahistoricity of Themes and Innovation in Genre," in *Slavic Drama: The Question of Innovation*, ed. Andrew Donskov et al [Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 1991], 143).

existence and where the end?[20] His more traditional tone and general approach form a strong contrast to Moskalets's postmodern treatment of religious themes. Kordun's self-abnegating tone and formal discourse render the psalms as just that—poetry that is prayer; Moskalets, meanwhile, purposely places himself at the level of the divine characters, challenging the traditional tone and attitude towards them.

Kordun's abiding impact stems from his ability to rise above the mundane; in his poetic world there is no everyday. For him, yesterday, today, and tomorrow merge and interlace, heaven and earth are ever–present, and time is very distant from chronological time. He is an actor in the history of his nation, but also of the world; he is part of the present. But in a surreal yet convincing way he is an integral part of the future. He is the one who destroyed Carthage, as the reader discovers from his poem "Mii Karfahen" (My Carthage) in the cycle "Slid pivnichnoho vitru." He destroyed the ancient city "yesterday / two to three thousand years ago." Mykhailo Moskalenko has isolated the epic effect of Kordun's technique, whereby the vision of the past develops in the fleeting moment of the present, endowing it with epic qualities[21]: Kordun tells us today of his exploits in Carthage "yesterday," at the same time stating, one presumes with reference to the destruction of the city, that "it is unknown who, / it is unknown how, / it is unknown why / and it is unknown why it is unknown." He therefore states that the blame cannot be placed on any individual; no individual is prepared to take the blame for this or many other actions. As the poet leaned his sword on the fallen walls of the city, he thought, "why did we do this?"

There is a mythological aspect to this kind of writing, wherein nothing can be located with certainty in a definite point in time or defined geographically. History is presented as myth, an overriding force that effects future events. In "Na rikakh beznaimennykh" (On the Unnamed Rivers, also in the cycle "Slid pivnichnoho vitru"), three girls—"this one from the water, this one from the grass, / and that one, with the wings, from heaven"—who take part in the events leading up to the creation of the Dnieper River are no longer certain where they now belong. Nothing is unchanged for long; nothing in this world can be relied on to remain as it was, and if it changes, we may not be able to identify or explain it: "On the unnamed rivers—/ unnamed people, / days unnamed./ unnamed sun."

Kordun's poem "Vershnyky" (The Horsemen) begins with great vigour and conviction—"Сідлаймо коней, братове, і вирушаймо з чужих часів" (Let us saddle the horses, brothers, and set out from these foreign times)—and ends

20. Viktor Kordun, "Try psalmy," *Suchasnist*, 1994, no. 4: 68.

21. Mykhailo Moskalenko, "Viktor Kordun: Poeziia i velych svitu," *Suchasnist*, 1994, no. 4: 150.

with a surrealistic explanation of the reason for their inability to leave these times—"де наші коні? — розвіялись з нами у синяві синьо як дим" (where are our horses? They have dispersed with us into the blue like blue smoke). The intention to leave is evident, the reasons for leaving are detailed, but, as always, the poet's sense of time becomes intentionally confused: he wishes to depart from the present, the past somehow interferes, and he is again part of the millennium. The riders, the horses, and the blue of the heavens become one entity and disperse like smoke.

In considering the possible future direction, although in a wider and more general context, Homi Bhabha has spoken of the "anti-nationalist, ambivalent nation space becoming the crossroads to a new transnational culture."[22] As far as Ukrainian literature is concerned, however, the poet Oksana Zabuzhko has perhaps expressed the situation best: "So what we experience now may be recognized as the fall of the 'poetry-as-opposition' tradition." The poet has been finally "freed from the obligation to 'save the nation.'"[23]

22. Homi Bhabha, "Narrating the Nation", in *Nationalism*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 309.

23. Oksana Zabuzhko, "Reinventing the Poet in Modern Ukrainian Culture," *Slavic and East European Journal* 39, no. 2 (1995): 275.

Tradition and Innovation in Twentieth-Century Ukrainian Verse Drama

Larissa M. L. Zaleska Onyshkevych

In most respects, twentieth-century Ukrainian verse drama was influenced by the same literary developments as its western European counterparts. Owing to political constraints and censorship during the tsarist and Soviet periods, however, certain innovations and some themes were suppressed. consequently the reflections of certain trends were delayed in Soviet Ukraine, but they did appear in plays written by émigré dramatists.

A Definition of the Genre

Various terms have been applied to the literary genre that is composed of dialogue and verse. While the entire genre of drama was represented by verse drama during the classical period (until about the sixteenth century the term "drama" also defined the verse form), during the modern period numerous attempts have been made to designate or limit this mode of literary expression and speaking.

While the term "drama in verse" is rather general, other terms are more specific. The term "poetic drama," for example, is used by some to describe a play in verse. This designation stretches the definition by pointing to the imagery rather than the metrical form; lately, owing to the predominance of imagery, even some prose drama has been identified by this term. When its synonym, "poème dramatique," is applied, however, the it is understood to mean philosophical thought in a dramatic form. Meanwhile the English equivalent of the French term, "dramatic poetry," does not define this genre precisely, because a work so described may not necessarily be composed of dialogue.

Various approaches continue to expand or reduce the number of components of the dramatic genre and its subgenres. Eric Bentley, for example, has claimed that drama in verse "is not poetry in the fullest sense, but, meter aside, operates

much on the lines of the drama of prose rhetoric."[1] The rhetorical element is quite dominant in the verse drama of T. S. Eliot, Ivan Drach, and Vasyl Barka, while in the works of Gabriele d'Annunzio, J. M. Synge, Lesia Ukrainka, Oleksander Oles, Lina Kostenko, and Vira Vovk it is the lyrical aspect that attracts much deserved attention.

The Recent History of the Genre

Through the ages, verse drama has undergone a series of changes in the definition of its function and form. Until the twentieth century poetic drama always had its great defenders and champions—from Victor Hugo to Lesia Ukrainka. Recently, however, Western opinion about the need for this subgenre in our age has been strongly divided

Christopher Frye, one of the leading lyrical verse dramatists in English literature, has argued for the use of verse in drama because it economizes on the use of words; he claims that "the full significance of action can be explored only by words,"[2] and points out that it is the very choice of words that portrays how an action is experienced. There are various opinions on the form in which words should be rendered, and writers and critics have debated whether the use of natural, colloquial speech is more appropriate for our time. Henrik Ibsen argued that a truly spoken language was necessary in order to portray action on the stage; more recently John Gassner claimed that "modern verse drama ... has been limited in power ... as a more or less artificial graft on our age."[3]

Drama in verse, or dramatic poetry, relies heavily on language—its diction, poetry, imagery, and emotional intensity. Since the days of Aristotle, different metres and rhymes have been in fashion—from the heroic metre and rhyme to blank verse. Variety has been sought in the type of verse form used in order to bring more vitality. Blank verse, in particular, introduced a conversational tone by taking the genre away from the highly traditional and rhetorical iambic pentameter.

T. S. Eliot stressed the need for a contemporary rhythm of speech that would enhance a work's musicality by affecting a listener unconsciously rather than consciously and artificially. But he also thought that "no play should be written in verse for which prose is dramatically adequate."[4] Proponents of various points

1. Eric Bentley, *The Life of the Drama* (New York: Atheneum, 1965), 88.

2. Christopher Frye, "Why Verse?" in *The Context and Craft of Drama: Critical Essays on the Nature of Drama and Theater*, ed. Robert W. Corrigan and James L. Rosenberg (San Francisco: Chandler, 1964), 75–6.

3. John Gassner, *The Theatre in Our Times* (New York: Crown, 1966), 22.

4. T. S. Eliot, *Poetry and Drama*, The Theodore Spenser Memorial Lecture, 21 November 1950 (London: Faber & Faber, n.d.), 12.

of view have presented different lists of required components for drama in verse, ranging from a historical topic to a didactic or emotional appeal. While Eliot admitted that the emphasis may be on the ephemeral and the superficial, he pointed out that when it comes to permanent and universal content "we tend to express ourselves in verse."[5] The emotional element was occasionally consciously underplayed by certain playwrights. For example, in his epic dramas Bertolt Brecht stretched the homiletic or rhetorical aspect to the extreme, stressing the contemplative element while attempting to influence the way his audience perceived social truths.

The genre of verse drama has often been dubbed "closet drama" or "*Lesedrama*," that is, a work that is not popular or not suitable for the stage owing to the lack of verisimilitude and its limited dramatic action, whereby diction is dominant. In their early writing careers several verse drama writers, such as Michel de Ghelderode and Lesia Ukrainka, did not even consider that their verse dramas could or would be performed. Verse drama, like drama in general, has borne an elitist stamp since Aristophanes' time, when all drama was written in verse and was meant for a very limited number of cognoscenti able to appreciate the genre. Contemporary verse drama continues to have a limited audience.

A Ukrainian dictionary of literary terms describes the genre of verse drama as a play in verse blending dramatic, epic, and lyrical elements; the presentation is laconic: there is no background or external intrigue, and attention is centred on uncovering some conflict of ideas between two antagonists when their verbal duel is at its peak.[6] In her study of Ukrainian verse drama, Liudmyla Demi"anivska divides the genre into three structural types: (1) the monodrama, in which the plot is focussed on one central character); (2) poetic frescoes—scenes or episodes not necessarily tied together but representing similar core dramatic situations; and (3) separate monologues, which are linked by undramatic dialogue.[7]

Ukrainian Verse Drama from 1900 to 1920

A combination of historical events and literary styles served to make the didactic element appealing to writers of verse drama both in the West and in Ukraine. At the turn of twentieth century the leading practitioners of verse drama

5. T. S. Eliot, *A Dialogue on Dramatic Poetry: Selected Essays* (London: Faber & Faber, 1932), 53.

6. V. M. Lesyn and O. S. Pulynets, *Slovnyk literaturoznavchykh terminiv* (Kyiv: Radianska shkola, 1965), 105.

7. Liudmyla S. Dem"ianivska, *Ukrainska dramatychna poema (Problematyka, zhanrova spetsyfika)* (Kyiv: Vyshcha shkola, 1984), 13.

in Ukraine were Ivan Franko, Lesia Ukrainka, Oleksander Oles, Vasyl Pachovsky, and Spyrydon Cherkasenko. Whether espousing symbolism, neo-Romanticism, or realism, all five wrote primarily *pièces à thèse*.

While Franko employed allegorical means and relied on historical facts, Lesia Ukrainka (1871–1913) preferred classical themes and set an impressive standard for later writers. She wrote *poèmes* with philosophical content in dramatic form. The poetical treatment of emotion and highly selective and effective diction—as demonstrated in *U pushchi* (In the Wilderness, 1910), *Boiarynia* (The Boyar's Wife, 1914), or *Advokat Martiian* (The Advocate Martianus, 1913)—characterizes works that may not have been meant for the theatre, since their mimetic aspect is rather subdued. Lesia Ukrainka was well aware of the limited adaptability of her dramatic poems (especially the early ones) to the stage. At that time in Europe, such verse drama was written mostly for reading.

Lesia Ukrainka classified her *Ifiheniia v Tavrydi* (Iphigenia in Tauris, 1898) as a "dramatic poem," which she considered extremely long but "suitable for reading"; she suggested that perhaps "one day it could be cut."[8] She called her *Rufin i Pristsilla* (Rufinus and Priscilla) "a bookish drama" ("*knyzhkova drama*"), *V domi roboty — v kraini nevoli* (In the Workhouse — the Land of Slavery, 1906) "more a publicist's work," and *Lisova pisnia* (The Forest Song, 1911) "an old-fashioned piece of Romanticism."[9] *Kaminnyi hospodar* (The Stone Host, 1912) was "the first true drama to come from my pen: objective, concentrated, not immersed in lyricism; it represents something new in my style."[10] A disciplined composition and compact plot, harmony of imagery and subject matter (e.g., multiple applications of stoniness to several characters, setting, and plot), and the presence of music (e.g., musical accompaniment in *Lisova pisnia, Orhiia* [The Orgy, 1912–13], and other plays) were very important her. While she was still rather critical of her hero in *Kaminnyi hospodar* ("he is more of a symbol than a living person"), she admitted that "at least I have given him a logical behaviour pattern and a real *raison d'être*, which some distinguished authors had failed to do."[11]

Ukrainian theatres of the time were not prepared to stage Lesia Ukrainka's verse dramas, and thus they were not accessible to large audiences or even to a wide reading public. Nevertheless, any serious Ukrainian poet or playwright who

8. Olha Kosach-Kryvyniuk, *Lesia Ukrainka: Khronolohiia zhyttia i tvorchosty* (New York: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., 1970), 427.

9. Ibid., 858.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 868–9 (letter to Olha Kobylianska, 26 March 1913).

followed after Lesia Ukrainka had to face the challenge of her dramas, especially the later works where her verse did not impede the action.

At about the same time, Liudmyla Starytska-Cherniakhivska (1868–1941), Oleksander Oles (1878–1944), Vasyl Pachovsky (1878–1942), Spyrydon Cherkasenko (1876–1939), and many other Ukrainian writers also turned to writing dramatic verse. Starytska-Cherniakhivska's first drama in verse was *Hetman Pavlo Doroshenko* (1908). It was followed by *Ostannii snip* (The Last Sheaf, 1917), *Ivan Mazepa* (1927), and others. Her plays were not so much character studies as portrayals of historical events in a highly patriotic tenor; she also popularized the Mazepa theme. During this period Oles wrote three symbolist verse dramas: *Po dorozi v Kazku* (Along the Road to Fairy Tale Land, 1911), *Tanets zhyttia* (The Dance of Life, 1913), and *Khvesko Andyber* (1917).

Pachovsky, a Galician modernist, is the author of the verse plays *Son ukrainskoi nochi* (Dream of a Ukrainian Night, 1903), *Sontse ruiny* (The Sun of the Ruin, 1911), *Sfinks Evropy* (The Sphinx of Europe, 1914), and *Roman Velykyi* (Roman the Great, 1918). These neo-Romantic and symbolist works on historical themes are replete with homiletic messages. The characters and events that he depicts tend towards epic portrayals with a vigorously patriotic tone (e.g., *Son ukrainskoi nochi*). Pachovsky incorporated many elements of Ukrainian folklore, and in this respect *Son ukrainskoi nochi* may be considered a precursor of Lesia Ukrainka's *Lisova pisnia.* (Later writers, such as Ivan Drach and Oleksandr Levada, also utilized elements of Ukrainian folklore in their works).

Cherkasenko wrote symbolist verse dramas that also incorporated elements of Ukrainian folklore and of history, such as *Kazka staroho mlyna* (The Tale of the Old Mill, 1914) and *Pro shcho tyrsa shelestila* (What the Feather-Grass Was Whispering About, 1916). These plays enjoyed great popularity and were often staged and set to music (especially the latter) until Soviet censors banned them because of their historical elements and patriotic messages.

In his survey of Ukrainian literature that appeared in 1913, Andrii Nikovsky wrote that "since dramatic form requires true literary talents with proper training and creative idea, our products of the last year have shown that we have truly outstanding works; this means that in our society there is a constant intellectual growth that points to a deeply conscious spiritual life."[12] In fact, the year 1913 did give Ukrainian literature such great works as Lesia Ukrainka's *Lisova pisnia, Orhiia*, and *Kaminnyi hospodar.* Nikovsky's assessment may also be applied to verse drama of the first twelve years of the twentieth century, when Lesia Ukrainka, Starytska-Cherniakhivska, Oles, Pachovsky, and Cherkasenko produced their greatest work. All of them provided models that have were followed for

12. Andrii Nikovsky, "Ukrainska literatura v 1913 r.," *Literaturno-naukovyi vistnyk* 17: 161.

over a half century, particularly because the genre relies on traditional forms. Very few later authors were able to break away and introduce entirely new elements, and those that did introduced primarily structural innovations (the plays of Drach, Levada, and Vovk).

The 1920s

In the 1920s there was a flowering of poetry and prose in Ukraine, but not of verse drama. A small number of émigré writers did, however, contribute a few important works to the genre. Iurii Lypa (1900–44), who emigrated to Poland in 1920, wrote several short dramatic poems: *Troianda z Ierykhonu* (A Rose from Jericho, 1922), *Korabel, shcho vidplyvaie* (A Departing Ship, 1923), *Slovo v pustyni* (A Word in the Desert, 1926), *Benket* (The Banquet, 1926), *Poiedynok* (The Duel, 1927), *Verbunok* (The Enlistment, 1927), *Motria* (1927), *Pisnia* (The Song, 1927), *Narada vnochi* (A Deliberation at Night), and the unpublished "Korol San-Domingo" (The King of San Domingo, ca. 1943). Lypa is a symbolist whose work features elements of neo-Romanticism and a good dose of mysticism. All of his compact and short works fit the *poème dramatique* category and focus on the juxtaposition and conflict of values. In his skilfully written dramas he champions the need for self-expression, a quest for truth and beauty, self-sacrifice, heroism, patriotism, and a strong faith in God. Although Lypa, like Lesia Ukrainka, set his dramas in the Middle Ages, he also poignantly addressed current social and historical problems.

Cherkasenko also emigrated, but to Prague, where he continued to write verse dramas: *Smert lehendy* (Death of a Legend, 1923, a continuation of *Kazka staroho mlyna*), *Tsvit paporoti* (The Fern Flower, 1924, which deals with the Soviet takeover of Ukraine and the reactions of folkloric figures), *Koly narod movchyt* (When the People Are Silent, 1927, a tragedy about Hetman Ivan Mazepa), *Severyn Nalyvaiko* (1928, the first historical drama of a planned trilogy called *Step* (The Steppe), and *Tsina krovy* (The Price of Blood, 1930, about Judas's betrayal). Cherkasenko relied on historical settings and characters to relay his didactic message. He often turned to topics that were developed earlier by Lesia Ukrainka, but he would offer his own interpretations (e.g., Judas betrays Christ in order to precipitate a popular revolt against the Romans) or present different historical conflicts (forest spirits facing Soviet soldiers).

Cherkasenko often used the same plots as other writers, but he gave them a different psychological motivation and interpretation. For example, he utilized the Don Juan theme to provide a simplified version of the popular Western plot "without any philosophical-mystical artillery."[13] Compared to most examples

13. Spyrydon Cherkasenko, "Zamists peredmovy," in his "Espanskyi kabaliero Don Khuan i Rozita," *Novi shliakhy*, 1936, no. 2: 208.

of Ukrainian verse drama written in the first half of this century, Cherkasenko's dramas were very stageable and did not convey complex messages. Action overshadowed diction, which otherwise would have been expected to shine in this genre. This was the author's intention: his goal in writing *Espanskyi kabaliero Don Khuan i Rozita* (The Spanish Caballero Don Juan and Rosita, 1928), for example, was "to provide what the contemporary stage demands: theatricality, lightness, lively interest, movement, etc., as well as a touch of some healthy moralizing."[14]

The 1930s and 1940s

In Soviet Ukraine it was only in 1931 that a notable work surfaced in the genre: *Svichchyne vesillia* (Svichka's Wedding, originally called *Pisnia pro Svichku* [Song about Svichka]) by Ivan Kocherha (1881–1952). Although this was not Kocherha's first drama, it became one of his most popular ones. Significantly, it reflects numerous similarities to Lesia Ukrainka's approach, such as the presentation of ideas concerning universal truths and rights and a heavy reliance on a particular quality that serves as a dominant image for the whole work (e.g., the multiple uses of light and candles, just as Lesia Ukrainka utilized stone and its properties in *Kaminnyi hospodar*). He attempted to use diction in a manner that would emphasize musicality and imagery and affect emotions and intellect. His choice of a medieval historical theme and his presentation of the principles of democracy place him in the ranks of Franko's and Pachovsky's followers.

Kocherha's works demonstrated his particular virtuosity in the genre. He was especially successful in the presentation of specific ideas and their discussion, employing the classical iambic pentameter and, intermittently, the tetrameter. Magdalena László-Kuţiuk, a Romanian scholar of Ukrainian literature, has written extensively about Kocherha's expert utilization of motifs (e.g., a candle) and key words (e.g., "word" and "law"). She also indicates that Maurice Maeterlinck influenced Lesia Ukrainka, Oles, and Kocherha, especially in their presentation of drama not as a slice of life but a discussion about it.[15] *Svichchyne Vesillia* also serves as a comment on classes, feudalism, and basic human aspirations; the historical background skilfully complements the imagery and vision.

Kocherha's dramatic poem *Iaroslav Mudryi* (Iaroslav the Wise) appeared first in a Soviet journal in 1944 and with some changes as a separate book in 1946. The timing is significant. Although Kocherha seemed to be continuing the

14. Ibid.

15. Mahdalyna Laslo-Kutsiuk, "Kliuchi do teatru Ivana Kocherhy," in her *Shukannia formy: Narysy z ukrainskoi literatury XX stolittia* (Bucharest: Kriterion, 1980), 267–96.

historical theme that Pachovsky had developed earlier (opposition to feudalism and emphasis on the need for unification of the Ukrainian people and classes), in one respect he took an opposite stand to Pachovsky's and introduced a very Soviet idea: the Kyivan princes' close ties with their proto-Russian neighbours to the northeast. The Soviet war effort had brought new pressures on writers to produce propagandistic works. Kocherha's work is therefore clearly didactic, and although his verses are usually smooth and flowing, many of his lines and aphorisms sound stiff and artificial. He provided each act with a significant key word, sometimes following Bertold Brecht's method of placing large signs on the stage, at other times simply drawing attention to a particular symbol or metaphor.

With this unsuccessful work Kocherha should, perhaps, have stopped writing in this genre. However, when the director of Kharkiv's Shevchenko Theatre, Mariian Krushelnytsky, asked him to write a play about Taras Shevchenko, Kocherha agreed. The result, *Prorok* (The Prophet, completed in 1948), was another failure. The verses are smooth (primarily in iambic pentameter with occasional rhymes) but dull; they are often interrupted by quotations from Shevchenko's works, which at least add some variety. Shevchenko is depicted as a complaining, lonely, old man (although he was only in his forties!). There is hardly any serious conflict within the main character, and very little within others. This drama is neither a tragedy nor a chamber play that concentrates on personal feelings, and it ignores civic issues. Rather than dealing with the psychological aspect, Kocherha tries to focus the reader's attention on certain ideas. For example, he provides a name for various acts, and key phrases are repeated by the protagonists (e.g., "He was a man" or "Is the past fated to be forgotten?").

Perhaps more than in other genres, the authors of verse drama of the 1930s and 1940s made ample use of propaganda. Among them were the Soviet writers Leonid Pervomaisky (1908–73), Ahata Turchynska (1903–72), who wrote the libretto (1950) to Heorhii Maiboroda's opera *Mylana* (1957), and Andrii Malyshko (1912–70). Pervomaisky wrote two verse plays: *Vahramova nich* (Vahram's Night, 1933) and *Oleksa Dovbush* (1946). In *Vahramova nich*, subtitled "Scenes from a Tragedy," the Communist protagonists speak in verse, while other characters use normal speech (this approach was used earlier by Pachovsky). *Oleksa Dovbush*, a portrayal of a historical Robin Hood-like hero, is subtitled "A People's Drama," thus drawing attention to the propagandistic content of the plot. The play may as well have been written in prose given its poor verses. Strangely enough, despite the period when it was written and Pervomaisky's undoubted skill as a prose writer who was noted for his style and plot constructions, it shows the definite influence of Oles's *Po dorozi v Kazku* and Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky's *Tini zabutykh predkiv* (Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors). Written just after the war, the work is a clarion call for the unification of all Ukrainian lands within the boundaries of the USSR.

In the emigration in the 1930s, Leonid Mosendz (1897–1948), who had settled in Poland in 1922 and later lived in Czechoslovakia, wrote one verse drama, *Vichnyi korabel* (The Eternal Ship, 1933), which deals with an émigré's fate and psychological pressures. It depicts a sixteenth-century Dutch city whose inhabitants face the choice of defending themselves, collaborating with the enemy, or leaving the city by ship in search of a new land and a happy life. Those who leave are destined to wander the world until their city is free again. At the same time Vasyl Pachovsky completed his verse drama *Hetman Mazepa* (1933), subtitled a "Resurrection Mystery," and began an unfinished dramatic epic, *Zoloti vorota* (The Golden Gate). Spyrydon Cherkasenko offered his own interpretation of the story of Hetman Ivan Mazepa in *Velmozhna pani Kochubeikha* (The Grand Lady Kochubei, 1936), subtitled "a historical family drama." The play's heroine is depicted as the one who was responsible for selling out Mazepa to Peter I because the hetman had spurned her advances. A few years later, a fellow émigré in Prague, Oleksander Oles, wrote the verse *Nich na polonyni* (A Night in the Mountain Pasture, 1941). Written in a style that is reminiscent of his neo-Romantic and symbolist works of the 1910s and using a dilemma similar to the one that Lesia Ukrainka had presented three decades earlier in *Lisova pisnia*, Oles depicts a protagonist who cannot decide between the world of ideals and dreams and the real world. He wants both but can not exist in either—a situation in which many émigrés, unable either to break their ties with Ukraine or to adjust to their host countries, found themselves. The verse is still the voice of Oles, but the diction is hardly equal to his much earlier works in the genre.

During the years immediately after the Second World War, several leading émigré writers also wrote verse dramas, often depicting the painful historical and personal fate of people forced to leave their country. One such outstanding writer was Iurii Kosach (1909–90), who wrote one historical verse drama, *Harold i Iaroslavna* (Harold and Iaroslavna, 1946).

The 1950s and 1960s

For about twenty years after the appearance of *Svichchyne vesillia,* hardly any notable verse dramas were written in Ukraine. Then a work appeared that was significant not so much for its artistic merit as for its plot—the verse drama *Faust i smert* (Faust and Death, 1960) by Oleksandr Levada (1909–95). For the first time in European drama the idea of space flight was presented, a year before such an event actually took place. The play instantly became a success and was translated into many languages. The author was awarded the Lenin Prize, which provided him with much sought-after Soviet respectability. Levada's play succeeded because of three factors: the timeliness of his topic, a new veneer of "intellectualism", and the author's attempt to demonstrate the moral and ethical superiority of Soviet scientists over Western ones, even if they were as ancient

as Faust. When the drama first appeared in the literary monthly *Vitchyzna* in November 1960, it bore the cautious subtitle "An Optimistic Tragedy." At the time tragedy was being re-examined in the USSR. Since the theme was "heroic" (this is how some critics described it), it required an elevated form, and hence the choice of verse. Levada also incorporated various commentators into the play, very much in the style of a Greek chorus.[16]

In his drama Levada utilizes the basic plot elements of Goethe's *Faust*, part I, but sets them in the Soviet era. The protagonist is an eager, dedicated scientist; his antagonist is an anti-intellectual mystic. A computer functions in the role of Mephistopheles, and God is replaced by Lenin. The author juxtaposes Soviet scientists with Faust, who requests that time actually stop. In contrast, the Soviet heroes will not stoop to express such a desire. In Goethe's *Faust*, the request for time to stop was an important part of the entire dramatic conception. There are many direct quotations from Goethe in the discussions (although the source of the translation is not identified);[17] they serve as an argument in favour of employing the verse form. But Levada was not very successful in this respect, and Soviet critics noted that he had not learned well from Lesia Ukrainka, Kocherha, or even his own earlier works.[18] Although Levada also claimed that the play is a tragedy, his protagonists do not experience any inner conflicts. Universal truths are discussed, but the propagandistic approach overpowers any sense of verisimilitude; the play is an obvious case of straightforward sermonizing.

The Kyiv poet Liubov Zabashta (1918–90) wrote the verse dramas *Kvit paporoti* (The Fern Flower, 1959) and *Zemlia Anteiv* (The Land of the Antes, 1971). The 1960s witnessed a revival of poetry and prose in Ukraine, but not of verse drama. However, in the West *Smishnyi sviatyi* (A Funny Saint, 1968), a little-noticed short play with twenty-one poems or "scenes," was published by its author, the Brazil-based poet Vira Vovk (née Selianska, b. 1926). At first glance, this poetic drama appears to be a presentation of the quotidian existence of monastery inhabitants. However, all of the elements necessary for a successful verse drama, which were missing in Levada's *Faust i smert*, are present in Vovk's: lyricism, an appeal to poetic sensibility, irony and humour, mystical elements bordering on surrealism, outstanding texture, and rhetoric that manages to deal subtly with deep universal truths. The poetic worth and beauty of *Smishnyi sviatyi* lie in the impression of total simplicity. The rhythmic variation with blank verse is individualized for various speakers. Vovk also employs

16. Iosyp Kyselov notes this in "Obraz i prykmety chasu," *Vitchyzna*, 1966, no. 11: 183.

17. Most likely the translator was Mykola Lukash.

18. Ihor Mamchur, "Dramatychna poeziia i muzyka," *Ukrainskyi teatr*, 1984, no. 6: 5.

religious chants, with the specific coloration of Ukrainian ritual songs, aspects that she later developed further.

In the United States the émigré writer Leonid Poltava (1921–90) wrote a historical verse drama entitled *Anna Iaroslavna*, about the daughter of Grand Prince Iaroslav the Wise who became the queen of France. This work was composed as a libretto to an opera (music by Antin Rudnytsky) that was staged in the United States and, in 1996, in Ukraine.

The 1970s

This decade is represented exclusively by works written in Ukraine. The drama historian Diia Vakulenko characterizes it as a time when there was an "intensive search for the means of more fully expressing Soviet man's personality."[19] She points out that since the individual and the collective influence each other, "the resolution of conflicts depends not so much on the subjectivity and individual characteristics of a protagonist as it does on social mores, on historical conformity, and environment."[20] Since such an interpretation and approach were still expected in the Soviet Union, even in the last two decades of its existence, playwrights had to comply.

Among the crop of mediocre works of this period is *Paryzka siuita* (Paris Suite, 1971) by Leonid Boloban (1893–1979). This dramatist attempted to follow Kocherha's *Iaroslav Mudryi* and depicted Anna Iaroslavna's journey to France and her life there as a "Slavic" or "Rus'" princess.[21] Kocherha's messages are also reproduced here: the need for the unity of the Ukrainians and Russians, the depiction of wrongdoing on the part of church officials, and so on. Written in iambic pentameter, the poem provides a taste of the many works that appeared in the 1980s commemorating the official Soviet celebrations of the 1,500th(!) anniversary of Kyiv.

It was also then that a new generation of writers turned to the genre of verse drama. Some notable works were written by Ivan Drach (b. 1936), among them *Duma pro vchytelia* (Duma about the Teacher, 1977) and *Soloveiko-Solveig* (1978). Drach, a leading poet of the 1960s, received training in cinematography and wrote several film scenarios. It was therefore quite natural for him both to turn to drama and to write it in verse. *Duma pro vchytelia* is subtitled "A Dramatic Cantata" and is dedicated to the noted Ukrainian educator Volodymyr

19. D. T. Vakulenko, *Suchasna ukrainska dramaturhiia, 1945–1972: Osnovni tendentsii rozvytku* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1976), 175.

20. Ibid., 185.

21. During the Soviet period, Ukrainian history officially began only with the thirteenth century, and earlier centuries were treated as common East Slavic (Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian) history.

Sukhomlynsky. It is a docudrama commenting upon different approaches to raising children. Drach makes comparisons to Johann Pestalozzi, Anton Makarenko, Hryhorii Skovoroda, and other pedagogues. They even appear at a type of court hearing that is very much in the style of Levada's *Faust i smert* (the three Curies, Einstein, and others speaking from their portraits) or Pachovsky's *Son ukrainskoi nochi.* Drach incorporates documentary reportage and a lyrical appeal to the readers, director, and editor. It is not a very subtle appeal to posterity; the entire poem is replete with didactic statements (e.g., "every child should be given a violin"). The reporting of events is interspersed with pleasant poetic scenes (e.g., "a mother with a fairy tale"). Drach demonstrates an interesting use of the chorus, which changes roles several times: chorus members appear as teachers and later as students or visitors. This sharing of roles is also apparent when the narrator appears as the author and then the master of ceremonies. The predominant rhythm is established by the use of iambic tetrameter and pentameter; some rhythmic prose is also interspersed.

Duma pro vchytelia was written as a panegyric not only to Sukhomlynsky but also to the Soviet educational system: the educator is shown winning debates against his opponents until finally all of Europe benefits from his ideas. While Levada ignored Faust's important discussion with God, Drach incorporates a play within the play that introduces a legend about Adam, Eve, and God. God is shown as an envious being lacking the capacity to love; man is able to love and thus becomes god on earth. Drach uses colourful situations, a chorus, masks, and other supplementary theatrical elements. But his stark lecturing, melodramatic tone, dull diction, and forced moralizings ruin the effect created by the poetic elements.

The tone of Drach's *Soloveiko-Solveig* is not as intensely homiletic. However, it too seems to follow Levada in presenting a similar lesson. The play depicts the selfish behaviour of an artist concerned only with her own individual desires and aspirations and who hurts other people in the process. Unexpectedly revealed past events and the protagonists' relationships stretch credibility. There is an attempt to incorporate elements of the fantastic by using Lesia Ukrainka's characters from *Lisova pisnia* (the forest nymph and others). But in Drach's play the combination of folk-poetry elements and contemporary documentary data does not produce a felicitous effect. (For example, when the grandmother addresses her granddaughter Natalka by using the vocative case of her diminutive, "Nato," the old woman comments on the similarity of her name to NATO). There are some effective poetic scenes and imagery and numerous attempts at aphorisms (e.g., "In broad daylight Maryna seeks herself with a candle"). Again, Drach seems to be more successful with regard to his stage design and visual and technical artistic aids, e.g., his use of masks, talking portraits, and tape-recorded voices of people who have died. Nevertheless, the

discussion about the inner conflict between one's duty to talent and the desire for a good life is not prejudged, and it shows a more natural development.

Mykola Rudenko (b. 1920), an established novelist and playwright who became a political dissident in the 1970s, wrote a verse drama called *Khrest* (The Cross, 1977; English translation 1987), which was published in the West. This is a short, patriotic poem in the form of a monologue with lyrical touches. Its subject is the Soviet-engineered genocidal famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine; a personification of Christ appears in the person of a blind *kobzar*, who proclaims that God is the suffering people, who must carry their own crosses.

One of Ukraine's leading poets, Lina Kostenko (b. 1930), initially experimented with drama in verse. Her poem "Tsarytsia Astyn" (Astyn, the Tsar's Wife) may actually be considered a mini-drama poem, as can her "Foto u dalekyi vyrii" (Photograph into a Distant Warm Land) and "Tsyhanska muza" (The Gypsy Muse, 1980). These works consist of lyrical monologues and implied dialogues, and the conflicts portrayed are derived from situations demanding choices and principles. While Kostenko did not classify her famous "historical novel in verse" *Marusia Churai* (1979) as a drama, it has been staged by many theatres in Ukraine and the United States.[22] The protagonists are not indicated before each speech, but the text and quotation marks make it quite obvious which character is participating in the dialogue. The mode of this "novel in verse" is almost that of an *Ich-Drama*, in which events are depicted through the eyes of the protagonist, with stream–of–consciousness monologues and entire scenes resembling a monodrama. Actually, the protagonist, Marusia Churai, seems to perform a role similar to that of a play-within-a-play. She embodies a discourse on the individual versus the community, which comes to a head in the form of the judgment at a trial.

The 1980s and 1990s

In the 1980s Lina Kostenko wrote two works, "Duma pro brativ neazovskykh" (*Duma* about the Non–Azov Brothers, 1984) and "Snih u Florentsii" (Snow in Florence, 1983–85), that she called "dramatic poems." The "Duma" employs the device of parallel plot development (or a play within a play), in which the actions of the three protagonists from the traditional *duma* epic and the three imprisoned Cossack friends are judged. "Snih u Florentsii" also features a self-judgment/trial scene of the protagonist, a sixteenth–century Italian sculptor. He is shown in middle and old age, when he is judging himself for his infidelity to true art and to his country. All of Kostenko's dramatic poems possess the qualities of a parable. They deal with timeless, universal ethical

22. For example, see my review "Ukrainian Youth Theater-Studio in Lviv Stresses Art's Permanency," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 30 October 1988, 8–9.

questions and incorporate legendary or historical characters that give the works an epic quality. These elements enhance the rhetorical elements and add to their stageability.

At the turn of the 1980s Ivan Drach's *Zoria i smert Pavla Nerudy* (The Star and Death of Pablo Neruda, 1980) appeared. Subtitled "A Dramatic Poem, or an Attempt at Contemporary Literary Study in the Chilean Manner," its greatest merit is the poetic conception of its structure, i.e., the dramatis personae, setting, small artistic details, and imagery. For one of the settings Drach uses a ship, a metaphor for life, with the captain also serving as a prosecutor and later appearing as death. It seems that the author meant the poem to be read rather than staged. A description in the list of characters reads: "A Poet is fate rather than a profession." The use of masks, several choruses (one dressed in black and the other in white), musical instruments, and mass scenes create a dramatic effect. The tone of this poem is that of a docudrama or a recitation of a *poème*, set against the background of an expressionist or grotesque stage design (e.g., a huge ear spying on the characters) and bizarre situations (members of a death squad chasing butterflies). Although the pace of events is intense and the diction and rhythm enhance the atmosphere, the bathos that surfaces through the repeated use of doctrinaire statements and journalese undermines the drama's praiseworthy features.

Quite different in tone and intensity is Iurii Shcherbak's *Nablyzhennia* (Coming Closer, 1984). Although the play is written primarily in prose, it deserves mention here because the author employs some verse dialogue and verses from Goethe's *Faust.* The play deals with a Soviet scientist and some of the Faustian problems that he encounters. Whenever a situation is directly compared to one in *Faust*, Goethe's work is quoted in Mykola Lukash's translation. While the discussion is performed with a better understanding of the problem than was seen in Levada's drama, Shcherbak seems eager to rectify his older colleague's misinterpretation of Goethe. Shcherbak's summation is: "life is coming closer to truth, / ... if the joy of coming closer is taken away, / man will be deeply unhappy."

To commemorate the 1,500th anniversary of Kyiv, Oles Lupii (b. 1938) wrote the verse drama *Liubov i lad* (Love and Order, 1982), subtitled "A Historical Poem." It was adapted as a television film (*Malusha*) and as a radio drama entitled *Kokhana kyivskoho kniazia* (The Kyivan Prince's Lover). Leonid Horlach (b. 1941) wrote *Slov"ianskyi ostriv* (A Slavic Island, 1986), subtitled "A Historical Novel." Like Kostenko's *Marusia Churai*, his drama does not visually indicate the dramatis personae, though the text does provide the speakers' names and their monologues or dialogues. This is a very didactic work about the fraternal relations of the Czechs and Slovaks and the rebellion led by Jan Hus in the fifteenth century against foreign oppression.

In the 1980s the émigré writer Vira Vovk also produced a verse drama, *Tryptykh do tsylindrovykh kartyn Iuriia Soloviia* (Triptych on the Cylindrical Paintings of Jurij Solovij, 1982). It contains elements similar to the ones that she employed earlier. This work, which was intended to be performed as an oratorio, is composed of three fresco pieces spoken in the form of a dialogue. Although it does not seem to be a drama owing to the presentation of seemingly independent poems, it should still be considered part of this genre. *Tryptykh* has no specific continuity of action per se. However, in this age of minimalist opera and music it may be considered a type of minimalist verse drama.

Tryptykh, a commentary on the paintings of the Ukrainian–American artist Jurij Solovij, consists of three acts, with seven scenes (poems) in each. Since none of the dramatis personae appear in all three "acts," this verse drama obviously does not possess all the dramatic unities. But the depiction of the Fallen Angels, the Crucifixion, and the Last Judgment (also the titles of the three acts) provides a unified general tone and message and builds deep emotional involvement and poetic appeal. Although the author mixes biblical characters (Lucifer, fallen angels, Veronica) with literary legends (Faust) and episodes about current Ukrainian poets and political dissidents, she retains the poetic aspect without using excessive rhetoric, which Soviet writers would. The delicate balance between the humanitarian and *engagé* civic message is subtly achieved by the effective use of devices that augment the poetic content: folkloric elements (from ancient Ukrainian spring-ritual songs [*hahilky*] to laments), ritualistic religious songs, a short intermede-type interlude, and a constant presence of tragic irony. The language varies from archaic to contemporary, and the total effect of the diction gives rise to multilevelled connotations and images. Vovk changes the rhythm of each poem (or "scene") to parallel the tone and role of the dialogue participants (e.g., the Wind speaks by repeating two words, with varied stress) with that of a chorale/hymn of a hopeful, prayer-like song. The organically connected ritualistic incantations carry out a plot function and form part of the drama's verse diction.

In the late 1980s Vovk wrote *Ikonostas Ukrainy* (The Iconostasis of Ukraine, 1988) and *Vinok troistyi* (A Threefold Wreath, 1988). *Ikonostas Ukrainy*, subtitled "A Mysterium," also includes some songs composed by the author and presents frescolike vignettes of important Ukrainian historic events and personages—pagan rituals, the Christianization of Rus' in 988, Grand Prince Volodymyr the Great, the Grand Princess Olha, Hetman Ivan Mazepa's mother, the eighteenth-century philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda—and tragic events and experiences from the Soviet period, such as the 1932–33 famine, incarceration in Siberia, and the Chornobyl nuclear disaster. As in most of her verse dramas, Vovk expresses a constant quest for truth, beauty, virtue, and justice, overlaid with the constant presence of hope. The text of *Vinok troistyi*, subtitled "A

Galician Feminist Interwar Chronicle," also includes the author's musical compositions.

A postwar émigré in Canada, Rostyslav Kedr (pseud. of Ivan Manastyrsky), wrote the verse drama *Homunkulius* (The Homunculus, 1990). This work is based on Part One of Goethe's *Faust* and includes many parallel symbols/protagonists (Faust, Mephistopheles, and the Eternal Feminine). The timeless polarities of good and evil are debated; Mephistopheles tempts the Homunculus with promises of power. The formerly self-centred protagonist suddenly faces the truth about the great injustice done to his people and blames God for allowing it to happen. The Homunculus wants to challenge evil (here the Soviet one), bring about justice, and avenge innocent victims. Under his lover's influence, however, he refrains from judging people and from punishing either the guilty or innocent bystanders. Philosophical discussions containing numerous intertextual references provide the core of the 255–page drama, written primarily in iambic pentameter and blank verse.

For more than half a century, from 1944 to 1990, the dean of the older generation of Ukrainian émigré poets, Vasyl Barka (b. 1908), who lives in the United States, worked on the creation of a two-volume epic verse drama entitled *Kavkaz* (The Caucacus, 1993, 790 and 1,034 pages). Just as Barka's four-volume *Svidok* (The Witness, 1981) was a "novel in strophes" with implied dialogue, so too *Kavkaz* may be called an epic novel in verse with dialogue. This monumental work presents the lives of several characters in the last years of Russian tsarism, the 1917 Revolution and its aftermath, and Soviet misdeeds in Ukraine and the Caucasus. The protagonist lives through these events, becomes a priest, and begins to preach the virtues of a Christian life in the Caucasus and then in prison.

Barka also wrote an oratorio entitled *Molebnyk neofitiv* (The Neophytes' Prayerbook, 1991). This work, which is almost a paraphrase of the Divine Liturgy, especially the sacrifice for the sake of souls, culminates in the Crucifixion. His verse drama *Zirka "Polyn"* (The Star "Wormwood," 1991), is a depiction of the Chornobyl disaster. The poet deals primarily with the events that transpired after this disaster and explores the reasons that inspired people to follow the Soviet government's inhumane orders.

In all of his verse poems Barka often adapts his own variants of biblical and folkloric elements. His style is epic, especially when he deals with dire historical events. His syntax is often condensed and elliptical, yet it adheres to the classical rhyme and rhythm of iambic tetrameter or pentameter. His vocabulary is rich in neologisms and diminutives, the latter creating an emotional response to the protagonists' fate.

In 1995 Viktor Lysiuk (b. 1938) of Kyiv wrote "Polyn" (Wormwood, subtitled "A Rhapsody"), an unpublished verse drama interlaced with prose that has some similarity to Barka's verse drama. This work portrays the situation

immediately after the Chornobyl nuclear accident situation in the contaminated area; Christian virtues and ethics are often mentioned by a protagonist priest. Lysiuk includes a substantial number of Ukrainian folk songs and laments of the Polisian region, which he collects, as well as religious incantations and a vocabulary very much like Vovk's.

Some Observations on Ukrainian Verse Drama since the 1930s

Lesia Ukrainka and her contemporaries created a solid base for the genre of verse drama on which succeeding generations of writers could build. At the beginning of the twentieth century, diction was considered to be one of the primary elements of poetic drama, which could be perfected and supplemented by the artistic use of prosody. The degree of artistry displayed by the writer employing these elements separated great works from poor imitations, which were plentiful. Poetic vision helped to formulate lofty ideas and principles, since the genre always included them and was respected for them. Myth, universal truths and values, and historical facts and situations (aimed at providing contemporary parallels) were offered in these works. As numerous scholars of the genre have observed, the desire to share serious truths has often lured writers to verse drama and "thesis" or "idea" plays. This approach was utilized to excess particularly during the Soviet period, when this genre, more than any other, was used to indoctrinate the public or, at least, to turn it into the ruling ideology's cheerleader. As a result, verse plays often became "poster plays." Diction and prosody were relegated to a secondary role, and the by then dull genre appeared to be on the edge of extinction. However, even minor innovations in structure (e.g., Levada's *Faust i smert*) managed to revive it.

During the 1970s and 1980s a younger generation of poets helped to maintain the vitality of verse drama: Drach and Kostenko in Ukraine and Vovk in the West. Their dramatic poems went beyond the traditions of the early years of the twentieth century in terms of structure and form, stage design and stageability, and poetics. Words, even if they were at times jarring, once again dominated the action or events. Justice—individual, social, political, and universal—became the dominant theme. Thesis works incorporated some elements of the epic. The classical form was not often pursued (Vovk, Kostenko, Drach), and blank verse was esteemed. There was also a return to classical dialogue with little action and to the *poème* form (almost recitative in nature, e.g., Vovk's *Tryptykh).*

Most writers of verse drama were attracted to historical themes. Tom Driver has suggested that when poets decide to espouse the genre, they do so out of nostalgia for the past, and when they include folk materials as an expression of

human experiences, "a nostalgia of content spills into a nostalgia of form."[23] In the case of Ukraine, it was more than just nostalgia. When Soviet Ukrainian writers turned to folklore, it was to preserve ties to the past and to prove that they did have a past that was distinctly their own. This may explain the numerous examples of incorporating folkloric elements and forms, such as the *duma,* in many verse dramas (e.g., by Kostenko, Drach, and Oleksa Kolomiiets). One may also note a rising interest in the use of elements from eighteenth-century Ukrainian morality plays in verse: allegorical, panegyric, and hagiographic (e.g., in Vovk and Drach). Baroque intermedes were also incorporated. The figure of God was reintroduced by Vovk, Rudenko, and Drach, although with diametrically opposite points of reference and motives. When Ukrainian writers in the West incorporated old Ukrainian forms, it was also to preserve knowledge of the past (e.g., Vovk's use of pre–Christian *hahilky* or songs from devotional services to the Theotokos). In both cases, it was not so much the inclusion of legendary figures or of several lines from these songs or chants as the casting of the entire poetic dialogue in that particular tone and form. It is this aspect of incorporating typical elements of Ukrainian folklore in terms of poetics, structure, and form that not only distinguishes Ukrainian verse drama from its Western counterparts, but also represents its strongest asset.

Because it deals with important and lofty issues, this distinctive genre has been attractive to writers wishing to preach ideology or morality, to inspire personal and civic virtues, integrity, and patriotism, and to convey information and lessons about Ukrainian historical figures and events. A sense of national history has been particularly important to the Ukrainian reader, who has been all too aware of Ukraine's tragic fate in the twentieth century. In several dramas there are strong charges that God is responsible for Ukraine's suffering under evil totalitarianism.

If Ukrainian poets have espoused this genre, it is also because a writer is "most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity," as Eliot observed. The fact that Ukrainian verse drama demonstrates not only typical traditional Ukrainian attributes but also many similarities to West European drama and traditions testifies to that historical sense that "compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order."[24]

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23. Tom F. Driver, *Romantic Quest and Modern Query: History of Modern Theater* (New York: Dell, 1971), 324.

24. T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism: The Greeks to the Present,* ed. Robert Con Davis and Laurie Finke (New York:

Among the innovations introduced into the genre since the 1960s, which in many cases meant the reapplication of specific means from earlier centuries, one should note in particular such theatrical means as music, dance, masks, and other visual stage devices. The Greek chorus was artfully employed in new ways by Levada and Drach, and a variant of the chorus—the use of portraits proclaiming certain judgments or truths—was used by Pachovsky, Levada, and Drach. Although Yeats was encouraging the use of masks, music, ritual, and verse as early as 1910, Ukrainian authors only began incorporating them into verse drama in the 1960s.

During the first half of the twentieth century, Ukrainian verse drama was influenced by neo-Romanticism, symbolism, and expressionism, with some typical avant-garde attributes. In the second half of the century, writers continued to rely on expressionistic devices, and their dramas became quite fragmented in form (e.g., Vovk's "fresco and monologue" verse dramas). Frequently they incorporated old Ukrainian literary forms (the intermede and *duma*), utilized intertextuality (e.g., folklore, biblical references, Faust, quotations from Ukrainian poets) and irony (e.g., in the works of Drach, Vovk, and Barka), and stressed the importance of time. In short, Ukrainian verse dramas exhibited all of the typical postmodernist qualities. Meanwhile Soviet Ukrainian dramatists were obliged to adhere to the demands of socialist realism and to eschew tragedy. Only Kostenko did not comply with this stricture.

It is worth noting that better verse dramas were created by outstanding poets: by Kocherha, Mosendz, and Lypa in the 1930s, and, since the 1960s, by Drach, Kostenko, and Vovk. It should also be noted that many of the Ukrainian practitioners of this genre are women (about a third)—more than in most Western literatures. Ukrainian verse drama is varied in diction, rhetoric, form, poetics, poetic vision, and subject matter. It combines both traditional and innovative means and approaches and is meant for both reading and staging. Poets have continued to be drawn to the genre, rescuing it from the extinction that appears to threaten it from time to time and providing Ukrainian literature with worthy dramas in every decade.

Longman, 1989), 588.

The Christian Experience in the Soviet Empire: Church-State Relations in Eastern Europe, 1917–1991

Oleh W. Gerus

Church-state conflicts are as old as Christianity itself, but beginning in 1918, for the first time in history, organized religion—Christianity in particular—was faced with ruthless and militant atheism. The roots of Bolshevik/Soviet atheism lay in the materialistic Marxist-Leninist philosophy, which is incompatible and irreconcilable with religion. To the fathers of Communism, religion represented a reactionary and deceptive superstition, and the church a clever institutional instrument of class oppression. It was a tool of bourgeois reaction for the repression of the proletariat ("Submit to authority, for all authority is ordained by God"). Religion thus had no place in a socialist society.[1] In theoretical Marxism, freedom of conscience could be achieved only by freeing the masses from the chains of religion by means of a permanent ideological struggle (dialectical materialism) against the religious conception of the world. However, such a struggle was to be conducted by education and propaganda, but not by wholesale suppression of religion. In fact, before the 1917 revolution even Lenin had argued that large-scale repression would be counterproductive because it would raise the church to martyrdom, revitalize the faithful, and prolong the church's life. It was a given that in a Marxist state organized religion would be completely separated from the state and from public education. Citizens would

1. "Of course, we say that we do not believe in God. We know perfectly well that the clergy, the landlords, and the bourgeoisie all claimed to speak in the name of god, in order to protect their own interests as exploiters.... We deny all morality taken from superhuman or non-class conceptions. We say that this is a deception, a swindle, a befogging of the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landlords and capitalist" (V. I. Lenin, *On Religion*, 3d ed. [Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969], 131); see also Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *On Religion* (New York: Schoken Books, 1971).

be free, at least in theory, to choose whether to believe or not while being inundated with anti-religious propaganda. Thus, it was the concept of a militant ideological struggle against religion and leading to its anticipated demise that distinguished the Marxist idea from the Western practice of church-state separation, wherein the state generally maintained neutrality in ecclesiastical matters.

When Marxist/Communist regimes were established, first in Russia and later in Eastern Europe, the foundations of their religious policies were determined by their ideology. But at the same time these policies were shaped by the prevailing historical and political circumstances, especially by questions of state security. Hence, the nature and intensity of the confrontation between church and state differed from place to place. Giovanni Barbini is correct in his assessment that, in general, never before had the church been so unyieldingly opposed by a state that was ideologically hostile to organized religion and wholly committed to the construction of an atheist socialist society.[2] On occasion it even seemed that the very survival of religion was threatened. Yet, in reality the church was less vulnerable than it appeared. Depending on the circumstances, the church offered either active or passive resistance to Communism. The Soviet empire's rulers had to cope with a thousand-year-old Christian tradition representing a cultural and spiritual framework encompassing millions of people, which the Communists never really understood.

The Church in the Soviet Union

The Russian Orthodox Church was the largest Orthodox community in the world. It was an offshoot of the church of Kyivan Rus' founded in 988 and moulded by Byzantine missionaries and philosophy. In imperial Russia the Orthodox Church was the official church of the land. The emperor himself was the guardian of the dogmas of the Orthodox faith and the preserver of Orthodoxy as its secular head. It was a highly conservative, privileged (it alone had the right to proselytize), and economically powerful institution with huge landholdings and properties to which nearly seventy percent of the multinational population belonged, at least formally.[3] All ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians

2. Erich Weingartner, ed., *Church within Socialism: Church and State in East European Socialist Republics* (Rome: International Documentation and Communication Centre, 1976), 7.

3. According to the official statistics, in 1900 there were 49,000 Orthodox churches in the Russian Empire, divided into sixty-four eparchies and served by 104,500 members of the secular clergy. There were also 380 monasteries with 15,000 monks and 170 convents with 48,000 nuns. The clergy was trained in fifty-eight seminaries and three theological academies (equivalent to universities). The twelve Roman Catholic dioceses had 3,000 parishes that served over eleven million faithful. There were nearly four million

were considered, ipso facto, members of the Russian Orthodox Church and were forbidden to leave it. In return for its denominational primacy, the church was subjected to tsarist control through a special ecclesiastical department, the Holy Synod, which in the eighteenth century had replaced the Patriarchate of Moscow. During the imperial period the Russian Orthodox Church, as a loyal servant of the state, acted as a staunch proponent of reactionary tsarism and Russian cultural imperialism (Russification), thereby alienating the liberal, non-Russian, and radical intelligentsia. The Roman Catholic Church in Russian-ruled Poland and Lithuania and several Protestant denominations (Lutherans in Latvia and Estonia, Baptists and Mennonites in Ukraine and southern Russia) enjoyed legal status but not equality with the Orthodox Church. There were also numerous sectarian groups, mainly the Old Believers, embracing millions of Russians, but because there was no freedom of religion until 1905, they were obliged to worship in secrecy.

At the beginning of the Russian Revolution, for the first time in Russian history all religions enjoyed a brief period of real freedom. The Russian Orthodox Church convened a general sobor, the first since the eighteenth century, which restored the Moscow Patriarchate as the executive office of the church. The council initiated other reforms designed to maintain the primacy of the Russian church and, at the same time, to free the church from state control, but not from its financial support. The reformed patriarchal church would be autonomous yet loyal to the imperial concept of the Russian state. For example, when the Ukrainians took steps to revive their own independent Orthodox church (taken over by Moscow in 1686), the Moscow Patriarchate vigorously opposed them.[4] The Bolshevik seizure of power threw Russia and Ukraine into a bloody civil war in which millions of people perished. It was only logical that the Orthodox Church would support the anti-Bolshevik forces. This action provoked Lenin into launching an unprecedented campaign of terror against the church. Right from the inception of the Soviet state, considerations of internal and external security were always present in the government's formulation of religious policies. Naturally, the greater the perceived threat, the harsher the

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Protestants. Islam was the largest non-Christian religion, with over 14 million followers, mainly in Central Asia. Useful background information may be found in Anton Kartashev, *Ocherki po istorii Ruskoi Tserkvi,* 2 vols. (Paris: YMCA Press, 1959); Georgii Fedotov, *The Russian Religious Mind* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960); and John Shelton Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia: The Last Years of the Empire, 1900–1917* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940).

4. A reliable documentary account is provided in *Martyrolohiia ukrainskykh Tserkov u chotyrokh tomakh,* vol. 1, *Ukrainska Pravoslavna Tserkva,* ed. Osyp Zinkevych and O. Voronyn (Toronto and Baltimore: V. Symonenko Smoloskyp Publishers, 1987).

persecution. To Lenin the Russian church was nothing less than a treacherous agent of counter-revolution.

The Soviet government used legal measures and outright force to undermine organized religion in general and the Russian church in particular. Lenin's Decree on the Separation of Church from State and School from Religion of 23 January 1918 provided the legal basis for a provisional church-state relationship in Soviet Russia. After World War II this decree would serve as a model for church-state relations in Eastern Europe. Lenin's regime secularized the Soviet state and declared war on organized religion with a specific focus on the Russian Orthodox Church. The church was deprived of the status of a judicial person and stripped of all its properties (land, church buildings, monasteries, bank accounts, and parochial schools) and the right to teach religion outside the church. Individual parishes could try to function by registering with the local authorities and then leasing back their former property. The church was further crippled when legislation, passed in 1929, deprived believers of the right to conduct religious propaganda and defend religion in public. In the face of systematic discrimination and persecution of believers, the constitutional freedom to "confess any religion or not at all" sounded rather hollow.[5]

The surprising level of popular, especially peasant, resistance to anti-religious campaigns compelled the Soviet government to change its tactics. It turned to the time-tested policy of "divide and rule." Still focussing on the patriarchal Russian Orthodox Church as its main enemy, the regime intensified a campaign of terror against its hierarchy, clergy, and faithful. At the same time it gave tactical support to anti-patriarchal dissident Orthodox Christian movements, such as the Living Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. But when the patriarchal church weakened, the regime turned against the dissident churches, which enjoyed a high degree of public support, and crushed them. Efforts by the Russian church leadership to reach an understanding with the government were rebuffed.

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5. The subject of religion in the Soviet Union has received considerable attention. See John Shelton Curtiss, *The Russian Church and the Soviet State, 1917–1950* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953); Max Hayward and William C. Fletcher, eds., *Religion and the Soviet State: A Dilemma of Power* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1969); Walter Kolarz, *Religion in the Soviet Union* (New York: Praeger, 1968); Richard H. Marshall, ed., *Aspects of Religion in the Soviet Union, 1917–1967* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971); Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, "Church-State Relations in the USSR," *Survey* (London), January 1968, 4–32; idem, "The Shaping of Soviet Religious Policy," *Problems of Communism*, May–June 1973, 37–51; and Dimitry Pospielovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime, 1917–1982*, 2 vols. (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984).

In the 1930s the anti-religious activities of the Soviet state blended with the general wave of Stalinist terror that was being waged in the name of socialism. In this unprecedented genocide more than twenty million innocent people perished. People were punished not for what they did, but for who they were. As disclosed recently by the Russian presidential commission documenting Soviet repression, hundreds of bishops and tens of thousands of clergymen of all Christian denominations were murdered as dreaded "enemies of the people." The lucky ones were sentenced to long terms in Gulag slave-labour camps. Thousands of church buildings, representing the spiritual and artistic legacy of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia, and Georgia were destroyed, and their religious contents looted. Of those that managed to survive the physical destruction, many became warehouses and museums of atheism.

On the eve of World War II, after years of systematic persecution, the historic Russian Orthodox Church had virtually ceased to exist as an institution. Throughout the entire Soviet Union fewer than four hundred churches still functioned with some regularity. The patriarchal office was vacant, and only four elderly bishops remained at liberty. Ironically, it was the outbreak of World War II and the German invasion of the Soviet Union that halted persecution and made possible the institutional survival of the Russian Orthodox Church. When it became obvious that the Soviet people would not fight to defend Communism, the pragmatic Stalin turned to patriotism for salvation. Perhaps guided by the tremendous revival of religious life in German-occupied areas of the USSR, Stalin, the lapsed seminarian, reached an understanding with the church leadership (Metropolitan Sergii), and the church responded with patriotic fervour.

The church's unselfish support for the war effort and its demonstrated loyalty to Stalin were rewarded with a legitimate though strictly controlled existence. The church was obliged to remain an exclusively liturgical institution; its social mission and educational function were not restored. Limited as its sphere of activity was, the Russian Orthodox Church once again enjoyed a greater status than other recognized religious denominations. It should be noted that the anti-religious legislation was not withdrawn; it was merely suspended, to be reintroduced whenever necessary. Both sides correctly viewed this truce between the brutal Communist regime and the Russian church as a temporary arrangement. The Kremlin made no secret of the fact that it was still committed to the eradication of all forms of religion.

Beginning in 1943 with Patriarch Sergii Stragorodsky (1867–1944), the church leadership saw its subservience to the Communist power, unpleasant as it was, as the only realistic way of preserving the church's structure until such time that Communism, a temporal force, would eventually disappear. The church, of course, was eternal. It had already outlived the Tatars and the tsars. This rationalization of subservience (the creed of resignation) as a strategy of survival was not shared by all Orthodox faithful. Many of them, perhaps in the millions,

turned away from the "tainted" and police-infiltrated official church and formed underground alternative religious communities, the "True Orthodox Church" so sympathetically discussed by William C. Fletcher.[6]

The governmental watchdog, the Council of Religious Affairs, was in charge of organized religion in the Soviet Union. But in practical terms, the welfare of parish life depended not so much on the central authority as on the attitude of the local Party officials. Their attitude toward religion was marked by outright hostility, indifference, or occasionally even sympathy. The rampant corruption of the Soviet bureaucracy actually allowed the wealthier parishes to buy protection from harassment even during periods of official persecution.

In the postwar period Stalin began using the church as an instrument of state policy.[7] The Russian Orthodox Church was authorized to play an important part in the Sovietization of Ukrainian and Belarusian lands that the USSR had taken from Poland. First, the Ukrainian and Belarusian Orthodox faithful were denied their own churches and integrated into the revived "imperial" Russian church.[8] Then the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, a bastion of Ukrainian nationalism in interwar Poland, with some five million adherents and extensive properties, was formally liquidated in 1946 by a patented Soviet method of forced "reunification" with Orthodoxy.[9] The move to abolish the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was inspired by the mutual interests of Stalin and the Moscow Patriarchate. Moscow had never recognized that church's legitimacy and feared its Western orientation. The majority of the banned Ukrainian Catholics, however, never reconciled themselves to Russian Orthodoxy, but as recent events in Ukraine have demonstrated, remained closet Catholics, worshipping in the underground church or simply pretending to be Orthodox.[10] The liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was a tactical error on the part of the Kremlin, for it sharpened Western Ukrainian hostility towards the

6. *The Russian Orthodox Church Underground, 1917–1970* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

7. See Michael A. Meerson, "The Political Philosophy of the Russian Orthodox Episcopate in the Soviet Period," in *Church, Nation and State in Russia and Ukraine,* ed. Geoffrey A. Hosking (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1990), 210–27.

8. See my article "The Ukrainian Orthodox Church during World War II," *Vira i kultura/Faith and Culture* (Winnipeg), no. 7 (1985–9): 83–120.

9. See Bohdan Rostyslav Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)* (Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1996).

10. Bohdan Botsiurkiv [Bociurkiw], "Relihiia i natsionalnist u SRSR," *Suchasnist,* 1985, no. 7–8: 110–30; and idem, "The Ukrainian Catholic Church in the USSR under Gorbachev," *Problems of Communism,* November–December 1990, 1–19.

Soviet system. It would have been easier to control a legal church than a shady underground ecclesiastical organization.

The gradual improvement in the institutional life of the Russian Orthodox Church was severely shaken by the sudden and virulent anti-religious campaign undertaken by Nikita Khrushchev. This erratic Soviet leader (1953–64) actually tried to humanize Communism on the one hand, while destroying religion on the other. Mountains of anti-religious literature, renewed atheist instructions in schools and factories, the denunciation and arrests of priests, and even punishment of those Communists who tolerated religious practices characterized the anti-religious campaign of 1959–64. Although statistical data is vague, it is estimated that half of the working Orthodox churches were closed down, leaving approximately ten thousand churches, more than half of which were located in Ukraine, for an estimated thirty to fifty million still-practicing believers. While the casual Christians had succumbed to governmental pressure and withdrawn from the church, millions of hardcore faithful still clung to their religion. The fall of Khrushchev in 1964 ended the persecution, and the church began the slow process of regaining its losses. It became obvious in the 1970s that, despite the continuing promotion of atheism and the clumsy portrayal of Marxism-Leninism as a secular religion with Lenin as its central icon, the stagnating Brezhnev regime lacked both the ideological commitment and the political resolve to liquidate the church in the near future. Large-scale persecution was replaced with a system of harassment.

Severe restrictions on the printing of religious books were combined with an import embargo aimed at frustrating all religious pastoral and educational efforts. Theological expertise was certainly compromised. Religious instruction was inculcated orally and generally carried out privately at home and in prison camps. In the entire USSR there were only three Orthodox seminaries and one theological academy with a limited enrolment. Religious dissidents or activists, particularly non-Orthodox ones, were regularly arrested.

At the same time the Russian Orthodox Church became an important tool of the Kremlin. Serving as apologists of the Soviet system, the Moscow Patriarchate and its Orthodox counterparts in Eastern Europe became useful extensions of Soviet foreign policy.[11] As a member of the World Council of Churches and various world peace organizations, the Russian Orthodox Church and its allies diligently promoted the legitimation of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe through detente and the Kremlin version of international peace and nuclear disarmament. Soviet propagandists sowed disinformation by using the

11. See John B. Dunlop, *The Recent Activities of the Moscow Patriarchate Abroad and in the USSR* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967).

example of "freedom of religion" in the Soviet Union as proof of Soviet democracy.

The Church in Eastern Europe, 1945–91

Between 1944 and 1948 Communist regimes were established in Eastern Europe mainly with the aid of the victorious Red Army. Indigenous Communist movements were relatively insignificant in Poland, Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania; only in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia were they influential. As the Soviet forces of liberation turned into an army of occupation, local Communist regimes were instrumental in establishing a loyal buffer zone between the USSR and the West. Using Stalin's Soviet Union as the official model, the new East European regimes first set out to consolidate their power and then to launch a Soviet-type socialist revolution. Both stages involved the unleashing of a wide-ranging campaign of social purge and terror. In this formative phase of East European Communism, tens of thousands of "class enemies" were victimized by the brutal methods of Stalinist social engineering. As in the USSR, organized religion and the church were considered as formidable ideological and political adversaries of the new order.

Eastern Europe represented a mixture of Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches. In the pre-Communist period these churches had enjoyed status, influence, and considerable economic power. But they were not immune to the emerging forces of modernization and secularization. The Communist regimes attempted to establish firm control over organized religion by means of legislation and force. In varying degrees the churches were deprived of much of their traditional privileges and economic wealth. Their influence over secular education and young people was either seriously curtailed or eliminated outright. In the Roman Catholic countries of Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia special efforts were made to isolate the local Catholic Church from the Vatican. The Vatican's uncompromising anti-Communist posture made it a target of vicious propaganda, which denounced it as a tool of American imperialism. The imposition of Marxist ideology and Soviet policies in Eastern Europe meant a direct confrontation with the local national churches, for they naturally resisted the drastic change to their status and loudly protested the general repression of real, potential, and imagined enemies of socialism. While all Communist regimes formally guaranteed in law "the liberty of conscience and confession and of all religious rituals," in practice they waged a bitter conflict with organized religion, especially in the initial stages of the consolidation of their power.

The situation in postwar Orthodox Europe reflected several aspects of the Russian experience. As in Russia, the Orthodox Churches there had had the status of national religions and were integral parts of the prewar states in Bulgaria (representing 85 percent of the population), Romania (70 percent), and Serbia (65 percent). As such, these official churches defined the national identity

of their adherents and tended to reflect the political views of the governments in power. In the Balkans the long-standing Byzantine tradition of political authoritarianism and cultural-religious conformity inadvertently facilitated the relatively rapid imposition of the Communist system. But there was an important difference in the attitudes of the Bulgarian and Romanian governments towards their churches. Unlike the Soviet version, their atheism was not militant. In fact, the Bulgarian and Romanian Communist regimes understood the historical and strategic importance of the Orthodox Church, and, at least in the short term, they chose to use the church for their own purposes rather than attempt to destroy it. Thus, while the survival of the church in Bulgaria and Romania was not threatened, the church's ecclesiastical independence, its social mission, and its traditional community leadership were certainly restricted and controlled. Still, the Orthodox Church in Bulgaria and Romania fared appreciably better than its Russian counterpart.[12]

In Bulgaria and Romania the church was purged of unreliable elements, and the legal church-state relationship was reorganized along the lines of the Russian Orthodox Church. In those countries the church reluctantly became an agent of the Communist regimes, whose policies effectively destroyed it as a potential centre of opposition. But as long as the faithful were still allowed to worship, they and their church remained outwardly content and passive. The submissive behaviour of the Orthodox Churches in Bulgaria and Romania was the reflection of the traditional Balkan strategy of survival by adapting outwardly to the occupying powers. Just as the church displayed passivity towards the Bulgarian regime, the same regime was equally subservient to Moscow, making Bulgaria the only satellite not to experience any crisis in its relationship with the Soviet Union.[13]

In the formative phase of Communist rule in Bulgaria, the primate of the Orthodox Church, Exarch Stefan, resisted the abolition of the church's traditional status and was removed. A number of priests were also arrested, but by Soviet standards the purge was rather mild. A new, mutually advantageous relationship

12. In 1966 Bulgaria had one church for every 1,600 worshippers, and in 1977 Romania had one church for every 1,100 faithful. Bucharest, with a population of 1.5 million, had 250 Orthodox churches, while Moscow, with a population of 7.6 million had only forty-three functioning Orthodox churches. See Jane Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church: A Contemporary History* (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1986), 16–17.

13. See Marin V. Pundeff, "Bulgarian Nationalism," in *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, ed. Peter F. Sugar and Ivo J. Lederer (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), 93–165; Christo Ognjanoff, "Religion and Atheism in Bulgaria under Communism," in the special issue *Twenty Years of Bulgarian Review* (1961–1980), June 1980, 65–77; and F. Stephen Larrabee, "Bulgaria's Politics of Conformity," *Problems of Communism*, January–February 1972, 42–52.

between the government and the church hierarchy was worked out in 1953. In return for complete obedience, the government constitutionally recognized the Bulgarian Orthodox Church as the historic church of the Bulgarian people. Furthermore, the Communist regime, with Moscow's approval, elevated the church to the prestigious status of patriarchate. The restoration of the patriarchal office (Patriarch Kiril), which was lost in the fourteenth century when the Turks occupied the Balkans, was a wise political move, as it appeased the Bulgarian sense of patriotism and pride. Curiously, Bulgaria even tolerated its Greek Catholic (Uniate) minority.

In return for its steadfast public support of the system and political leadership, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church was treated reasonably well and was allowed to remain the largest non-Communist institution in the country. In the 1970s it had nearly four thousand parishes, several monasteries, a seminary, a theological school, and a small publishing house that was permitted to produce limited religious literature. The Bulgarian church was maintained not only by donations from its mainly rural faithful, but also by operating several government-approved church-goods enterprises. Its monopoly of candle production, for example, was a major source of revenue. However, it was prevented from ministering to young people, and the latter were pressured into avoiding church services. It seems that the Bulgarian regime was in no hurry to liquidate a church that it controlled and manipulated. It was assumed that in time, as the old pious generation died out, the younger generation, educated in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, would have no need for religion, and the church would wither away.

Romania had been a police state before the war and continued to be one after the end of the conflict. The Communist regime, especially under Nicolae Ceausescu, was the most repressive in the entire Soviet system, and there was little scope for any activity outside the Party structure.[14] Like its Bulgarian neighbour, the Romanian Orthodox Church had been a major force in the Romanian nation-building process in the nineteenth century. The Communist regime officially recognized the historical importance of that church by proclaiming it first among the country's Christian denominations and providing it with state funding. Unlike in the Soviet Union, a single Orthodox place of worship was closed. At the same time, however, the government placed numerous restrictions on the activities of organized religion, including the

14. See Keith Hitchins, "The Romanian Orthodox Church and the State," in *Religion and Atheism in the USSR and Eastern Europe,* ed. Bohdan R. Bociurkiw and John W. Strong (London: Macmillan), 279–308; and Stephen A. Fischer-Galati, "Autocracy, Orthodoxy, and Nationality in the Twentieth Century: The Romanian Case," *East European Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (March 1984): 25–34.

Orthodox Church. The Ministry of Cults had extensive discretionary power to interfere in religious affairs.

It was the Romanian Uniate Church (approx. 1,600,000 faithful) that suffered the most. Like the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Soviet Union, it was singled out for liquidation both by the Orthodox Church and the government. To the Orthodox Church the Uniates were national renegades; to the Communists the church was an agent of Western imperialism. Those Uniate bishops and priests who protested their arbitrary incorporation into the Orthodox Church were imprisoned; some were executed. Nonetheless, their church was formally "reunited" with the Orthodox Church. The Roman Catholics escaped a similar fate because they consisted of ethnic minorities.

It was the Roman Catholic Church in Poland and, to a lesser extent, in Hungary and Czechoslovakia that was responsible for East European divergence from the Soviet model. As a result of the bitter medieval church-state struggle, the Roman Catholic Church had developed a strong tradition of independence from secular interference in ecclesiastical affairs. In the Communist period the Polish church, under the strong leadership of its primate, Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, was particularly noted for its successful refusal to submit to the government. The steadfast resistance of the church to Communist pressure in Poland and Hungary and its denunciation of totalitarianism and atheism served as an inspiration to domestic pro-democracy elements.

In the 1960s Vatican II ushered in profound changes in the Roman Catholic Church, and the cold war between the papacy and the Communist world began to relax. The new Vatican policy of moderation ("from anathema to dialogue") resulted in a series of new concordats between the papacy and the Communist regimes of Catholic Eastern Europe, which ended the imposed isolation of the church there.[15] The Polish church gained much from the new relations, while the Czechoslovakian church remained the most repressed until the Prague Spring of 1968. In Czechoslovakia Roman Catholicism functioned mainly underground.[16]

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15. See M. K. Dziewanowski, "The Vatican's Ostpolitik Reexamined," *Problems of Communism*, January–February 1978, 68–71.

16. The difficulties of religious life in Czechoslovakia are vividly summarized by Michael Lavelle, a Jesuit who spent twenty-eight years there:

> In 1950, all religious orders were declared illegal, and many members of international religious orders were put in jail for periods from one year to fifteen years, with work camp stints tacked onto the lighter sentence. At the height of the Cold War, the Church did not know what its plight would be and assumed the future would mirror the Soviet model of repression. Clandestine seminaries were started in jails and work camps, with former teachers of philosophy and theology teaching the non-ordained members of the orders and bringing them to a readiness for ordination. Often they were ordained in prison,

The Catholic and Protestant experience under Communism ranged from serious difficulties to reasonable accommodation. In Hungary (which was 63 percent Roman Catholic and 25 percent Protestant), for instance, the Communist regime was in the hands of Soviet-trained leaders who strove to make Hungary a carbon copy of their sponsor. As a result, Hungary experienced more terror between 1948 and 1953 than any other satellite. József Cardinal Mindszenty, the conservative primate of the Hungarian Roman Catholic Church, was an outspoken anti-Communist who refused to co-operate with the regime.[17] The government imprisoned him and unleashed a crackdown on the Catholic Church. It dissolved religious orders, imprisoned nearly 4,000 monks, nuns and priests, confiscated church properties, secularized parochial schools, and disbanded the charitable organization Caritas. At the same time the secret police sowed disunity in the Catholic community by organizing a pro-Communist group of clergy called the "peace priests" into a short-lived Progressive Catholic Church. Despite an agreement between the Catholic bishops and the government (August 1950) whereby the church pledged loyalty to the state, pressure on the church continued. Protestant denominations (Calvinists and Lutherans) fared better because they did not have external ties like the Catholic Church and were more co-operative, especially on social issues.

After the failure of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, relations between the pragmatic government of János Kádár (1956–88) and the churches improved. Perhaps the most important gain for the Catholic and Protestant churches was the right from 1957 to offer limited religious education in public schools after hours. Although attendance was voluntary, atheistic indoctrination of the young could be legally countered by religious instruction. In return the church recognized the determining role of the government in the area of senior church appointments and agreed to endorse the cause of socialism, except atheism. Further improvement in church-state relations was illustrated by the election of several prominent Protestant clergymen to the Hungarian parliament in 1975.

The religious situation in East Germany was unique in the Soviet empire.[18]

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in secret. Some of these young men, twenty-six or twenty-seven years old at the time, were almost immediately secretly ordained bishops.

As these priests and bishops came out of prison, they began their underground activity forming study and prayer groups, clandestinely saying Mass in private homes, teaching catechism while working as brick layers, cab drivers, crane operators, truck drivers" ("New Perspectives for the Catholic Church in the Former Iron Curtain Countries," *Diaconia* [Scranton] 27, no. 2–3 [1994]: 129).

17. Mindszenty, who was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1948, was released during the Hungarian uprising in 1956 and found refuge in the American embassy until 1972, when he was allowed to immigrate to Austria. He died in Vienna in 1975.

18. See Pedro Ramet, "Church and Peace in the GDR," *Problems of Communism*,

First, by Soviet standards, the regime was comparatively moderate. Since the East German leadership was sensitive about its Nazi past and because Berlin was the focal point of East-West tensions, it refrained from undertaking Stalinist-type purges. Secondly, this was the only Communist state with a large and dynamic Protestant church—the Evangelical Lutheran Church (44 percent of the population). The Roman Catholic Church (47 percent) tended to be a relatively passive institution. Until 1952 the Evangelical Lutheran Church enjoyed relative freedom to perform a wide range of religious, social, and educational functions. Then, in response to escalating cold-war tensions, the East German government assumed a hard line on the question of church-state relations. For a time religious instruction in schools was banned, and the Lutheran church became isolated from its counterpart in West Germany. However, in 1969 the Federation of Evangelical Churches was established as a sign of new and improved church-state relations. The government reaffirmed Evangelical and Catholic ownership of extensive properties, including church lands, and provided funding from the national budget for salaries and limited social work. Evangelical theological faculties at six state universities were strengthened. The church in East Germany certainly did not appear to have been under siege.

The East German church leadership, while co-operative, was not subservient in the manner of the Orthodox hierarchies. It not only defended the principle and practice of religious freedom, but periodically spoke out independently on controversial national issues, such as immigration to the West, conscription, and peace. The difficulty that the government had in controlling the Protestant church without resorting to violence was largely due to the Lutheran tradition of putting individual conscience above institutional discipline. As Pedro Ramet points out, this lack of uniformity and consensus, which frustrated the authorities, was due to the fact that church-state relations worked out on one level may be rejected on another.[19]

In the late 1970s, as a result of improved relations between the two Germanys, a new church-state relationship was worked out. The agreement lifted most of the remaining restrictions on church activities, removed discrimination in education and employment against believers, and toned down the government's atheistic campaigns. The Evangelical Lutheran Church was even permitted limited access to radio and television, a privilege that existed only in Poland. Still, a sense of ambivalence continued to characterize church-state relations. For example, the Lutheran Church was generally supportive of the government welfare system, but it promoted its own version of a peace campaign called Swords into Ploughshares. The church enjoyed a high degree of credibility

July–August 1984, 44–57.

19. Ibid., 49.

among the young and the intelligentsia, but had little support among the industrial workers. In the 1980s the regime of Erich Honecker apparently revised its strategic approach to religion; it no longer characterized religion as a reactionary force but as a necessary part of a socialist society in the formative phase.

In the interwar period Czechoslovakia was the only democratic state in Eastern Europe. Religious toleration was a way of life there. Although the majority of the population was nominally Roman Catholic (77 percent), the nature of Catholicism differed between the Czechs and the Slovaks.[20] The Westernized and urban Czech culture had become secularized early in the twentieth century, and the Czech church played only a marginal political role in the lives of the people. Catholicism was not tied to the sense of Czech national identity, and an attitude of indifference towards religion seemed to dominate. There was also a strong Hussite Protestant tradition, which counterbalanced traditional Roman Catholicism. In contrast, Slovakia had a formidable Catholic tradition and church—one that constituted a defining part of the Slovak national consciousness and, as such, exerted dominant influence, especially over the rural population. Historically, the clergy had been the actual leaders of Slovak nationalism. This differing background was translated into a wider acceptance of Communist religious policies among the Czechs and into resistance among the Slovaks.

With the establishment of a neo-Stalinist regime in Czechoslovakia in 1948, the government mounted a concerted campaign against the church, closing seminaries, secularizing parochial schools, and confiscating church property. The ranks of the clergy were purged of "suspicious" elements. Nevertheless, religious worship was constitutionally permitted and generally allowed. In Slovakia the traditional influence of the Catholic clergy, although somewhat diminished, remained important among the peasantry.

During the brief Prague Spring of 1968 the reformist Communists, headed by Alexander Dubček (1923–93), assumed power and, two decades before Mikhail Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika, attempted to humanize and democratize the brutal Stalinist system. Stifled religious life was revitalized, and church contacts with Rome and the West were re-established. The Dubček government even promised to restore the right of religious education. But the leaders of the Prague Spring were ahead of their time, and they consequently panicked the repressive regimes of the Soviet empire. Moscow intervened, the Warsaw Pact forces crushed this experiment in real socialist democracy, and the

20. See Pedro Ramet, "Christianity and National Heritage among the Czechs and Slovaks," in *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, ed. in Pedro Ramet (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), 264–85.

Communist hard-liners resumed control of Czechoslovakia for the next twenty years.

The Catholic Church of Czechoslovakia assumed a politically quiescent appearance while quietly conducting its pastoral activities on both the public and the clandestine level. The fact that the church maintained its presence in the country was politically important. As one of the few surviving non-Communist institutions in the country, it acted as a beacon for a variety of political dissidents, including non-believers. People could and did express their inner hostility towards the regime by their association with the church, the symbolic and ideological antithesis of Communism. The church itself remained cautious and apolitical until 1988. Then, influenced by the events unfolding in the USSR and Poland, the elderly primate, František Cardinal Tomášek (1899–1992) called for religious freedom and human rights. A huge demonstration (600,000 participants) in Bratislava led by a newly formed Christian Democratic Movement was disbanded by force, and this act turned the cautious public against the government. The new coalition of the church, the political dissenters (Public Forum), and the general pro-democracy public resulted in the remarkable Velvet Revolution that peacefully overthrew the Communist regime in 1990.[21]

Of all the Soviet satellites Poland was the most restive. The Polish people despised their Moscow-imposed Communist regime and rejected conformity and obedience. Furthermore, the Polish government simply lacked the capacity to consolidate its authority over the resentful population. As a result, the society experienced much popular and industrial unrest, especially after Stalin's death in 1953. Dissident labour, peasant, intellectual, and Catholic elements eventually coalesced in 1980 into the famous Solidarity movement, which challenged the monopoly of Communist power.

The main reason why this popular opposition to the government did not erupt into a bloody upheaval was the Polish Catholic Church.[22] Poland represented the largest Catholic community (approx. 36 million adherents) in the Soviet empire. The Polish church was a powerful historical and national institution. During the Communist period it was not afraid to criticize the regime when it threatened its prerogatives. Cardinal Wyszyński proved to be a courageous and skilful opponent of the regime and of its encroachment on

21. See Otto Ulc, "The Bumpy Road of Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution," *Problems of Communism*, May–June 1992, 19–33; and Bernard Wheaton and Zdenek Kavan, *The Velvet Revolution: Czechoslovakia, 1988–1991* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992).

22. A special issue of *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, vol. 15, nos. 1–2 (1973), contains the following relevant articles: Jerzy Turowicz, "The Changing Catholicism in Poland," 151–57; Stanislaw Staron, "The State and Church," 158–75; and Ludwik Dembinski, "The Catholics and Politics in Poland," 176–83.

Catholic liberties. The Communist Party made attempts to subvert the church, but proved to be simply too weak and was obliged to tolerate its rival as an autonomous institution and alternative value system. In the Polish circumstances atheism had no chance of success. The church not only considered itself as the sole and true guardian of Polish national interests, but also acted as such with the approval and support of the people. The Catholic Church remained a political force that the Communist Party was obliged to recognize. In addition to its moral prestige and credibility, it succeeded in preserving its considerable economic power and legal means for further growth and influence. In practical terms this meant its extensive property holdings, a system of parochial schools, thousands of clergymen and nuns, its own press, seminaries, and lay associations, and the only denominational university (the Lublin Catholic University) in the Communist world. The fact that the Polish church grew larger and stronger in Communist Poland than it had been in prewar Poland testifies to the most unusual church-state relations in that country.[23] Poland was indeed a special case among the Soviet satellites.

The power and influence, both moral and political, of the Catholic Church was based on the deep religiosity of the Polish people and even more so on their identity with the church as an embodiment of the Polish nation. To be a Catholic was to be a Pole. The church nourished the acute sense of frustrated Polish nationalism with its appeals to tradition and patriotism, especially in its criticism of the servility of the Polish leadership to Moscow, which the Poles considered culturally inferior. With the election of Karol Cardinal Wojtyla to the papacy as John Paul II in 1978, the already formidable church received a powerful boost at the expense of the regime. The pope's three triumphant visits to his homeland as the uncrowned king of Poland further undermined the political legitimacy of the Polish government in the eyes of the nation.

In the 1980s the church became a key player in the political struggle between the incompetent but repressive regime and the increasingly rebellious Polish society, as represented in the Solidarity movement under the leadership of Lech Wałęsa. While sympathetic to popular grievances, the church leadership (led by Józef Cardinal Glemp) was mindful of the Czechoslovak tragedy of 1968 and determined to prevent a violent social upheaval and Soviet intervention. It preached moderation. Under martial law in the 1980s the prestige of the church was at its height. The majority of Poles demonstratively flocked to the church in a manifestation of contempt for the repressive and incompetent administration of General Wojciech Jaruzelski. Although mutual criticism characterized public

23. Between 1937 and 1972, the number of parishes increased from 5,170 to 6,470; churches and chapels from 7,257 to 13,600; priests from 11,239 to 18,650; and monks and nuns from 24,000 to 35,550. See Weingartner, *Church within Socialism,* 174.

church-state relations in the 1980s, secret negotiations between the government, the Catholic Church, and the pope eventually led to the restoration of civil authority. This retreat by the Polish government, in combination with Gorbachev's critical decision to keep out of Eastern European affairs, represented the beginning of the end of the Communist system in Poland. By 1990 the mediation of the Catholic Church made possible the peaceful transfer of power from the Communists to the nationalist and democratic forces represented by the Solidarity opposition. The successful example of the Polish drive for freedom had broad political ramifications. It served to erode further the unpopular Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and encouraged the non-Russian republics of the Soviet Union to demand their own national sovereignty.

The Collapse of the Empire

Underground processes—the human-rights movements and minorities nationalism—were decisive factors in the undermining of Communism and of the Soviet Union itself during perestroika.[24] It must be emphasized that religion was an important part of both processes. The dissident movement in the Soviet Union emerged during the period of de-Stalinization under Khrushchev's rule. It became a catalyst around which small groups of democrats (including Communist reformers), minority nationalists, and human-rights and Christian activists coalesced into an illegal political opposition to the status quo. Although this opposition remained amorphous until the late 1980s, the dissidents succeeded in compromising the moral legitimacy of Communist rule by defiantly challenging the glaring discrepancies between constitutional guarantees of human rights and the regime's brutal violation of them. These highly principled and courageous members of the Soviet intelligentsia (e.g., Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Andrei

24. The subject of dissent in the Soviet empire has been well researched. The following works are useful: William C. Fletcher, "Religious Dissent in the USSR in the 1960s," *Slavic Review* 30, no. 2 (June 1971): 298–316; Lubomyr Hajda and Mark Beissinger, eds., *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1990); Lyman H. Legters, comp., *Eastern Europe: Transformation and Revolution, 1945–1991: Documents and Analyses* (Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1992); Bohdan Nahaylo and Victor Swoboda, *Soviet Disunion: A History of the Nationalities Problem in the USSR* (New York: Free Press, 1990); Peter Reddaway, "Dissent in the Soviet Union," *Problems of Communism*, November–December 1983, 1–15; Walter D. Connor, "Dissent in a Complex Society," *Problems of Communism*, March–April 1973, 39–52; Peter Sugar and Ivo Lederer, eds., *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*; Michael Bordeaux, *Religious Ferment in Russia: Protestant Opposition to Soviet Religious Policy* (London: Macmillan, 1968); George W. Simmonds, ed., *Nationalism in the USSR and Eastern Europe in the Era of Brezhnev and Kosygin* (Detroit: University of Detroit Press, 1977); and John B. Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

Sakharov, and V"iacheslav Chornovil) captured the attention of the Western media and focussed the unwanted spotlight on Soviet internal affairs. Similar dissident movements emerged in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary. To the dissidents the question of religious freedom was an integral part of the broader issue of human rights. In the 1970s, contrary to the Helsinki Accords on human rights, which Moscow had signed, non-Orthodox denominations in the Soviet Union, notably the Baptists, Catholics, Adventists, and Pentecostals, albeit small in number, felt the full force of KGB harassment. Thanks to the underground press (*samizdat*) their plight could no longer be kept secret. In Moscow an underground body, the Christian Committee to Defend Believers' Rights headed by the imprisoned but defiant Orthodox priest Gleb Iakunin, sharply challenged Soviet lawlessness. Iakunin also berated the hierarchy of his church for its collaboration with the atheist regime. He was particularly critical of the church leadership's public denial that religious oppression existed in the Soviet Union.[25]

Religious-rights activists were joined by growing numbers of sympathetic non-believers. In Russia segments of the intelligentsia and youth, although indoctrinated in Communism, began to show interest in the Orthodox Church because it represented to them their history and culture. Others sought in religion moral values that were clearly absent in Marxism. Even Komsomol members were occasionally drawn to the church by a genuine curiosity about the "forbidden fruit." In the fourteen non-Russian Soviet republics, religion (Christianity and Islam) was also imbued with local, generally clandestine, nationalism. This interdependence was particularly noticeable in Lithuania, where the traditional Roman Catholic Church (two to three million faithful), which was more active underground than openly, came to personify the Lithuanian nation and its aspirations to independence.[26] In the Baltic republics, Ukraine, and the Moslem regions of Caucasia and Central Asia, local nationalism was stimulated by Moscow's rigid administrative centralism and Russian cultural imperialism. The nationalism of the national minorities often manifested itself in the numerous local heritage committees for the preservation and restoration of historical monuments, which in most cases meant the surviving churches and mosques. There was also a very practical reason for political dissidents to associate themselves with religion: under Soviet law religious crimes carried lighter penalties than political crimes.

25. See Ellis, *The Russian Orthodox Church*, 369–447.

26. The Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights was formed in Lithuania in 1978 and acted as a catalyst for the defense of human and national rights in that republic despite police harassment.

Lithuania's agitation for independence was followed by similar demands from Latvia and Estonia, where Lutheranism was prominent.[27] Inspired by the Baltic republics' defiance of Moscow and partially safeguarded by Gorbachev's democratization process, popular nationalist-democratic movements mushroomed throughout the USSR, including Russia. The once mighty Communist Party of the Soviet Union, now confused and demoralized by the rapid changes and challenges, began to disintegrate. Its moderate elements turned to republican nationalism. With the Party in disarray, the empire lost its only ideological, political and administrative cohesiveness.

Conclusion

Throughout their existence, the Communist regimes in the USSR and Eastern Europe demonstrated contempt for and fear of religion. Concerned about the traditional influence of the church and fearful of any alternative belief system that challenged the validity of Marxism and the totalitarianism of their Party, Communist leaders worked hard to reduce religion's influence on society. Using legal and coercive means, they attempted to create an allegedly superior atheist society by discrediting religion, repressing the faithful, and controlling the church. The ideological struggle and restrictions on religious activities in violation of constitutional guarantees negated the principle of church-state separation that formally characterized the Communist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

It has been difficult to quantify the real impact of anti-religious policies in the Soviet empire. First of all, Soviet and East European statistical data has never been renowned for its reliability. It generally reflected government objectives rather than actual results. Second, the prevailing authoritarian or totalitarian political culture prevented free investigation. Thus scholars can only make educated guesses. Soviet data on the success of atheism is at odds with the post-Soviet religious revival among Christians and Moslems of the former USSR. At the same time significant numbers of people do not profess any religion, and this may be the result of the normal secularizing process of modernization rather than of official anti-religious propaganda.

The rulers of the Soviet empire were led by their own disinformation and propaganda to underestimate the actual depth of religious convictions in their domain. Ancient religious traditions and beliefs had too much history behind them to be swept away by violence or crude indoctrination. The millions of practicing Christians proved to be quite resilient in their adjustment to the new

27. A comprehensive account of the Baltic separation from the Soviet Union can be found in Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the Path for Independence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

circumstances without giving up their basic beliefs. Adversity strengthened their faith and further alienated them from the Soviet system. By its mere presence organized religion offered an alternative value system to the secular religion of Marxism-Leninism. The repression of the church surrounded it with an aura of martyrdom, and this, as Lenin had feared, served to reinforce rather than weaken the faith of many of its followers.

Christianity also served a political function in undermining the Communist system. It did so by attracting to the church a variety of political and social dissidents, including non-believers, who could identify with the church's historical, national, or cultural role. Most importantly, however, there was a powerful historical relationship between nationalism and religion, which Communism did not fully understand. In the Soviet empire religious affiliation generally defined nationality. It was the clandestine nationalism of the subjugated nations that inspired and fuelled their drive for liberation from Soviet imperialism. Insofar as Christianity has been an integral component of Eastern European nationalism, it contributed directly and indirectly to the demise of Communism and the disintegration of the Soviet empire.

Soviet public policy in regard to the Russian Orthodox Church and other Christian denominations, as well as Islam, began to change from outbursts of hostility to open accommodation only in 1988.[28] This was the third year of Gorbachev's reforms and the millennium year of Christianity in Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus. Gorbachev's reconciliation with organized religion was most likely motivated by the need to generate greater public support for his reforms, which were being obstructed by the conservative Communists. In his historic meeting with Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow, which took place on 29 April 1988, the Soviet leader expressed regret about the past treatment of the church and promised that there would be genuine freedom of conscience in the reformed Soviet Union.

Gorbachev's statement was followed by the relaxation of restrictions on many of the activities of all religious institutions. For the first time since the Bolshevik revolution, the clergy was encouraged to participate in civic affairs, and in 1990 more than three hundred clergymen, mainly Orthodox priests, were elected to the local soviets. Permission was granted to print religious material on government presses. The ban on the importation of the Bible and the Koran was lifted. The ban on churches' outreach activities also ended, and churches were authorized to engage in charitable and educational activities. After decades of repression and clandestine worship, emancipated Christianity was being reborn in a spectacular fashion. Despite the acute shortage of clergy, hundreds of old

28. See John B. Dunlop, "Gorbachev and Russian Orthodoxy," *Problems of Communism*, July–August 1989, 96–116.

churches were reopened, and new parishes were founded by enthusiastic believers. Among Christian denominations themselves, new tensions and conflicts erupted with the rise of a brand-new phenomenon—the competition for souls, church properties, and jurisdictions.

Not surprisingly, it was the Russian Orthodox Church that experienced a major loss in jurisdiction and wealth. Of the estimated eleven thousand Russian Orthodox parishes in the USSR in 1989 more than half were in Ukraine, with the majority located in the western part. It was in Western Ukraine that the two banned churches, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Catholic Church, were revived.[29] Both drew heavily on Ukrainian nationalism and the membership and ecclesiastical property of the Russian church. With the disintegration of the USSR, the Russian church has been steadily pushed out of the former Soviet republics, where it is considered an imperial church and an agent of the Kremlin. Furthermore, as Orthodox dissidents have pointed out, the moral leadership of the Russian church, including Patriarch Aleksii, has been compromised by its collaboration with the former Communist regime. Given the hierarchy's past relationship with the Communist authorities, it is debatable whether the Russian Orthodox Church will be able to exercise a full measure of influence for quite some time. The rapid growth of Protestant denominations in Russia at the expense of the patriarchal church may be the reflection of its moral dilemma.

There are many explanations for the fall of the Soviet empire. Most identify the dismal performance of the Soviet economy as the prime reason. But the collapse may also be attributed to the moral bankruptcy of pseudo-scientific and misguided ideology. It is obvious that the Soviet system was based on ideological myth and terror, both physical and psychological. The enforced and irrational pursuit of an earthly paradise sacrificed millions of lives, inflicted tremendous suffering, and gave little in return. Gorbachev's noble but futile efforts to revive the moribund system by injecting it with doses of freedom and democracy only strengthened the centrifugal forces and hastened its inevitable disintegration. In Eastern Europe Communist authority was less firmly established than in the USSR. Its ultimate guarantee of security lay in Moscow, which had intervened militarily in 1956 and 1968 to save its puppet regimes from their own people. But Gorbachev was no longer prepared to enforce the myth of Communist solidarity and left these regimes to their own resources. This change in policy sounded the death knell for the Soviet satellite system. By 1989 democratic-nationalist coalitions, supplemented by repentant Communists, swept the old discredited regimes from power. The liberation from Soviet imperialism was

29. See my article "Church Politics in Contemporary Ukraine," *The Ukrainian Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 28–46.

achieved with remarkably little bloodshed. With the exception of Romania, where specific local conditions necessitated violence, the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union capitulated with a remarkable degree of passivity. The world witnessed a unique peacetime dissolution of its largest surviving empire. As the post-ideological society of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union returns to the market economy, it faces an uncertain and disturbing future—a future where nationalism, a critical ingredient of Eastern European Christianity, has been changing from a liberating force to a repressive one. The post-Soviet world certainly offers new challenges for Christianity.

Jaroslav Rozumnyj: A Bibliography

Nevenka Koscevic

This is a bibliography of Professor Jaroslav Rozumnyj's works published in books and refereed scholarly journals, and of his major translating and editing work. A selection of his book reviews, newspaper articles, letters to the editor, and interviews is also included.

The English translations of the Ukrainian-language titles in this bibliography were kindly supplied by Professor Rozumnyj. In cases of bilingual publications, the Ukrainian and English titles are reproduced here as they originally appeared. The reverse chronological order is used throughout.

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