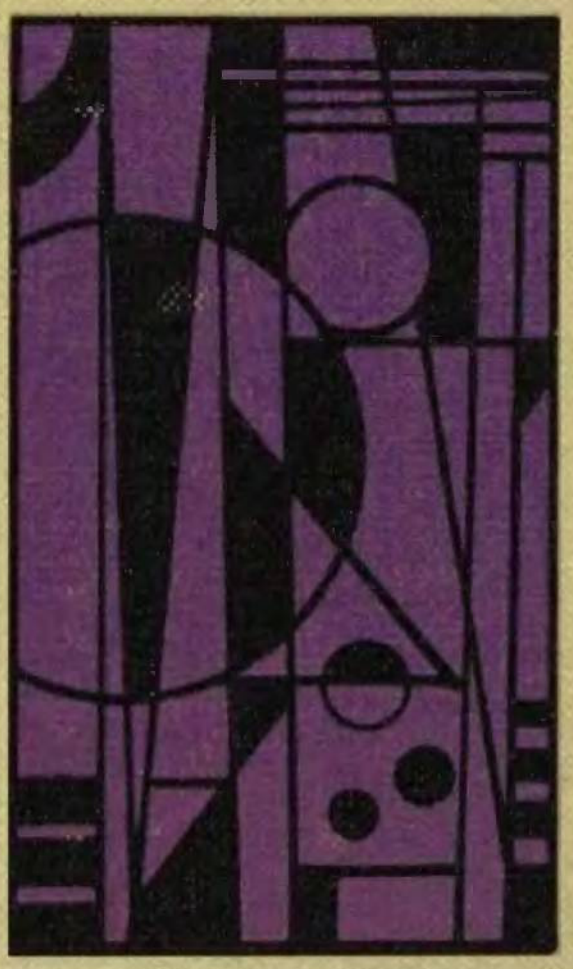
The New Generation and Artistic Modernism in the Ukraine

Myroslava M. Mudrak



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by

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Acknowledgments

Many contradictory and complex facts present themselves to the scholar studying this still unfamiliar and largely unexplored period of Ukrainian art history. There are many who have helped me in this project to whom I am grateful. For special assistance and encouragement during the preparation of this work, I would like to single out my mentors, John E. Bowlt and Sviatoslav Hordynsky. I owe a debt of gratitude to those in the Soviet Union who helped gather materials in libraries, museums, and archives, particularly to those whose own work in this area has always been of ceaseless inspiration to me. I am also grateful to individuals at The Ohio State University who—through the College of the Arts and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies—have made it possible to prepare this manuscript for publication. Special thanks are extended to Mary Lee Raines for typing it. I humbly express my greatest appreciation to my parents, and especially to my husband, Ihor, who sustained my enthusiasm and courage, and who, by making many personal sacrifices, have allowed this book to become a reality.

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations in the text and appendices have been rendered by the author. In transcribing the Cyrillic alphabet, a modified version of the Library of Congress system of transliteration is used for both Ukrainian and Russian. Names of Ukrainian artists or publications in Ukrainian are transliterated according to the Ukrainian code, so that a soft "h" (e.g., Bohomazov) rather than the Russian "g" is used to retain the native pronunciation of the name or word. In the case of words derived from foreign languages (e.g., *generatsiia*), the hard "g" has not been altered and remains faithful to the hard "g" letter in the Ukrainian alphabet. In the case of Russian language publications (e.g., *Germes*), a straightforward transliteration from the Russian alphabet is utilized. Conventional English transcription of Ukrainian place names has in most cases only been altered to more accurately reflect Ukrainian pronunciation: L'viv, not Lvov or Lwow; Dnipro, not Dniepr or Dnieper (although Kiev has been retained instead of Kyiv because of its familiarity). Soft signs are rendered by an apostrophe.

Introduction

When, in 1928, the Paris journal *La revue mondiale* ran a survey under the title, "Our Epoch in Search of a Name,"[1] many literati, French and otherwise, endeavored to find a term which would capture the very ethos of the early twentieth century. Although some were hesitant, deeming it impossible by virtue of proximity to characterize a period in which they were still living,[2] for the most part, those questioned were eager to baptize the era. A series of neologisms ensued: "convulsionnisme" (Ventura Garcia-Calderón), "confusionnisme" (Charles-Brun), "impulsionnisme" (M. Florian Parmentier), and "l'époque du frénétisme et du raccrochage" (Ernest Prévost). The artist Van Dongen suggested naming the period the age of the cocktail "qui est faite de toutes sortes de mixtures."[3] It was obvious from some of the chosen names how varied indeed was the epoch. Some observations were astutely perceptive, such as William Speth's "vitalism," José Germain's "vérism" and André Delacour's "instantaneonism." Other suggestions were obvious: "mondialism" (Jane Catulle-Mendes), "globalism" (Joseph Delteil), "machinism" (Pierre Humbourg), "productionism" (Charles-Brun), and "jazzism" (André Lamande). In general, the naming game was conducted with great sport.

Meanwhile, in Kiev and Kharkiv, far from Paris both geographically and culturally, Ukrainian artists and literati, intrigued by this campaign to label the era, considered it telling that no one mentioned the word "nationalism."[4] The observation came from an avant-garde group, the Panfuturists, who issued their ideas in a little-known and narrowly circulated journal, *Nova generatsiia* [New Generation]. The remark made by the Panfuturists was a sobering reaction to the lighthearted merriment enjoyed by the contributors to contemporary Western European art and literature. In a postwar era of national and cultural identity in Western Europe, the issue of nationhood was a given fact, and not much thought about by the consumers of international artistic trends. It is not surprising therefore that the term "nationalism" never came up among the Western readers of *La revue mondiale* when considering a name for the modern era. For Ukrainian artists and writers, however, after

centuries of subjugation by Russia, the issue was of utmost importance, for it was, first and foremost, the prospect of nationhood that allowed Ukrainians to embrace the Revolution with any degree of enthusiasm. Hence the Russian Revolution of 1917 represented something different to the Ukrainians than it did for the Russians. In Russia, revolutionary forces were instrumental in finally breaking down the barriers between the social classes, while in the Ukraine, as in other nations engulfed by the political and cultural forces of the Russian Empire, the opportunity for freedom, so longed for by these individual nations, took precedence over any imminent social change, and was seized at any cost, even if it meant subscribing to revolutionary socialism.

When in 1918 the Ukraine finally proclaimed its political extrication and cultural independence from Russia, there occurred an artistic renaissance of a most abundant flowering. It was a volatile period in a new era which provided a rich breeding ground for myriad artistic directions and pursuits. The vitality with which art in the Ukraine burgeoned at this time mirrored the verve with which the new era was accepted. The Panfuturists represented only one such direction. Their own publication, the journal *Nova generatsiia* (1927–30), offers a glimpse into one of the most creatively fertile and experimentally diversified periods in the history of Ukrainian art and literature. It was an era marked by two basic aspirations: first, a conscientious and deliberate alignment with the international mainstream of modern art; and secondly, the affirmation of a national cultural identity.

The first issue of *Nova generatsiia* appeared in October 1927. This was exactly a decade after the decisive revolution in the Russian Empire that changed the course of Ukrainian national and cultural life. It was also just two years after a program of Ukrainization in cultural and educational policy was implemented in the Ukraine, which made possible a vast publishing network to educate the populace in the native language. *Nova generatsiia* was a product of this flourishing Ukrainization policy of 1924–25.

As late as 1919, critical informative material on Ukrainian art was still being published in Russian journals, such as *Mir iskusstva* [The World of Art], *Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'* [Art and Artistic Production] and *Apollon* [Apollo]. Other art journals, though published in the Ukraine, were still printed in Russian.[5] One of the first Ukrainian language journals devoted to the arts was *Mystetstvo* [Art], published in Kiev in 1919–20. The editor of *Mystetstvo* was an ebullient, galvanizing personality—a young poet who was ultimately the chief promoter of the most extreme positions of the Ukrainian avant-garde, the Panfuturists—Mykhailo Semenko (1892–1937). Semenko's brainchild at the end of the decade was, in fact, *Nova generatsiia*.

Panfuturism, as implied by the name, was a stance developed in 1920 by young Ukrainian writers and poets who, looking beyond the mere national or

regional confines of their culture, wished to broaden those horizons by directing their attention at the international community of artists. To do this, they looked at the products of artists deeply ensconced in the creative ardor of the era. However, by doing so, the Panfuturists were also aiming to revitalize their own local literary-artistic milieux, to infuse new perspectives into the minds of a young, upcoming new generation of Ukrainian artists, writers, and poets.

In large part, Panfuturism was modeled on the goals of the Italian Futurists who aimed at "the renewal of the spirit through a new art and a vision of the world."[6] Like their Italian counterparts, Ukrainian artists were anxious to regain a meaningful position not only within their country, but in the international arena as well. The same desire to expose and overcome cultural stagnation was nascent in the Ukraine as it had been in Italy, when the latter country fought for the political independence and unification absent there since the mid-nineteenth century. But, while unease was beginning to foment in Italy in the first decade of the twentieth century, blatant expressions of discontent surfaced in the Ukraine only after the tsar was deposed and Russian hegemony over the Ukraine weakened.

There were many parallels between Italian Futurism and Ukrainian Panfuturism. As an artistic movement, Italian Futurism went hand-in-hand with the political upheaval within Italy, and the declarations of Ukrainian Panfuturism concurred with the "national" spirit of Italian Futurism as pronounced in the first "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters" in 1910:

> In the eyes of other countries, Italy is still a land of the dead, a vast Pompeii, white with sepulchres. But Italy is being reborn. Its political resurgence will be followed by a cultural resurgence. In the land inhabited by the illiterate peasant, schools will be set up; in the land where doing nothing in the sun was the only available profession, millions of machines are already roaring; in the land where traditional aesthetics reigned supreme, new flights of artistic inspiration are emerging and dazzling the world with their brilliance.[7]

Thus, Marinetti miscalculated the fate of his movement when, in the first manifesto of Futurism in 1909, he forecast: "The oldest of us is thirty: so we have at least a decade for finishing our work. When we are forty, other younger and stronger men will probably throw us in the wastebasket like useless manuscripts. . . ."[8]

The manifestos of the Italians were not discarded. Instead, they served as an impetus and foundation for the literary-artistic activity in the Ukraine. While Futurism's most original phase had already ended by 1915, a decade later Panfuturism not only revived the work of the Italians, but also expanded its realm and applications. Through Panfuturism, the principles of Futurism continued to thrive in the Ukraine throughout the twenties, culminating in *Nova generatsiia*. The premises of Italian Panfuturism had proliferated

beyond the borders of Italy and were expanded on a large scale into the Ukraine. Even before Marinetti's arrival in Moscow in 1914, news of the Futurist movement had already filtered down to Kiev. Anatolii Lunacharsky, later to become the Minister of Enlightenment in post-Revolutionary Russia, was, before the Revolution, a little-known journalist in the Ukrainian capitol. He contributed news of Marinetti and his ideas to the Kiev newspaper, *Kievskaia mysl'* [Kievan Thought].[9]

The spirit of Italian Futurism, although eventually carried over to the political-cultural aims of Panfuturism, also provided the tactics to initiate artistic changes in Ukrainian art long before the Revolution of 1917. The term "futurism" was used in more general and diversified ways before the emergence of Panfuturist theory. In effect, beginning around 1908, any manifestations of an experimental nature in the visual or literary arts were soon classified as "futurist." This included examples of what came to be called "New Art" before the Revolution, and "leftist" art after the period of War Communism. Viewed as a whole, the entire vanguard of artistic formation in the first two decades of the twentieth century were regarded as "futurist." This new generation of artists, many of whom had no direct attachment to Semenko or to the Panfuturists, shaped a physiognomy for Ukrainian art which brought modernism into full swing in the Ukraine. However, in a narrower and more specific sense, the term "futurist" was applied to the ultra-experimental and daring aspects of modern artistic creations. This aspect was more evident first in formalist practice; eventually, it became the basis of artistic theory and even ideology, as in the case of the Panfuturists. Nonetheless, all these varied formal and theoretical forces combined to bring about a true renaissance in Ukrainian culture. Hence, the title of this work, "The New Generation and Artistic Modernism," is meant to indicate the all-encompassing aspects of the activities engaged in by artists at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century in the Ukraine. They all helped to form a fresh, new epoch in the history of Ukrainian art.

The ideas propagated by *Nova generatsiia* represented the culmination of all vanguard strivings in modern Ukrainian art, and served as a focal point for national and international cultural integration. Universal communication on the basis of formal achievements in the artistic media was the premise of *Nova generatsiia*. The journal served as a forum for the analysis and critical evaluation of contemporary Ukrainian art; and it aspired to remove provincial attitudes and to encourage artistic production of international significance. As a pedagogic medium, *Nova generatsiia* pointed the way for the future of Ukrainian art by criticizing, debating, and arguing the fine points of contemporary art. The mere existence of the journal and its appropriate title and allied commitments served to dispel some of the mistaken but commonly held notions about Ukrainian art. In particular, the journal helped

to reverse the argument that the Ukraine was merely a cultural backwoods steeped in artistic regionalism and dictated by an incendiary nationalism.

Toward the end of the decade as artists in the rest of the Soviet Union began to feel the effects of restrictive politics—*Nova generatsiia* became the last stronghold for both the Ukrainian and the Russian avant-garde. During the brief period of its existence (the last three years of the decade of the twenties) it served as a refuge for continued efforts in the avant-garde. When the major avant-garde painter Kazimir Malevich fell into disfavor with the Russian government, for example, the only remaining outlet for the dissemination of his theories was through *Nova generatsiia*. But in the end, the Panfuturists had to succumb to the increasingly restrictive measures of the Stalinist era (as had other proponents of Ukrainian culture, whether Communist or not). Ultimately they became the victims of Stalinist purges. By 1937, most leaders of the Ukrainian avant-garde who had not emigrated were killed, died in exile, or disappeared completely. The final fate met by Semenko and most of the other Panfuturists still remains in the realm of speculation. Their lot had an ironic underlining however; despite the Panfuturists' genuine quest for "internationalism," they were vanquished by the very means according to which they sought to attain that goal—the search for a strong national cultural identity.

Part One: Panfuturism

Major Centers of Artistic Modernism in the Ukraine

1

Mykhailo Semenko

The story of Futurism in the Ukraine and the birth of the New Generation centers around the figure of Mykhailo Semenko (fig. 1-1). Semenko was born in 1892 in Kybyntsi, a Ukrainian village in the small rural area of Yares'k in the district of Myrhorod of the Poltava region. He came from solid kozak stock. This might account, in part, for his buoyant character and free spirit, as well as for his assumed birthright to overturn Ukrainian national traditions deeply ingrained in the psyche of the people. Semenko was a figure of controversy during his own time; and even today, his place in the history of Ukrainian culture is uncertain, tenuous, and often a source of embarrassment. His Futurist antics and antitraditional worldview have not made him a popular spokesman for modern Ukrainian art and literature.[1] Nonetheless, he is a figure worthy of note, for he was a catalyst for many avant-garde actions.

Although he came from a literary background (his mother was a writer who published under her maiden name, Maria Proskurivna), Semenko's first interests were not in literature but in science. At the age of nineteen, Semenko went to study at the Psycho-Neurological Institute in St. Petersburg, but within two years he abandoned his studies and returned to Kiev. At the end of 1913, he and his brother Vasyl', an artist, and the painter Pavlo Kovzhun (1896–1939) organized the first Futurist group of Ukrainian writers and artists: Kvero. With energy, artistic verve, and concrete plans, this group immediately began to work to develop a Ukrainian Futurism.

As the triumvirate set out to change the status quo of literary-artistic Kiev, they behaved in a manner which brought attention to their curious ways. In a photograph of 1914 (fig. 1-2), the only known picture of Semenko's brother, the artist has been photographed standing against the background of one of his paintings from a cycle entitled *City*. The very fact that Vasyl' Semenko created such a work gives some clue as to what degree the Kvero-Futurists aligned themselves with the work of the Italian Futurists. The only work known to be by the hand of the elusive Vasyl' Semenko echoes the ideas of Umberto Boccioni, who himself (between 1910 and 1911) produced urban-based paintings such as *The City Rises* or *Forces of a Street*, and a cycle,

Figure 1-1. Photograph of Mykhailo Semenko on an Identification Document of the Psycho-Neurological Institute Attended Briefly by Semenko in St. Petersburg, ca. 1911 *(Private collection)*

Figure 1-2. Photograph of Artist Vasyl' Semenko with His Painting *City* (1914) in the Background
(Private collection)

States of Mind—all paintings proferring aggressive activity. Furthermore, in the photograph of Semenko and his volatile painting, his face is arrogant in pose and is painted with playful dalliance meant to shock and hopefully offend the apprehender. His conduct was reminiscent of the kind of Futurist activity practiced by Russian poets and painters contemporary to him—Vladimir Maiakovsky, David Burliuk, and Natalya Goncharova, for instance. When making public appearances, the Russian Futurists frequently decorated their faces with actively criss-crossed Futurist strokes and Rayist designs. In 1913, the writer Ilya Zdanevich and Rayist painter Mikhail Larionov explained that they paint themselves because it is a way of invading life through art.[2] Invading traditional cultural life in the Ukraine was certainly a primary goal for the Ukrainian Futurists. This was to be achieved not only by the kind of art produced, but also by the behavior of the artists. Vasyl' Semenko's face is set against the highly impastoed surface of his active Futurist painting. His name, painted on the chin, serves as a signature to the painting, and the date 1914 is marked beneath his nose. On Semenko's forehead one reads: "kvero."

Kvero-Futurism, in these early stages of the Ukrainian avant-garde, strove to break with the past and to concentrate on the present as a progression toward the future. In this Futurist vision, it became necessary to sever associations with age-old Ukrainian traditions described by Semenko as the "suffocating canonization of the magnificent 'folk song,' the sickly nationalist cult of Taras Shevchenko and of all who beatified 'the native land.'"[3] The nineteenth-century painter and poet, Taras Shevchenko (1814–61), born a serf, was not only the greatest exponent of Romanticism in Ukrainian literature, but his poetry served as a catalyst for raising national consciousness among subjugated people. Much of his subject matter had to do with the victorious, heroic feats of the kozaks, which were characterized by love of country, and, to some degree, moral virtue. These qualities were regarded as uplifting and were highly cherished by a nation downtrodden throughout its history. Shevchenko was regarded as the symbol of the nation, and homage was paid to him at every national gathering.

Kvero published its first Futurist publication, *Derzannia* [Audacity], in February 1914, concurrently with the one-hundredth anniversary celebration of the birth of Taras Shevchenko. To reaffirm national unity and to retain a traditional character in the jubilee celebration, many of the male celebrants donned kozak dress with characteristic grey lambswool hats. The occasion was ripe for Futurist ridicule. *Derzannia*, consisting of eight pages of Semenko's poetry, contained a short preface with the heading "*Sam*"[Alone], in which Futurist mottos of defiance and upstaging of mass traditions were issued. The title of the preface was highly appropriate, for Kvero remained alone, unsupported and isolated in its Futurist endeavor. The irony of

Derzanmia is that, although it was an irreverent, boisterous, and vociferous desecration of a national bard, the audacious gesture went unnoticed for the masses, who, although restricted in celebrating Shevchenko's memory, milled in large gatherings about the city squares costumed in national dress. National sentiment and the patriotic fervour of the Kiev citizens overran the efforts of the Futurists.

As in the case of their Italian counterparts, the proponents of Ukrainian Futurism were few in number. The press, too, decided to boycott all the publications of the Ukrainian Futurists, mainly by choosing to remain silent on the activities of Kvero. When the bookstores refused to sell *Derzanmia*, the Futurists took to disseminating the brochure by distributing it individually. In essence, the short preface, "*Sam*" [Alone], expressed the solitude and ostracism experienced by the few propagators and supporters of Ukrainian Futurism. Yet the morale of the Futurists was not weakened. They began to prepare a second edition of *Derzanmia* with virtually the same contents as the first but with several added articles by each member of Kvero, and a few photographs of Futurist drawings by Kovzhun.[4] Simultaneously, Kvero published another collection of Semenko's poetry entitled *Kvero-Futuryzm*. Here, the scope of Ukrainian Futurist activity was outlined, including pronouncements, strategies, exhibitions, and platforms.[5] Issued in Kiev in April 1914, the key item of the collection *Kvero-Futurism* was a Futurist literary manifesto whose sole signatory was Mykhailo Semenko.

In its struggle with a national culture, Ukrainian Kvero-Futurism displayed a close affinity to Italian Futurism. This was in contradistinction to Russian Futurism in general, which advocated a complete separation from any adherence to Italian models. The belligerence on the part of some of the Russian Futurists as a reaction to Marinetti's visit to Russia in 1914 demonstrates the Russians' desire to separate themselves from their Italian precursors.[6] Two factions arose among the Russians. There were those like Benedikt Livshits and Nikolai Kul'bin, who at least attempted to retain a modicum of civility in welcoming Marinetti and acknowledging his catalytic effort in forming the Futurist movement. Others, like Larionov, vehemently opposed Marinetti and were adamantly determined to sever all ties with Italian efforts. The aim of the latter was to lay to rest, once and for all, the rumors that Russian Futurism was an outgrowth of its Italian antecedents. The Russian Futurists' denial of any association with the Italians led them to discard the term "futurist" in favor of the word *budetlianin*, a neologism derived by Velimir Khlebnikov from the Russian word *budushchnost'*, meaning "the future." This emphasis on terminology was a way of renouncing any affiliation with the Italians. By not using the Italian-derived term, "Futurist," the Russian *budetliany* (i.e., "those who will be") wished to emphasize their complete separation from the Italian movement.

Such an overt negation of Italian Futurism did not occur in Ukrainian Futurism. In fact, Kvero consciously cultivated a bond with its Italian predecessors and acknowledged its influence. In more ways than one, Ukrainian Futurism had a close, direct alliance with the declarations proposed by the Italian Futurists. The missionary role played by Marinetti as the ideologue and disseminator of Futurist ideas was duplicated by Semenko, who propelled the movement of Futurism in the Ukraine. Just as the proponents of Italian Futurism protested violently against the mindless veneration of antiquated masterpieces housed in the museums of Europe, the Ukrainian Futurists also aimed at radically transforming the collective mentality of the Ukrainian populace who deified national heroic figures such as Shevchenko.

Leaving no doubt as to their fervent allegiance to the Italians, Semenko and his colleagues openly adopted even some of the wartime themes of the Italians. A case in point is Mario Bétuda's "Looping the Loop," a poem about the death-defying feats of airplane pilots (which he equates with the brazen exploits of Futurist poets).[7] Mario Bétuda's poem is created through *parole in libertà*: the words of the poem are arranged to visually elicit the whirling of the plane in the heavens and its slipping, thunderous descent to the earth below where an enthusiastic, howling crowd is exhilirated by the event. Modeling himself on the Italian poet, Semenko created a large Futurist almanac entitled *Mertvopetliuiu* [Tying the Death Noose]. The title refers literally to making a death spiral in the air with an airplane, but symbolically to the poet's submission of a challenge, a confrontation, and therefore, of a daring change to his reading public.

The almanac was only half composed when the war broke out in July 1914. The onslaught of the war also dissolved Kvero and dispersed the first Ukrainian Futurists. Vasyl' Semenko was sent to the Western front, never to be heard from again. Pavlo Kovzhun, former editor of an art monthly, *Siaivo* [Radiance], which ceased publication with the outbreak of World War I, survived the war and afterward pursued more conventional artistic activities. He entered the painting and graphics faculty at the Kiev Academy of Art and became one of the Academy's first graduates. Kovzhun, however, left Kiev in 1922 and spent most of his life in Western Ukraine, where his ideas catalyzed an artistic avant-garde in the city of L'viv and throughout Galicia. In Galicia, Kovzhun was coeditor of the first literary magazine to appear in Western Ukraine after World War I. The journal, *Mytusa* [Medusa], commenced publication in 1922 and catered to modern literary developments in Left Bank Ukraine (that is, those emanating mainly from Kiev). Eventually, Kovzhun became editor of the L'viv-based artistic periodical of the Association of Independent Ukrainian Artists, which he was responsible for organizing in 1932. Throughout the five years of publishing *Mystetstvo* [Art] (1932–37),

Kovzhun also produced innumerable graphic designs for book covers, ex libris, and illustrations. He continued to work in this vein until his untimely death.[8]

Mykhailo Semenko, the sole remaining member of Kvero, served in Vladivostok in the position of a wartime telegraph worker between 1915–17. In November 1917 he married and returned to the Ukraine. He spent that winter in his native village, Kybyntsi, and then returned to Kiev in 1918. During the war, Semenko continued to write poems, the most significant of which was a large cycle on the Pierrot theme. These were published in series which bore titles such as *Pierrot in Love*, *Pierrot Showing Off*, and *Pierrot Looping the Loop*, all of which emphasized his feelings of boredom, of isolation, and of being misunderstood. These were autobiographical poems that repeatedly underscored that Semenko was not like others.

Thanks largely to Semenko's work, the germ of Futurism, already defined in the Ukraine by 1914, did not die. The spirit of the Revolution further fired Semenko's literary efforts. As political events began to alter the cultural face of the Ukraine, the content and form of Ukrainian literature and art began to change dramatically. These changes were reflected in new types of poetry, such as the *revfutpoemy* [revolutionary Futurist poems] created by Semenko. Revolutionary topics pervaded the art: the revfutpoem *Tovarysh sontse* [Comrade Sun], for example, describes a revolutionary storm.

Although Semenko's legacy today is that of a Futurist poet, his unlimited energy in the realm of publishing helped to mold the truly ultraleftist directions in all aspects of modern Ukrainian culture. According to Semenko's Futurist vision, much of the proselytizing about leftist positions in the arts had to be effected via the publishing medium, and mainly through popular journals. Semenko dreamed of publishing a journal in Ukrainian which would represent only the radical convictions of Ukrainian artists and literati. On a professional level, he honed his editorial skills and journalistic expertise by editing *Universal'nyi zhurnal (UZh)* [Universal Journal], a popular journal. *UZh* dealt with current events at home and abroad, and included photographs, illustrative graphics, and montage. The journal spanned a wide area of interests: it included not only articles and reports on world events accompanied by photographs, but also fragments of literary works and commentaries on the art world.

During this time, Semenko also contributed articles to various newspapers in the Ukraine, such as *Komunist* [Communist] and *Visti* [News]. In 1919, impassioned by the new constructive political and cultural reorganization in the nation, Semenko became the editor of the literary organ of the Ministry of Education (NARKOMOSVITA),[9] which published a journal entitled *Mystetstvo* [Art]. Semenko labored diligently on this journal and was able to produce six issues before the attack on Kiev by Denikin's army

in 1919. This effort can be considered to be Semenko's first significant achievement in an official capacity, for *Mystetstvo* was one of the very first art journals to be published in Ukrainian in the Ukraine.[10] Though not necessarily "leftist" in political orientation, it was nonetheless the first opportunity to show the new physiognomy of modern Ukrainian art.

Mystetstvo was not necessarily a Futurist journal, but it did maintain close contact with the Ukrainian Proletkul't movement which allowed Futurism to develop. Promoting the concept of collectivism and mirroring the Marxist principle of internationalism, Proletkul'tism represented the channeling of collective strength in the arts toward a proletarian orientation. The backing of *Mystetstvo* by Proletkul't offered Semenko the reassurance that, with the ever-expanding political commitments to the new regime among writers and artists, Futurism as he understood it would indeed soon be able to flourish in Ukrainian art.

A number of other literary-artistic groups and journals appeared in the Ukraine during this epoch of cultural revolution. Each of these had its own program for revitalizing Ukrainian art and literature by taking drastic measures to break with convention- with that which was regarded as conservatism. But all still maintained their ties to a national culture.[11] Such activity had already begun at the end of 1918 when the association Muzahet (which gathered young writers who "were seeking new forms") was organized, with a monthly publication bearing the same name.[12] Muzahet was comprised of individuals such as D. Zahul, P. Tychyna, Ol. Slisarenko, V. Yaroshenko, M. Zhuk, Ya. Savchenko, Les' Kurbas, Mark Tereshchenko, and Mykola Tereshchenko, many of whom were initially Symbolist writers. Semenko was critical of these contemporary poets and artists, "tuberculosed symbolists" and "modernist invalids,"[13] and reproached their "passéiste, conservative, and evolutionist" manner.[14] Many of them soon transferred allegiance and joined Semenko at *Mystetstvo* (a sign, as Semenko saw it, of their natural acceptance of Futurism). Thus, after associating themselves with *Mystetstvo*, names once familiar as adherents to more conservative notions now represented different ideologies. The writings of O. Slisarenko, Vasyl' Chumak, Volodymyr Yaroshenko, and Vasyl' Ellan were now tempered with the fire of revolution, by the new ideology; and (after Semenko) they became the first marchers on the path of the destruction of traditional artistic conventions. Parallel to Muzahet was the group Borot'ba [Struggle], which assembled mainly revolutionary literati such as Vasyl' Ellan, Serhii Pylypenko, and Hnat Mykhailychenko. Ultimately, with the publication of *Mystetstvo*, M. Semenko was able to unite the most active forces of both of these groups. Gradually, others took the initiative in promoting Futurist activity in the Ukraine; and with these increased cadres and encouragement, Semenko again attempted to organize Futurists in Kiev into a new association with an unusual name Flamingo.

In 1919, when Flamingo was founded, there was an attempt to issue a purely Futurist journal using the same title. However, because the political situation in Kiev was so indeterminate, and the level of commitment to Futurist goals so varied, it was impossible for these new devotees to the movement to come to some accord. Thus, plans for a journal representing a unified Futurist ideology were postponed. Shortly after the association was founded, Hnat Mykhailychenko and Vasyl' Chumak were shot for treason, while other members were dispersed and Flamingo was disbanded. Semenko was twice arrested in 1919, first by the Germans who were in Kiev until November 1918, and then during the occupation of Denikin's army. But Ukrainian Futurism continued to thrive even in the absence of its founder and greatest propagator.[15]

Eventually, the Futurist concept of destroying old values extended to other artistic regions of the Ukraine. In Kharkiv, a group of writers emerged whose work reflected the same transmutation of despised archaic Symbolism and lyricism as that found in Kiev. Vasyl' Aleshko and Yulian Shpol became representatives of Kharkiv's gradual evolutionary assimilation of Futurist principles. Semenko called them the "new destructive talents." Shpol, for example, was regarded by Semenko as being "a master of the futurization of form and especially of content with a psychological superstructure of the latter."[16] Geo Shkurupii also joined the Ukrainian Futurists in Kharkiv. Shkurupii was also (according to Semenko) a "witty destructor of all the elements of Facture,"[17] meaning, of course, that he was gifted not only in the transposition of words to give a sense of physical materiality in poetic experimentation, but his work represented a change in the overall superficial aspects of the literary-artistic status quo.

Ukrainian Futurist forces rapidly multiplied, and Kharkiv, like Kiev before it, began to grow as a center of Ukrainian Futurist activity. Unexpected personalities, both young and old, joined the group. O. Korzh, a timid and reticent person, was attracted to it, as was Mykola Tereshchenko, once a stalwart upholder of conservatism. Many others, though aligning themselves with the left, did not plunge wholeheartedly into the movement but held on by virtue of mere fascination. Still others, Mykola Khvyl'ovyi, Volodymyr Sosiura, and Maik Yohansen, all proletarian poets, clung to the Futurists on the basis of ideological principles. In practical terms, the group in Kharkiv did not take up the Ukrainian Futurist cause in the homogeneous way that Semenko had originally foreseen. Furthermore, antagonism and internal bickering could not be avoided among different factions claiming greater or lesser affiliation with the true Futurists.[18] Because of its gradual crystallization of purpose and direction, those who did not share the vision put forth originally by Semenko eventually fell away from Futurism and its values. All the while Semenko continued to implement his views, always drawing on new strengths and a new coterie of followers.

With Futurism as a basic premise, the avant-garde artists and literati began to develop more specialized "constructive" programs, the implemention of which were meant to secure the utopian cultural state that all were anticipating. Out of *Mystetstvo*, for instance, emerged some of the strongest Communist cultural associations in the Ukraine. There was, for example, the association Hart [Tempering (as in metal)], which was formed in 1921 by the writers, V. Ellan, M. Khvyl'ovyi, V. Sosiura, M. Yohansen, and other members of Muzahet. Another Kharkiv organization, Pluh [Plow], absorbed members of Muzahet, such as Pluh's organizer, Serhii Pylypenko. Pluh consisted mainly of students whose primary purpose was to bring the peasant youth to an understanding of general proletarian demands in the branches of culture and art.[19] There was also the association Hrono [Grape cluster], a motley group including P. Fylypovych, D. Zahul, H. Kosynka, Yu. Mezhenko, M. Liubchenko, G. Shkurupii, Mykola Tereshchenko, Valeriian Polishchuk, and others, whose work began to demonstrate the changeover from Symbolism to Impressionism, and on to Futurism.[20]

The new literary organizations exerted a strong impact on the visual arts as well, and the interactions between artists and writers were sustained by durable relationships. On June 25, 1921, the Futurists O. Slisarenko, G. Shkurupii, M. Tereshchenko, and the painter, O. Shymkov, founded a new Futurist-oriented group called the "scientific-artistic group KOMKOS-MOS."[21] In the same spirit of the declarations of Kvero-Futurism, KOMKOSMOS issued a practical guide which would guarantee the fulfillment of the "constructive" plan of Futurism which united politics, science, and art. The KOMKOSMOS manifesto, issued in Kiev in July of 1921, proclaimed that this cooperative and collective creative effort should be raised to the cosmic level. KOMKOSMOS ("Communist Cosmos") set the following four aims for itself:

1. The accumulation and organization of all revolutionary-artistic forces of science, art, and technology under the banner of cosmic Communism, i.e., the Universe (universum) mastered by man.
2. The dissemination of the idea of man's conquest of nature on a cosmic scale, along with the idea of Communism as the immutable, immediate condition in mankind's struggle to conquer the Universe. Because of this, the group KOMKOSMOS cannot be apathetic to displays of counterrevolution in all areas of life, and must eliminate any kind of compromises with nationalistic, narrowly bourgeois and conciliatory trends in science and art just as soon as they occur.
3. The introduction of a decisive and unceasing battle on the Communist front of science and art against the pernicious influences on the masses of bourgeois ideologies.
4. Liberation from bourgeois influence, and a Communist refinement of young proletarian strengths in science, art, and technology. . . .

   Implementation into life of all that is planned is only possible under the conditions of a full and decisive break with bourgeois and petit-bourgeois trends, and, therefore, KOMKOSMOS declares war on them, calls all revolutionary artists, scientists, and

technicians to stand in the organized ranks of KOMKOSMOS for the communal struggle for an ideal liberation.

Let Live the International Union of Science and Art![22]

For KOMKOSMOS, art merging with progress in science and technology would result in a powerful pedagogic means to be utilized for the social revolution. The traditional preoccupation with aesthetics and beauty as an absolute and idealistic quality was completely rejected. Instead, the rule of order was a practical one:

To enter into solid contact with the Communist parties of all countries with the purpose of close cooperation;

To organize book publishing, to open artistic ateliers, laboratories, workshops, and studios;

To demand that the opening of art schools be directed at ideological leadership in the existing educational and scientific institutions;

To reward inventions and works of art;

To open clubs, reading rooms, museums, theatres; to organize conferences, public readings, meetings and the like; [and]

To support materially artists, scientists, and technicians.[23]

KOMKOSMOS sought to place art in a socially dependent position where it could most expediently help to build a new society. This society would, in turn, create a new, updated, and modern culture. Futurist destruction was replaced by constructive methods of culture building: a proletarian ideology and a recognized and admitted struggle for a future of communism were the ideas which inspired the Ukrainian Futurists.

KOMKOSMOS's duration was brief. By the end of 1921, perhaps because of the unattainability of their existing goals and because of the difficulties involved in integrating the diverse supporters of the movement, the Ukrainian Futurists, with Semenko in the lead, undertook one more reorganization of its forces and united all the splinter groups of both Kharkiv and Kiev under a single rubric called the Asotsiatsiia panfuturystiv [Association of Panfuturists]—ASPANFUT. In essence, ASPANFUT maintained the same fundamental precepts advocated in the manifesto of KOMKOSMOS, but they were made clearer and had the semblance of being more practical. To make the demands of Panfuturism known to the world, Semenko published the Panfuturist declaration in English:

MICHAEL SEMENKO. "WHAT PANFUTURISM WANTS."

First of all, Panfuturism wants to be a scientific system which is attained by its being a system universal and synthetic. Everything depends upon the way of regarding the development of art.

Panfuturism wants to abolish all "isms" which is attained by neutralizing them. Panfuturism makes every "ism" harmless by regarding every single case as a private problem of the polyproblematic organism of art. Owing to that, Panfuturism is a science having permanent problems of its own.

Panfuturism, as well as Marxism, is a revolutionary conception. It implies the elements of both aim and tactics, and is in a [*sic*] functionally dependent upon the given period of the struggle of classes in society.

Panfuturism is a proletarian system of art. It wants to discover a new way of looking at question [*sic*] in art, following the same method as was followed by Marx when he was reconstructing political economy.

Panfuturism changes the very substance of art and becomes an experimental science. It wants to introduce a fundamental and correcting factor –conscience—into the intuitive process of production. Owing to that, Panfuturism is an "organizational" art.

Panfuturism cannot be a "new direction" in art. Panfuturism is the whole of art, and in the future—what will substitute it. At present Panfuturism is a system, liquidating the old art in its pretension to be an active factor.

Panfuturism is at once Futurism, Cubism, Expressionism and Dadaism, it is, however, no synthesis of these useful things. That is to be distinguished.

Art, as a part of being, is an organism dependent and derivative from the latter. What does Panfuturism want, then? It determines the matter of art, and finds an immobile point of support.

That point of support is ideology. Panfuturism wants to be organizational ideologically.

Every art can be abstract; it is not, however, its complete formula. Panfuturism can be also abstract, but it has at the same time concrete contents. Panfuturism does not want to be a utopia, but practice. For that purpose, it has constructed a panfuturist system of coordinates, determining all practical contents of Panfuturism. Its formula [*sic*] as follows:

Panfuturism = Ideology + Factore [*sic*]
Factore [*sic*] = Material + Form + Contents

Panfuturism wants to be a constructive system. But construction can be accomplished only on the basis of the accomplished destruction. As the process of the destruction of art is simultaneous to that of the disorganization of the bourgeois society, the panfuturist construction is but realizable simultaneously with the building of the bases of the communist life, including all the peripeteias of such a building.

Panfuturism denies all ante-destructive art and maintains destruction, as a revolutionary and futurist process. Not caring for the ideological excrescences of the destructive process, as phenomena accidental and non-immediate (imperialism, militarism, etc.), Panfuturism embraces the universal destruction of arts, as revolutionizing of facture. The result of this process is to be the liquidation of the bourgeois art.

Thus, Panfuturism continues destruction as a revolutionary system. At the same time, Panfuturism intends to determinate [*sic*] the principles of construction. As a matter of course, it is possible only because Panfuturism came under the conditions of the victorious building of the proletariat of the eastern federation of the proletarian republics.

Panfuturism is a practical system of the proletarian art.[24]

Not only was Panfuturism a unified and conjunctive literary-artistic philosophy in the Ukraine, but Panfuturism was driven by the goal of expanding its philosophical frontiers to become international in concept, as

the name "Panfuturism" implies. The ASPANFUT program was strong and lasted a long time. The Panfuturists saw themselves as truly a new generation of cultural activists in the Ukraine. They were the quintessence of the avant-garde, for it was they who embodied the extreme posture of modernist experimentation. The aim of ASPANFUT was to discard the remnants of Symbolism, to negate the peasant elements of popular art *(narodnytstvo)*, and to propagate instead the rationalism of a new socialist industrial culture. It began as a vision initiated by a corpus of three devoted figures: a poet and two painters. The poet, Semenko, remained undaunted in this vision and perpetuated it throughout his career. His aim was to create a "synthesis" of the arts; and toward the end of the decade, as his ideas matured and as others joined his movement, his aims approached fulfillment.

The official manifesto of Panfuturism was first issued in 1920–21 (see appendix A). In it, Semenko made clear that Panfuturism was not a new direction in art, not a new "ism." Instead, it was an artistic system which represented a period of transition in the merging of art and politics. Hence, at one end of the Panfuturist spectrum was the extension and continuation of artistic Futurism (inspired by the manifestos of the Italian Futurist movement), while at the other end, Panfuturism was dictated by the promulgation of political Communism. Within this framework, and inasmuch as the movement dealt with the art of the transitional period, the primary goal of Panfuturism was to become a system which would organize art according to a prescribed ideology whose major features were destruction and construction. The former related to the nihilistic means of the Futurists, while the latter offered a positive program in its place. Consequently, the Panfuturists saw themselves as both revolutionaries and constructors. Politically, this meant being a Communist; in art, it meant being a Panfuturist.

The major goal of Panfuturism, then, was the uncompromising rejection of all artistic traditions. With reference to Marinetti's "Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" of 1909, "perdition of the previous" was the motto put forth by the Panfuturists.[25] Panfuturist "destruction" did not mean, however, some violent turn of events, a militant force instigated by an inflexible ideology. Rather, it was a revolutionary and evolutionary process directed at the future. After a phase of "destruction," a subsequent program of constructive creation could ensue: "For us, destruction is the last stage in the development of art and not one of its branches or deviations. That which is called art is for us the subject of liquidation. But we liquidate 'with the deed and not with words'."[26] The Panfuturists declaimed, "ART IS A HANGOVER OF THE PAST," and clarified their position by modeling their phrasing on the opening statement of Karl Marx's *Manifesto of the Communist Party*: "A spectre haunts Europe—the spectre of Communism" (1848):

> A ghost wanders over Europe—the ghost of Futurism. The futurization of art is the ruin of art. Panfuturism is the liquidation of art. Death to art! Let Panfuturism live! Deepening the revolution in art, Panfuturism prepares the ground for construction. Construction is meta-art. Meta-art is the synthesis of deformed art and sports. There can be no place for art in the future. There will be meta-art then, but now, Panfuturism is the continuation of Futurism, the art of the transitional period. Let meta-art live –the "art" of communist society! Let Panfuturism live—the fighting front of meta-artists![27]

The concept of "meta-art" had the connotation of "metamorphosis" derived from the "organic" aspects of Panfuturism. The Panfuturists maintained that art had lost its sequential historical flow, like the uninterrupted fluidity of a river. The period of transition, therefore, was responsible for locating "a waterway" so that "all the streams of past art could merge together, become anonymous, and flow together as a mighty river into the future."[28] In keeping with this period of transition and change and underscoring the organic quality of art, the Panfuturist O. Slisarenko went on to define Panfuturism in terms of biological and physiological metaphors. In 1922 he presented his ideas in an article entitled "On the Last Frontier," in which he stated: "Form dies out, deteriorates, in the same way as nations which have reached a high level of culture and civilization die out. The time comes when one needs to infuse additional blood in order to revitalize the decaying organism of the form. With such an infusion of blood, the change of artistic forms, the entire historic path of the art of all of mankind is expressed. The last such renewal of blood was the futurization of art which for a time entertained the putrid body of the muse."[29]

The Panfuturists maintained that art finds its source in being– it is a part of being and depends on being. Therefore, old art—an art which was separated from life, from being—died away out of necessity; and "meta-art," arising from the new soil cultivated by and in the period of transition, replaces it. Briefly then: "Meta-art is that bridge by which mankind will pass into the new organization of sensing the world: Meta-art (Panfuturism) is parallel to the transitional forms of economics, and therefore, it is the only correct activity in the field of spiritual culture."[30] Envisioned as the continuation of the destructive phase of Italian futurism, Panfuturism represented the process of this activity and not the final result.

Thus, the first principle to which Panfuturism subscribed was the neutrality of all "isms" in art. It was in this charge that Panfuturism's "destruction" was most graphically demonstrated. But destruction in the sense of neutralization did not imply the total abolition of all that had come before: the intention of Panfuturism was to create a new ground for the development of the arts by devaluating all "isms" and by establishing a common foundation in their place. Thus Panfuturism was not a synthesis of previous artistic "isms." It did not wish to integrate Cubism, Futurism,

Dadaism, Expressionism, etc., into a single cohesive entity. Yet, these movements were not completely eradicated either. Since each of these movements had its place in twentieth-century art, none was to be eliminated. Furthermore, if Panfuturism could be regarded as all of art in its entirety, then these movements formed a part of it and could not be ignored. The Panfuturists thus regarded art as "polyproblematic" and felt that each "ism" represented a minute element in the vast complex of art. Panfuturism, therefore, could be abstract, yet it could also contain a concrete relationship with figurative art, a feature particularly endemic to the avant-garde art in the Ukraine.

The underlying current of this "process" of synthesis was the search for a "generalizing principle." The Panfuturists believed that on the basis of a scientific formula, they would indeed be able to locate that element which would be applicable to all the arts and which would bring about their synthesis. Moreover, in the case of the Ukraine, the discovery of the "generalizing principle" would help to bring Ukrainian art into the international arena by equating the aims of Ukrainian artists with the goals set forth by avant-garde artists throughout the world. The formula

Panfuturism = Ideology + Facture

Facture = Material + Form + Content

was to serve as a means of establishing a common basis for a universal synthesis of the arts.

In certain respects, this formula paralleled similar concurrent ideas formulated by the Russian art critic, Alexei Gan, cofounder of the First Working Group of Constructivists in 1920. In his book, *Konstruktivizm*, published in Tver in 1922, Gan expressed the same fundamentally Communist orientation in the arts which formed the basis of Panfuturism. While Panfuturism simply stressed "Ideology + Facture," Gan emphasized "Tectonics, Texture, and Construction" as a reflection of "Revolutionary Marxist Thought."[31] Both Gan's Constructivism and Semenko's Panfuturism cultivated and propagated a proletarian ethic and aesthetic. When Panfuturism professed to be "ideologically organizational," it espoused an artistic ideology which was closely bound to a political one. As a result, for the literary and artistic vanguard in the Ukraine, Panfuturism was indeed a revolutionary concept. This was especially true in the case of Ukrainian art, since such a pragmatic and contemporary program had never before been outlined for it.

Most significant is the fact that Panfuturism, rather than being an isolated program, was one that opened avenues of communication with the

general mainstream of twentieth-century European ideas on art. As a tactic for this program, Panfuturism proffered the development of an artistic system by which the Ukraine would be able to align itself with the universal proletariat. In fact, as indicated in their manifesto, the Panfuturists viewed Ukrainian art and the Ukraine in general as the eastern federation of this universal proletariat.

The ideas of Panfuturism were first disseminated through the journals *Semafor u maibutnie* [Semaphore into the Future] and *Katafal'k mystetstv* [Catafalque of the Arts]. The editorial staff of each journal was headed by the ideologue of Panfuturism, Mykhailo Semenko. He was assisted by Geo Shkurupii (d.u.), Yulian Shpol (1895–1934), Oleksa Slisarenko (1891–1934), Myroslav Irchan (1897–1937), and Mark Tereshchenko (d.u.). *Katafal'k mystetstv* and *Semafor u maibutnie*, both published in Kiev in 1922, were the preliminary attempts of Semenko's effort to issue a multi-faceted Futurist publication in the Ukraine, a journal which would concentrate on the multiple media of the arts. (This was a goal ultimately attained with the publication of *Nova generatsiia*.)

Prior to the appearance of these two journals, Semenko made many unsuccessful attempts to produce a Futurist periodical. One such early but unsuccessful endeavor was the journal *Studiia* [Workshop]. Although envisioned as a forum for all the arts, it began mainly as a literary organ for Ukrainian Futurist poets. However, in the process of formulating and realizing this project, Semenko became discouraged as he came to realize that no true leftist poets were to be found in Kiev (most of them had moved to Kharkiv). It was therefore necessary to dispense with *Studiia* and dissolve the inauspicious association of poets who were grouped under the same title. Futurism per se was not attractive to most writers in Kiev, although other "modern" poetry was being created. In 1912, Semenko chose to record the status of this other "modern" poetry never touched by Futurism in a new journal which he called *Literaturno-Krytychnyi Al'manakh* [The Literary-Critical Almanac]. By 1919 Semenko was chief-editor of *Mystetstvo* and chose to propagate leftist art solely through this journal despite the fact that its orientation was not necessarily Futurist. In a triple issue of *Mystetstvo* (nos. 2–4, 1919), Semenko submitted a feature editorial entitled "The Art of the Transition Period." In this article, he actively assumed his unequivocal role of ideologue and theoretician of Panfuturism.

Finally, in 1922, Semenko's vision of a purely Futurist journal or, more precisely, a Ukrainian Panfuturist journal became a reality with the appearance of *Semafor u maibutnie* and *Katafal'k mystetstv*. Although planned as serial publications, each of these appeared only in a single issue: *Semafor u maibutnie* was issued in May 1922, while *Katafal'k mystetstv* appeared on December 13, 1922. Of the two journals, *Katafal'k mystetstv* represented the anarchical force of Panfuturist theory. It was the literary

organ of the "Panfuturists-destructors." The title of the journal, denoting the funeral and internment of old art, also clearly evoked associations with nihilistic Futurism. In some instances, the Panfuturists' claim for the death of art and their break with past traditions equalled the impious acts of the Dadaists. An example of such an attack on the past was manifested by Semenko's collection of poetry entitled *Kobzar*, first published in 1924.[32] The term "kobzar" derives from the Kozak bards who, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, traveled through the Ukraine. They sang and played on the national folk instrument, the "kobza," and told of the valiant ways of the kozaks fighting against foreign invaders. Taras Shevchenko, who associated himself with these singers of freedom and national sovereignty, had named his own collection of poems *Kobzar*. Semenko, the Futurist, who had already expressed his contempt for what he considered the disabling sentimentalism of Shevchenko's poetry, demonstrated his defiance by adopting this name for his own poetry. Continuing in the pattern set by the earlier Kvero-Futurists who had published the irreverent *Derzannia* [Audacity] in the wake of the centennial celebration of Shevchenko, Semenko unremorsefully attacked the revered cultural figure. While Shevchenko's poetry spoke of love of country, Semenko's poetry of this time was on more mundane themes. An example of this is the following poem entitled "Seven," published in *Katafal'k mystetstv:*

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Mykhailo Semenko

Semenko's action gives some indication that the Panfuturists were also aware of Dada. In fact, for *Semafor u maibutnie*, the editors translated and published R. Huelsenbeck's "First Dadaist Speech in German" (Berlin 1918) and his article entitled "What Does Expressionism Want and What Does Dadaism?" which originally appeared in the *Dada Almanach* in Berlin in 1920. In one section of *Semafor u maibutnie*, the Ukrainian Panfuturists even ventured to give their own Dadaist evaluation of contemporary artists. These included such intimate and nonsensical assessments as the following:

Braque: impressionable, somewhat an eighteenth-century type, a pleasant person
Picasso: very much of the eighteenth century; must miss it very much, a French type
Metzinger: his face reveals a great desire to be modern, maybe he can even achieve that ("I exhibited too soon," he said to Louis Vauxcelles)
Marcel Duchamp: an intelligent person; is overly preoccupied with women
Albert Gleizes: the head [brain] of Cubism
Tristan Tzara: extremely intelligent—not Dada enough
Ribemont-Dessaignes: very intelligent; too well dressed
Léger: a Norman; he maintains that it is necessary to always stand with one leg in filth
Arp: your place is in Paris
André Breton: we await the moment when he, compromised, will explode like dynamite
Soupault: prodigal son
Paul Dermée: likes good company
Pierre-Albert Birot: full of natural talent; we suggest that he should not live so alone
Reverdy: gives the impression of being a prison warden
Max Jacob: maintains that his derrière is hysterical
Francis Picabia: it is impossible for him to understand what happens between cold and warm . . . always asserts that warmth should be spat up.[33]

Appropriate to the title of the journal (Catafalque of the Arts), and in conjunction with their "destructive" phase, the Panfuturists contemptuously attacked nonleftist artists and writers in the Ukraine as well, irreverently labeling them cadavers in the morgue of Ukrainian literature. In an effort to replace the leaders and founders of Western European avant-garde art and literature, *Semafor u maibutnie* advanced its own Panfuturist painter, Ole Shymkov, who in this transitional, meta-art stage of Panfuturism, was able by means of "jiufarb-juitsu" to "conquer the Matisses, Picasso, Kandinskys, Schwitterses, Boccioni, Severini, Arkhipenkos, Lentulovs, Tatlins, Mellers, and K° by pinning them on their shoulder blades."[34] The work of these artists was representative of the pre-Panfuturist epoch. Shymkov's task was to prepare the transition toward Panfuturism by incorporating into the movement all cadres of art and especially to demonstrate the role of painting in this transition, beginning with the second issue of the journal. However, the second issue never appeared, and the whereabouts of Shymkov's own paintings remain unknown (if he himself ever existed at all).

Semafor u maibutnie possessed a resolved character and attempted to find answers to problems rather than to criticize the situation mercilessly without offering any constructive solution. In contrast to the destructive and caricatural simplification of art demonstrated by *Katafal'k mystetstv* (which, by comparison, was more Dadaist in spirit), *Semafor u maibutnie* represented a constructive intention attached to defined goals:

SEMAPHORE INTO THE FUTURE
THE APPARATUS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF META-ART (fig. 1-3)

The apparatus of a periodical, the first number of which is before the eyes of the readers, formulates material on the basis of evaluating the contemporary status of world art advanced by the system of art of the transitional period called

Semafor u Majbutn'e

Aparat konstrukciji metamystectva.

Periodyxnyj aparat, perwyj nomer kotroho pered oxyma xytaxiv, opra-c'ovuje material na pidstavi toji dumky pro suxasnyj stan svitovoho mys-tectva, jaku vykladeno v systemi mystectva pereqodovoji doby pid nazvoju „PANFUTURYZM".

Zavdann'am aparatu je: peretravl'ujuxy syrovyj material suxasnosty, stvoryty novyj produkt.

Abo: na pidstavi vyvxenn'a destruktyvnoho procesu, ideologixno pro-korektovanoho proletars'kymy pidvalynamy tvorxosty, namityty ti osnovni sqemy majbutn'oji konstrukciji wtuky (metamystectva), jaka vyplyvaje odnoxasno zi zmicnenn'am proletariatu v caryni kynetyxnoji klasovoji borot'by.

Destrukcija dl'a nas je ostannim etapom rozvytku mystectva, a ne odnym z rozhalužen' xy zboxen' joho. Te, wxo nazyvajet's'a mystectvom je dl'a nas predmet likvidaciji. Ale my likvidujemo „dilom a ne slovamy". Koly my budemo dovodyty j perekonuvaty (teorija...), to nam niqto ne po-viryt'. Koly my **pokažem** na eksperymenti,—spravu bude vykonano, qaj todi ne vir'at'. Likvidacija mystectva je nawe mystectvo. I koly ne nam dovedet's'a zvodyty konstrukciju pisl'a-mystectva, to my boremos' za neji, likvidujuxy mystectvo vo imja konstrukciji, hotujuxy dl'a neji grunt.

Takym xynom, zavdann'a nawe podvijne: buty v odyn i toj samyj xas

REVOL'UCIONERAMY j

BUDIVNYXYMY.

V hromads'kim žytti s'ohodni ce znaxyt' buty **komunistom.**

V mystectvi ce znaxyt' buty

PANFUTURYSTOM.

Figure 1-3. A Page from the Journal *Semafor u maibutnie* (Semaphore into the Future) with the Panfuturist Manifesto "The Apparatus for the Construction of Meta-Art" Published in May 1922 in Panfuturist Code *(Private collection)*

PANFUTURISM

The task of this apparatus is: to create a new product by digesting the raw material of contemporaneity.

Or: on the basis of studying the destructive process of creativity [which is] ideologically corrected [by means of] proletarian foundations, to indicate those basic outlines for the future construction of a work of art (meta-art), which evolves concurrently with the strengthening of the proletariat in the realm of a kinetic class struggle.

For us, destruction is the last stage in the development of art and not one of its branches or deviations. That which is called art is for us the object of liquidation. But we liquidate "with deed and not with words." When we demonstrate and convince with theory, etc., then no one believes us. When we show proof by experimentation, the matter is settled; let them not believe. Liquidation of art is our art. And if we won't be able to procure construction after art, then we will fight for it, liquidating art in the name of construction, preparing the ground for it.

In that way, our task is twofold: to be at one and the same time

REVOLUTIONARIES AND CONSTRUCTORS

In community life today, this means to be a *Communist*.
In art, this means to be a

PANFUTURIST

Just as the liquidation of the capitalist order was born within the foundation of this order (machine = *proletariat*),

so, too, the death of art arose from one of the "directions" of the past (*Futurism*).

LET LIVE THE CONTINUATION OF FUTURISM—
PANFUTURISM!

The patent for the future is in our hands.
And we put up the SEMAPHORE.
We regulate the colors of the signals the fires.
There is one path into the future. We have
conquered the last station—and have captured the

SEMAPHORE INTO THE FUTURE.

The Editors.

As regulators of the semaphore[35] on the road to the future, the Panfuturists viewed their role as an intermediary one in the guiding of art toward its final revitalization.

It is clear that Panfuturism cultivated links with Western trends, drawing on the spirit of both Dada and Futurism. But in the final analysis, in its positive, constructive outlook, Panfuturism also put to use the concurrent precepts of Constructivism. As were the Dadaists and Futurists, the Panfuturists were also interested in startling the public, in shaking traditional

values. However, they went beyond a simplistic wish to "épater la bourgeoisie." They aligned themselves with a political ideology which would be constructive and pro-art. Art, in the eyes of the Panfuturists, had become necrotic and was already lying in state. It was therefore necessary to take immediate stock of the situation and to prepare a framework for the art of the future. Panfuturism was to bridge the gap between the lifeless art of the past and the vibrant art of the future.

The "constructive" aspect of Panfuturism, that which emphasized a "period of transition" and took note of proletarian reality, was already being nurtured in Semenko's *Mystetstvo* article of 1919. This article was issued prior to one of the acknowledged primary documents of the Constructivist movement, "The Realistic Manifesto" of 1920 by Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner. In keeping with the direction of Constructivism, some of the articles in *Semafor u maibutnie* reflected deep theoretical considerations vis-à-vis the arts. These include "Panfuturist Construction," "Panfuturist Destruction," "Panfuturist Workshop," "Today and Panfuturism," "Among Constructive Countries," and "Among Destructive Countries."

As an affirmation of the global concerns of Panfuturism—the merging of East and West, so to speak—the editors of *Semafor u maibutnie* transliterated the Ukrainian language into a unique transcriptory code. Although lacking a logical linguistic foundation, this code was nevertheless a clear reflection of the effort to facilitate the reading of important, universally oriented Panfuturist texts, making them available to broader, international audiences. Furthermore, the system of transcription was meant to underscore the very "constructiveness" of Panfuturist theory (fig. 1-4). In deciphering the code, the right hand column, translated, reads "ATTENTION!" [Uvaha!]. The letters on the right stand alone, while on the left side are letters which require an added "h" for pronunciation, e.g., Z (zh), W (sh), X (ch), Q (kh). The rest of the transliterated alphabet does not deviate from standard form. By implementing this curious system of transcription, the Panfuturists created a new orthography (e.g., PANFUTURYSTYXNA KONSTRUKCIJA [Panfuturist construction]); and in some cases, they created neologisms which carried distinct Dadaist overtones (e.g., "Jiufarbjuitsu" [Jiu-juitsu with paint—"farba"]). There was a dual, if not a triple, function in this system of transcription. First of all, it was an exercise which bore some linguistic importance, particularly in the realm of phonetics. It had a particular usefulness in reading declamations or manifestos aloud, for it aided the reader in verbalizing the text. Without having knowledge of the Ukrainian language, the reader could enunciate Ukrainian words, and thus actually read in the language. This was viewed as a direct means of enhancing the fact that the Ukrainian language was accessible to all and its culture could now join the mainstream of artistic developments throughout Europe and vice versa.

...k ... ...k ... ...a zarodyš ... ...ost' ...
...odnoho ... ...nawyk ... *predtamnoho*.

...k i smert' mystectva powstaje z odnoho z „napr'amkiv" ostannoho
futuryzma.

Qaj żyve prodovżenn'a futuryzmu—

PANFUTURYZM!

Patent na majbutn'e v nawyq rukaq.

I my stavymo *SEMAFOR*.

My regul'ujemo farby sygnaliw—ohniv.

V majbutn'e odyn wl'aq. My zaqopyly ostann'u stanciju—i zaqopyly

SEMAFOR U MAJBUTN'E.

Redakcija.

Ż = ж **y** u **Mystectvo je perežytok mynuloho. Pryvyd blukaje po Evropi**
Мистецтво е пережиток минулого. Привид блукає по Европі—

W = ш **B** v **pryvyd futuryzmu. Futuryzacija mystectva je zahybel' mys-**
привид футуризму. Футуризація мистецтва є загибель мис-

X = ч **A** a **tectva. Panfuturyzm je likvidacija mystectva. Smert' mystectvu!**
тецтва. Панфутуризм є ліквідація мистецтва. Смерть мистецтву!

Q = x **Γ** h **Qaj żyve panfuturyzm! Pohlybl'ujuxy revol'uciju v mystectvi—**
Хай живе панфутуризм! Поглиблюючи революцію в мистецтві—

’ = ь **A** a! **panfuturyzm hotuje grunt dl'a konstrukciji. Konstrukcija je**
панфутуризм готує ґрунт для конструкції. Конструкція є

metamystectvo. Metamystectvo je syntez deformovanoho mys-
метамистецтво. Метамистецтво є синтез деформованого мис-

tectva zi sportom. Proletars'koho mystectva ne może buty, bo
тецтва зі спортом. Пролетарського мистецтва не може бути, бо

proletariat je rasa majbutn'oho, v majbutn'omu ż nemaje misc'a
пролетаріат є раса майбутнього, в майбутньому ж немає місця

mystectvu. Todi bude metamystectvo, a zaraz—panfuturyzm—prodovżenn'a futuryzmu,
мистецтву. Тоді буде метамистецтво, а зараз—панфутуризм—продовження футуризму,

mystectvo pereqodovoji doby. Qaj żyve metamystectvo—„mystectvo" komunistyxnoho
мистецтво переходової доби. Хай живе метамистецтво—„мистецтво" комуністичного

suspil'stva! Qaj żyve panfuturyzm—bojovyj front majbutniq metamystciv! Geo Wku-
суспільства! Хай живе панфутуризм—бойовий фронт майбутніх метамистців! Ґео Шку-

rupij, Myqail' Semenko, Julian Wpol, Oleksa Slisarenko, M. Irxan, Mark Terewxenko.
рупій, Михайль Семенко, Юліан Шпол, Олекса Слісаренко, М. Ірчан, Марк Терещенко.

Figure 1-4. The Second Half of "The Apparatus for the Construction of Meta-Art" with the Legend of the Panfuturist Code and Declaration, "Art Is a Hangover of the Past," Published in *Semafor u maibutnie* in May 1922

Finally, in terms of typography, the Panfuturist editors became acutely conscious of the potential of diversified typesets and of the variability in the simultaneous use of both Latin and Cyrillic script. This would eventually have a special significance on the typographic design of *Nova generatsiia.*

Both *Katafal'k mystetstv* and *Semafor u maibutnie* were Semenko's first successful publishing attempts to create a forum for a major goal of Constructivism: the synthesis of all arts. In 1923, the Panfuturist editors published *Zhovtnevyi zbirnyk panfuturystiv* [October collection of Panfuturists] which continued along these same lines. But all of these publications were merely prototypes for the single journal which later echoed the feelings of the new generation. This was *Nova generatsiia,* the journal of the avant-garde in Ukrainian art. It was in *Nova generatsiia* that a true Panfuturist synthesis of the arts took place, a program which included poetry, prose, painting, sculpture, theatre, music, photography, graphic arts, architecture, and sports. Published at the end of the twenties, *Nova generatsiia* proved to be not only the culmination of the earliest aspirations of the Panfuturists, but a summary of modernist directions in Ukrainian visual arts during the teens and twenties.

2

The New Generation

Once the journal *Nova generatsiia* was issued in Kharkiv in October 1927, exactly ten years after the Revolution, it became the mouthpiece for a fresh and active Ukrainian avant-garde. The Association of Panfuturists (ASPANFUT) ceased to exist as a functional organization in 1924, and in the following year it joined with KOMUNKUL'T (Komunistychna Kul'tura [Communist Culture]), sometimes referred to as ASKK (Asotsiiatsiia Komunkul'tu [Association of Communist Culture]). Rather precipitously, the Panfuturists moved even more to the left; their affiliation with the journals of KOMUNKUL'T—*Gol'fshtrom* [Gulfstream] (1923), *Gong Komunkul'tu* [The Gong of Komunkul't] (1924), and *Bumerang* [Boomerang] (1925)—represented the formative years of the Futurist "New Generation." In the final analysis, the publication of *Nova generatsiia* could be seen as the culmination of this rapid movement toward the ideological left, while the Panfuturist New Generation became "the organ of the leftist formation of Ukrainian culture," the vanguard of artistic modernism (see appendix B).[1] The formation of the New Generation was long and involved. In an official capacity, the term "New Generation" was applied to the vanguard of earlier Panfuturism, headed by Mykhailo Semenko and including Geo Shkurupii and Ol. Poltorats'kyi in addition to newcomers such as L. Frenkel', O. Vlyz'ko, Leonid Skrypnyk, and the photographer, Dan Sotnyk. Of the visual artists, Anatol' Petryts'kyi, Vadym Meller, and Viktor Pal'miv (among others) also upheld the principles of the New Generation and supported their publishing endeavors. The New Generation saw itself not as the beginning of a "leftist" direction for art and literature, but rather as a continuation of it. Its foundation had already been traced to Kvero-Futurism, and ultimately blossomed into full-blown and vociferous Panfuturism in 1922 through the journals *Semafor u maibutnie* and *Katafal'k mystetstv*.

The premises of the New Generation were clear-cut and uncompromising. On the spread of the first two pages of nearly every issue of *Nova*

generatsiia, the editors reminded the reader exactly what the organization supported and what its members, the Panfuturists, loathed. They listed these straightforwardly:

We are for:
Communism
Internationalism
Rationalization
  invention
  quality
  economy
Social steadfastness
Universal communist platform
  of custom
  of culture
  of scientific-technology
New Art

We are against:
National limitedness
Unprincipled simplifications
Bourgeois modes
Amorphous artistic organizations
  of provincialism

triple-tiered
small-peasantness
  illiteracy
  eclecticism

Nova generatsiia, therefore, was not simply a forum for an isolated group of writers and artists. Its pages were open to everyone but with the stipulation that contributors "maintain our platform which we announce in every issue of *Nova generatsiia* (i.e., "We are for" "We are against") and keep to those features which are intrinsic to the leftist formation of poets and publicists, which our journal cultivates and condenses."[2]

The program and character adopted by the New Generation for its journal was educational, if not tendentious, in nature. Its aim was to teach. In abstracting articles from contemporary foreign periodicals and by soliciting and translating materials on foreign artists, *Nova generatsiia* served two purposes for the Ukrainian art world. First, it disseminated information (in Ukrainian) on modern art of an international scope in an effort to present new directions to Ukrainian artistic groupings which the Panfuturists thought still upheld provincial attitudes. Secondly, it served as a pedagogic forum which touched upon all the artistic media. The journals from which *Nova generatsiia* most frequently abstracted or translated articles in full included *Cahiers d'arts*, *Der Sturm*, *Der Kunstblatt*, *Das neue Frankfurt*, the Dutch *Filmliga*, the Polish *Praesens*, the Czech *Stavba*, and even *Die Literarische Welt*. Some articles on architecture were taken from *Almanach d'architecture moderne* and the Russian *SA* (*Sovremennaia arkhitektura* [Contemporary Architecture]) which appeared in Moscow contemporaneously with *Nova generatsiia* (1927–30). The contributors to *Nova generatsiia* from these foreign sources were a motley assortment of modernist critics and theoreticians who wrote about an even more diversified stratum of artists. Some of the translated authors included Hubert Grogsley, Jean Cassou, L. Kaplan, Willy Grohmann, et al. Some of the artists featured in monographic

articles included Georges Braque, Hans Arp, Viktor Servanckx, Juan Gris, Otto Dix, Paul Klee, Fernand Léger, Mies Van der Rohe, Willi Baumeister, Jan Tschichold, Pieter Hans, Paul Colin, Kosio, and La Serna. Feature articles included the writings of Lászlo Moholy-Nagy on photography as the design of light; Karel Teige on the theory of Constructivism; H. de Friesz on plastic architecture; E. Thériade on Juan Gris and the last works of Fernand Léger; Willi Baumeister on surface; and the criticism of Guillaume Apollinaire, translated into Ukrainian for the first time. As evidenced, the content was extremely varied, but the ideological premises were very tight indeed. Thus, for those who may have thought that *Nova generatsiia* represented nothing else but pedantic eclecticism, Geo Shkurupii forewarned: "We don't at all confuse Cézanne and Picasso with Rodchenko; and when we include George Grosz next to De Chirico, this doesn't mean that we are hopeless aesthetes or eclectics."[3]

True to its principle of the "leftist formation of the arts," *Nova generatsiia* underscored the ongoing, constant process of artistic creation. Consequently, by the explorative tone manifest in the journal, one sensed that the artistic climate in the Ukraine toward the end of the twenties was neither the start nor the finish of an artistic vanguard, but rather an evolutionary maturation of a new generation of artists and literati whose work was becoming ripe for entering the international community of artists. In this process, impressive parallels can be drawn between *Nova generatsiia* and *Transition*, the international journal of literature and the art of the American expatriots in Paris. *Transition* also commenced publication in 1927, and was produced by an equally small coterie of like-minded individuals as were the Panfuturists. It was the brainchild of Eugene Jolas (1894-1952), who, like Semenko, was a poet and critic. As editors, writers, publishers, and theoreticians emerging from a multi-lingual cultural background, both Semenko and Jolas had galvanizing personalities which stimulated a closely knit literary school and created a loose alliance of artists and writers which was brought together "under the aegis of a theory partly imported from European movements,"[4] and also partly derived from the practice of innovators in the common national languages of the respective groups (i.e., English for the Lost Generation, and Ukrainian for the New Generation). Hence, the journals of both groups served essentially the same function: to connect the culture of Western Europe with that of their respective countries. The great accomplishment of *transition*, for instance, was that it "awakened the broader circles of the American intelligentsia to the activities of their expatriots in Europe."[5] In the same way, *Nova generatsiia* kept the Ukrainian reader in touch with artistic events in the West, both those in which Ukrainians participated and those of a general international character.

Another point of comparison between the two journals is that *transition*

and *Nova generatsiia* were also founded on high ideological bases which were mainly leftist in their orientation. Like the Panfuturist effort which originated with the Revolution and culminated in *Nova generatsiia*, *transition* was triggered by the complex ideas which spawned the Russian Revolution of 1917. Whether the accusations that *transition* was a Communist organ[6] were true is not an issue here. However, on a philosophical level, such a partiality could be construed if one takes into account the fact that Jolas did extend an invitation to "all those who wish to express violently and sincerely their reaction to the age, who are interested in creative experiments, who revolt against the growing hegemony of philistinism and sterility."[7] After the first year, Jolas changed the orientation of *transition* from a simple, straightforward forum for international literature and redirected it, in format and principle, to "an international quarterly for creative experiment."[8] It is revealing that this new subtitle and new commmitment of *transition* evoked the idea of laboratory work and research into artistic processes in much the same way that Panfuturism underscored meta-art, the transitional organic metamorphosis of the creative act, which involves interaction between "destruction" and "construction." Jolas's plan for redirecting the orientation of the Lost Generation has been described thus: "Since none of the major paths the epoch seemed to offer was acceptable, Jolas felt that more of the old structures would have to be destroyed before a new way could be found, and as part of its programme, *transition* undertook to define exactly the destructive attitudes which the situation demanded."[9] After three years of intense dedication to this idea, Jolas was ready to announce in June 1930 that: "The transitional period of literature appears to be drawing to a close. But our experimental action, I feel sure, will constitute an impulsion and a basis on which to construct for some time to come."[10] The journal lasted until 1938, and in its ideational quests underwent several face changes. After 1930 (the year that *Nova generatsiia* was forced to cease publication), a change in the editorial staff of *transition* was effected with the resignation of Jolas himself.

The similarities in the structure and philosophy of America's Lost Generation and the Ukrainian New Generation, and the kinship elicited by their publications, exemplify resemblances between movements in the Ukraine and the West. Indeed, both journals were the products of idiosyncratic groups—small, but diverse conclaves of dedicated activists who represented a new literary-artistic generation in two different parts of the world. Aside from the striking but coincidental resemblances between the two, yet another feature which allies *Nova generatsiia* and *transition* is the effect that German publications had on both journals. The progressive ideas of *Der Sturm*, in particular, helped to shape the program of *transition* in the same way that it served as a constant inspiration for *Nova generatsiia*. For *transition* the influence from Germany came later, while for *Nova generatsiia*

it manifested itself almost immediately with the New Generation's subscription to the Berlin journal and its professional association with the editor of *Der Sturm*, Herwarth Walden. This was demonstrated in 1928, when Walden was visiting the Ukraine and was invited to write an article on contemporary European art expressly for *Nova generatsiia*.[11]

It was not only *Der Sturm*, but Berlin's entire radical artistic movement of the same name that the New Generation emulated. The greatest influence exerted on the New Generation by Der Sturm was that it ignited a prolonged struggle with official criticism and official art theory while promoting the advance guard of artistic modernism.[12] Through its journal and exhibition activity, Der Sturm made possible the independent existence of New Art. The historic role of Der Sturm (in addition to promoting German Expressionism), therefore, was not only to advertise the art of Pechstein, Nolde, Kokoschka, and Kandinsky, but it was also on the initiative of Der Sturm that many young artists, such as Boccioni, Léger, Delaunay, Metzinger, Schwitters, among others, were able to display their works for the first time. Der Sturm was, in fact, the first to recognize artists such as Marc Chagall and the Ukrainian sculptor, Alexander Arkhipenko. From the very start, the German exhibition society fostered international union among artists by the inclusion of literature, painting, music, and architecture in its journal. This principle of artistic universality was a priority which obviously appealed to the New Generation.

Another German model for *Nova generatsiia* was the literary-artistic monthly, *Der Querschnitt*, published in Berlin from 1921–36. Like *Der Sturm*, *Der Querschnitt* was also associated with an exhibition circuit: the Flechtheim Gallery of Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt/Main, and Cologne. The journal served mainly as a bulletin for the Gallery, and maintained standard featured items, such as the survey section, "Marginalien der Galerie Flechtheim." However, the articles in *Der Querschnitt*, principally critical essays on nineteenth- and twentieth-century art, also rendered a most valuable service in reporting on the artistic life of Germany, Paris, and Italy. The contributors to *Der Querschnitt* were André Salmon, Paul Guillaume, Julius Meier-Graefe, Wilhelm Uhde, Guillaume Apollinaire (whose writings appeared posthumously), Marsden Hartley, Karl Einstein, Viktor Shklovskii, et al. The title of the journal, translated as *The Cross-Section*, demonstrated its variegated composition; in addition to art and film, the publication also introduced essays on dance and sports, interspersed with graphic illustrations, photographs, and reproductions of paintings. As reflected in its name, *Der Querschnitt* did not have any single focus and did not confuse itself in a specialization. Instead, it entertained as well as informed, and included book reviews, exhibition surveys, and popular articles as part of its content. The friendly international union that the journal perpetuated was underscored by

frequent expressions of "herzlicher grüss" and the well-wishing with which the authors ended their contributions and their correspondence—was a feature which also characterized the sportive side of the Panfuturists and the communal tone of *Nova generatsiia.*

The question then arises: was their a conscious prototype for *Nova generatsiia* which the Panfuturists adopted? Repeated queries to this effect were put to Semenko. Regarding the exemplar for *Nova generatsiia,* Semenko, as editor-in-chief, acknowledged that: "that is no secret, for every educated Ukrainian reader who keeps track of the foreign periodical press knows...that the prototype for *Nova generatsiia* was the journal *Der Querschnitt,* while the paintings and articles regarding information on the arts abroad are largely taken from the French journal *Cahiers d'arts.*"[13] So, in reference to the journalistic model for *Nova generatsiia,* based on Semenko's admission one can safely assume that *Nova generatsiia* was an artistic synthesis of several prototypes for at least the first two years of its publication.

Paradoxically, one of the major distinctions between *Nova generatsiia* and *Der Querschnitt* was that the latter was largely apolitical and not a mouthpiece for any particular artistic group or institution. Moreover, in presenting literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, theatre, film—the leading elements of Ukrainian culture—and discussing and shedding light upon them "in serious and original explorations with well-executed graphic demonstrations,"[14] the orientation of *Nova generatsiia* also shifted from the kind of reportage offered by *Cahiers d'arts. Nova generatsiia* was, as acknowledged by a Belgian reviewer from the Brussels journal *7 Arts,* a natural uprising "against national limitedness, bourgeois indirectness, against amorphous artistic organizations, and against colorless eclecticism."[15] These were hardly the motivations behind *Cahiers d'arts.* A closer bond by virtue of shared goals seems to have been established between *Nova generatsiia* and *7 Arts.* This was acknowledged by the following which appeared in the June 1928 edition of *Nova generatsiia:* "Our Ukrainian co-brothers also use the media to familiarize the public with artistic achievements in other journals. Therefore *7 Arts* continues to be interested in the beautiful Kharkiv monthly and in a fraternal way will inform it of the efforts of our periodical in the same field."[16]

Obviously, the affiliations of the New Generation were broadening rapidly. The Panfuturists' attention was focused not only on Paris and Western Europe, but extended to Eastern Europe as well. The "Ukrainian issue" of the Czech journal *Nove Rusko* (No. 7, 1928), published in Prague, serves as an example of the fellowship between *Nova generatsiia* and other literary-artistic journals published in various parts of the world. Closer to home, reactions to *Nova generatsiia* were varied. Observer V. Trenin of the Russian *Novyi Lef* could not accept the fact that an out-of-the-way place such

as Kharkiv could produce a periodical with such an international scope. As a retort, the Panfuturists stated that, "Our friends, misunderstanding our positions, have become concerned that we find ourselves in a blind province of the UkrSSR . . . [that we have] become 'passively futurized,' 'nonfunctionally novelized,' and have generally forgotten about world revolution."[17] Trenin questioned the originality of *Nova generatsiia* with unrelenting cynicism, and accused the New Generation of plagiarizing its neighbors, the Russian publications *LEF* and *Novyi Lef*. The names of these journals reflected the name adopted by the group of Russian Futurists organized by Vladimir Maiakovsky in Moscow in 1923. Maiakovsky became the editor-in-chief of *LEF* (*Levyi front iskusstv* [Left Front of the Arts]), which printed the works of N. Aseev, B. Arvatov, O. Brik, A. Rodchenko, L. Popova, V. Shklovskii, V. Khlebnikov, and A. Kruchenykh. The termination of the journal in 1925 was blamed on its ideological incomprehensibility to the masses, but in 1927, Maiakovsky resuscitated the revolutionary platform of LEF and revived it under a new title, *Novyi Lef* [New Left Front of the Arts], with a slightly mellowed Communist Futurist stance.

In general terms, since *Nova generatsiia* and *Novyi Lef* were published contemporaneously (at least until 1928, when *Novyi Lef* ceased publication due to increasing political pressures), and inasmuch as both journals possessed a "leftist" attitude for art formation, the basic foundations of both *Novyi Lef* and *Nova generatsiia* could easily have been regarded as being similar, if not the same. But precisely herein lay the fallacy of the opinion to which Trenin and his supporters subscribed. Semenko redressed such a notion by indicating that the "leftist" concept of artistic creation was approached from very different vantage points by each of the journals and their respective groups. He highlighted the fact that *Nova generatsiia* presented a broader platform than did *Novyi Lef*, and this sustained the Ukrainian journal at a time when *Novyi Lef* itself was forced to cease publication. Insofar as leftist art in the Ukraine was in the process of development, *Nova generatsiia* could not afford to follow such a narrow, self-referential course as outlined and practiced by *Novyi Lef*. Rather, it was bound to initiate its neophyte audiences into the concepts of New Art gradually and systematically. In the process, it had "to inform its readers about the contemporary work of Western leftists, and in its platform, to unite dialectically destructive work with the constructive."[18] True creators of "proletarian art," claimed the Panfuturists, "can only be those who stand on the international principles of the leftist front."[19] Thus, in a friendly response to the false threat of the Russians expressed in V. Trenin's article, "A Warning Signal to Our Friends"[20] (which lambasted the New Generation), *Nova generatsiia* suggested that *Novyi Lef*, as a participant in the leftist process of the arts, "ought to be more carefully keeping track of what is happening in the leftist movement." The words were

those of Panfuturist Geo Shkurupii, who concluded encouragingly that "we hope that the Moscow leftists will finally understand our conception and will forsake their tone which is characteristic only of the traditions of old Russian literature,"[21] which were premised on the claim that Ukrainian culture was provincial, only an offshoot of the accomplishments of Great Russia.

Trenin continued to attack the ideology of Panfuturism, questioning in fact, how "left" or how much "left of left" *Nova generatsiia* really was. The issue was superfluous in terms of the confident aims put forth by the New Generation. The Panfuturists saw their work as going beyond the simple "leftist craft" of the Moscow Futurists. Semenko himself commented that *Novyi Lef* possessed "only practice . . . which was not a justification for the kind of work based on a definite philosophical system of leftist art which *Nova generatsiia* governs."[22] Semenko tried to demonstrate that *Novyi Lef* had departed into abstraction, that is, into "logically correct, but schematic mottos."[23] This he regarded as an artificial system. By contrast, the Ukrainian leftist front, basing itself on a "universal conception of culture" always took into account *diialektychna hnuchkist'* [a dialectical pliancy] and a "vitality of the leftist front."[24] Semenko asserted that this "is our strong side."

The notion of dialectical pliancy was first formulated by Mykhailo Semenko in 1921–22, and introduced publicly in *Semafor u maibutnie*. It allowed *Nova generatsiia* to justify all branches of the leftist process in art. Thus, *Nova generatsiia* had its own system of leftist art, including even the work of "LEF," alongside the work of the formalists abroad: "When *Novyi Lef* specializes in standardized constructive work; when the Moscow Constructivists experiment diligently, while foreign leftists (new artists) destruct, then this does not mean that *Novyi Lef* or all of the latter are the alpha and omega of new art. There are leftists who work under conditions of a proletarian dictatorship, but the artistic process is one."[25] Hence, by incorporating all artistic media—including poetry and literature—into the journal, it was not, in contradistinction to what *Novyi Lef* maintained, "eclecticism" which *Nova generatsiia* fostered. The various media were used paradigmatically as examples of destruction and construction necessary to the process of creating modern art. For example, the paintings of Picasso interested *Nova generatsiia* from the vantage point of "scientific-painting experiments; as the end of the painterly process and its transference into different categories,"[26] while other new easel painting "plays the role of a destructive factor and it offers assistance in analyzing and studying the Facture of material."[27] The tie between theory and practice, and especially the campaign for pragmatic contemporary work identifiable with both *Nova generatsiia* and *Novyi Lef*, was the result of a "laboratory environment" which prevailed in both journals. But the atmospheres of these respective laboratories could not be entirely equated. In fact, *Nova generatsiia* blamed

intellectual illness for the death of *Novyi Lef*, that "washrag from which former Russian Futurists squeeze out the afterbirth."[28]

The demagoguery of *Novyi Lef* continued in the Moscow Ref (Revoliutsionnyi Front [Revolutionary Front]) which replaced it. Ref came into existence in 1929 under the leadership of V. Maiakovsky. Within a year the group disintegrated. Again the New Generation felt that the "refivtsi" (i.e., those who were members of Ref or associated with it in any way) had "shilly-shallied around the issue of the literature of fact and [were] now becoming entangled in the question of form and content and social orders."[29] The Panfuturists felt that the whole problem with Ref was that

> it builds its program on a small area of concrete work and makes no general artistic program as does *Nova generatsiia*. In making a plan, say for national agriculture, for instance, one can't only base it on the concrete issue of how to sow beets. Ref narrows and simplifies the major question about the art of our epoch and, by the same token, sentences itself to the specialization of a definite school, forgetting about the broad revfront of new art.[30]

Another leftist journal with which *Nova generatsiia* was often compared was *Yugolef* [South Left].[31] Semenko and another Panfuturist, M. Yalovyi, frequently corresponded with the Odessa-based journal,[32] but *Yugolef* (1924–25) was, in effect, merely a southern extension of the Moscow *LEF* and bore no real direct relation to *Nova generatsiia*. Indeed, a new contingent of leftist writers was introduced in *Yugolef*, but its main function was to keep the southern reaches of the Soviet Union in contact with activities in other areas, especially Moscow. Hence, in addition to the correspondence between the Panfuturists and the editors and staff of *Yugelof*,[33] contact was also maintained with the Russian vanguard. When the Russian Constructivist artist Liubov Popova died, *Yugolef* printed a touching obituary, expressing support of her art.[34] Issuing from Odessa (where Ukrainization had not permeated as deeply as in Kharkiv), the journal *Yugolef* was still bilingual: Russian and Ukrainian.

As a synthetic endeavor, *Nova generatsiia* dealt with the arts in theoretical, political fashion. Critical articles, fortified by an abundance of research materials and balanced by pamphlets, reportages, feuilletons, references to and surveys from abroad and from all parts of the Soviet Union, plus a bulletin from the left front of the arts, helped to make the journal a lively point of departure for discussions on modern Ukrainian art. This content, interspersed by correspondence with readers, with reproductions, photographs and other diverse items, was in keeping with the expressed goals of Panfuturism: to highlight "the question of theory and to demonstrate the practice of leftist tendencies in the arts in their constructive and destructive

meaning."[35] But the New Generation and its journal were not the sole propagators of revolutionary avant-gardism in the Ukraine. In 1926, out of the literary debates and controversies which had transpired at mid-decade, there emerged a literary-artistic association calling itself Avangard. It became a rival group for the New Generation. This group was formed in Kharkiv in 1926 by the author and critic, Valeriian Polishchuk, and included Kharkiv artists Heorhii Tsapok, Oleksander Levada, and Vasyl' Yermilov. In its rhetoric, the newly formed group espoused many of the same general ideas as put forth by the New Generation, namely, the importance of creative work on the path to new forms appropriate to the epoch; the propagation of contemporary artistic technique of the West; and the maintaining of ties among artistic associations of like goals. The differences between Avangard and the New Generation lay in their self-conception. Avangard, for example, responded more directly to the élan of the "Realistic Manifesto" of 1920, championing an "adventurous-urbanistic realism."[36] Consequently, it shunned organizations such as the New Generation for its pseudo-progressiveness and for failing to see that "the new forms of art which have plainly been produced because of the industrialization of life continue to influence their basis as a superstructure, i.e., the psyche, life, economy; they become accelerated by the tempo of industrialization, for everything is united by reciprocal influences."[37]

Avangard, therefore, saw itself as the culmination of Kharkiv Futurism as evolved into a full-blown proletarian Constructivist movement. It regarded its work as the fulfillment of goals about which the New Generation merely theorized. Hence, while *Nova generatsiia* represented a true "laboratory" stage, Avangard formed itself on the conrete premises of productionist art. Avangard proclaimed that, "the formation of man's psychology through art is no less important a moment in the general plan of the artistic shaping of all of life than the architectonic shaping of a new house for the purposes of our time—through the architect-engineer . . . and the pedagogues of objects of everyday usage, etc."[38] In its activity, Avangard availed itself of the practical side of modern art, proposing that "we need to shape life constructively, for its dynamism occurs better in such forms. The dynamism of the Futurists is chaotic; ours must be logical and aimed at a goal."[39] The group described its movement as "Constructive-Dynamism"—the "single correct artistic situation for proletarian creators."[40] This goal toward which Avangard strove, furnished the avant-garde with a most commendable task: "To teach people to think expediently, successively, and revolutionarily in the branch of art."[41] Constructive-Dynamism was not just a bellicose ideology which gave no attainable results (an opinion which Avangard harbored against Panfuturism). Rather, it was a movement which "not only shapes life, but is life itself."[42]

To emphasize the steadfastness of their principles and to underscore their hard-lined but motile constitution, Avangard adopted the image of the spiral as a symbol, and called themselves Spiralists. Despite the mechanical and technological connotations of the spiral, the Spiralist movement was actually based on a very human, organic orientation which manifested itself in what might be called a subjective Constructivism. This greatly contrasted with the more rationalized and pseudo-scientific character undertaken by the Panfuturists. Vasyl' Yermilov (1894–1968) was the best exponent of Constructive-Dynamism. In two works of 1923, both human portraits, Yermilov used hard industrial-type materials as his medium– nails, screws, wrought copper, forged metal, and processed wood (fig. 2–1). The durability and tactility of this modern artistic material is obvious, but the meaning of his work does not stop there (fig. 2– 2). The emergence of a human physiognomy created of those very same materials suggests that there really is a place for man within the hard tensile forces of the modern world, and that man can gain strength in that environment. Yermilov thus symbolically reveals an implicit dramatic human content, a hope for man's future in an industrial era, rather than a mere formal experiment in new industrial materials. This was one of the more exacting aims which differentiated the Constructive-Dynamists from the New Generation. The Constructive-Dynamists, or Spiralists, saw man as part of a universal collective aimed at nurturing the spirit of the revolutionary artists of the East and the West; international contact was maintained by soliciting materials from abroad for their publications, the newspaper *Doba konstruktsii* [Epoch of Construction], and ultimately, the journal, *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu* [Artistic Materials of Avangard], published in 1929.[43]

For Avangard, the cultivation of international human contact was of paramount importance. "Art is an expression of the culture of nations and an epoch ought to become better by means of international contact,"[44] exclaimed the members of Avangard, and, like New Generation sought to further already established contact with the international contingent of proletarian artists by using Esperanto, German, French, and Ukrainian in its publications. The purpose behind *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu* therefore was

> to create a journal of the avant-garde of post-October art with a clearly delineated line of revolutionary struggle against regressiveness, bourgeoisness, backward enlightenment [*prosvitianstvo*][45] and peasant-hut existence [*khatianstvo*][46] and others.... We raise the struggle for a true contemporary Europeaeism in artistic technique, uncovering and dispelling the epigonery of the long past and regressive artistic and literary forms....[47]

The Constructive-Dynamists repeatedly spoke of "perpetuating the fire of the avant-garde" and even issued an ephemeral publication, *Ohon'* [Fire] to indicate that sentiment. Three *Bulletins* of Avangard [*Biuleten' Avangardu*]

Figure 2-1. Vasyl' Yermilov, *Portrait*, 1923
(Photograph from Zinovii Fogel', Vasilii Ermilov, *Moskva: Sovetskoi khudozhnik, 1975)*

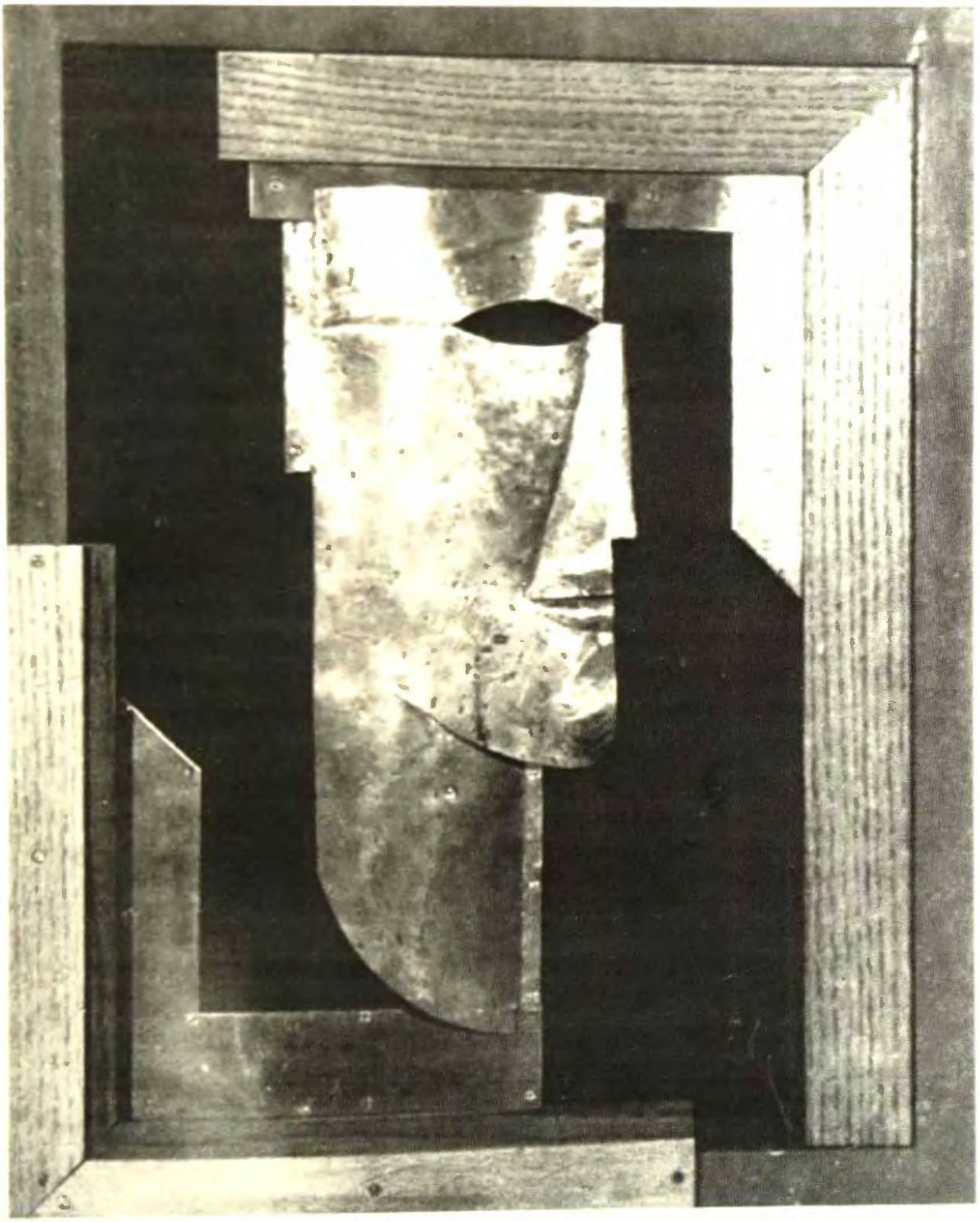


Figure 2-2. Vasyl' Yermilov, *Male Portrait*, 1923
(Photograph from Zinovii Fogel', Vasilii Ermilov, *Moskva: Sovetskoi khudozhnik, 1975)*

were published by an editorial staff headed by Valeriian Polishchuk, with Vasyl' Yermilov as artistic director. The editors criticized the backward actions of other existing journals such as *Nova generatsiia*, calling them futile attempts "to maintain the fire of the idea of Constructive Dynamism."[48]

One of the major grievances of Avangard against New Generation was based on its members' contention that, aside from their own publication, *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu*, no other existing journal truly supported the progressiveness of the avant-garde movement in the Ukraine as they did. But the New Generation and Avangard were rivals in many other respects as well. Avangard had more of a purely literary orientation. Its progenitor, Polishchuk, had at one time belonged to the literary group Hart,[49] an organization which revelled in polemic discussions with the Panfuturists. As for the Panfuturists, the publication of a journal was an all-important issue for Avangard. With time, the members of Avangard became disenchanted with the regressive nature of currently existing literary-artistic groups in the Ukraine, such as even Hart. Their primary concern was that since the publication of *Shliakhy mystetstva* [Paths of Art] in 1919–20, there was no genuine literary-artistic journal in the Ukrainian language issuing forth from these groups. Other journals that did exist, such as *Puty tvorchestva* [Paths of Art], were still being published exclusively in the Russian language.[50] Clearly, such an admonition was unjustified in the case of Semenko and his editorship of *Mystetstvo*, for the Panfuturists themselves had already embarked on an extremely vigorous program of publishing which concentrated on local talent. Moreover, in 1929, New Generation announced a new publication in which "every beginner whose work required a minimum of three editions," could publish. It was to be called the *Al'manakh nevyznanykh* [Almanac of the Unrecognized].[51] Thus, by comparison with the New Generation, Avangard was perhaps more local and parochial than the Panfuturists, notwithstanding the group's great master plan for universalism. *Nova generatsiia*, on the other hand, often attacked for neglecting local artists and for searching elsewhere for a mature avant-garde, became more all-encompassing in its scope: "to deploy the entire front of new art in all of its aspects and in an international scope [is] the pressing task of our contemporaneity and, therefore, our journal does not stand on the platform of some kind of local group, but is creating a foundation for various possible groups."[52] The friction between the New Generation and Avangard was aggravated further when in January 1930 (the final year of publication efforts in Kharkiv) the Panfuturists began to publish yet another journal, this time in Kiev, under the title *Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii"* [*Avant-Garde Almanach of Proletarian Artists of the "New Generation"*]. Like *Nova generatsiia*, *Avangard al'manakh* was published by the State Publishing House of the Ukraine (DVU [Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Ukrainy]).

Avangard al'manakh was another counterattack on the part of the New Generation against Avangard. In order not to confuse *Avangard al'manakh* with Valeriian Polishchuk's Kharkiv journal and group, the New Generation decided to mark it by letters in the lower case instead of numbering the Kiev *Avangard al'manakh* with numerals. Only two numbers of *Avangard al'manakh* were issued: No. a (January 1930), and No. b (April 1930). The journal was published in two languages, Ukrainian and German, with the German title: *Avantgarde almanakh der proletarischen Künstler der "Neuen Generation."* It was edited by Geo Shkurupii, one of the original Panfuturists from the days of *Semafor u maibutnie* and *Katafal'k mystetstv*. The focus of the journal to a large degree reflected the spirit of contemporary German art (i.e., Constructivism merged with "Die neue Sachlichkeit") and was dictated by the following declaration:

> ART AS AN IRRATIONAL CATEGORY OF CULTURE IS DYING OUT
>
> THE PRIMACY OF THE GOAL IS BEING EMPLOYED IN ART AS A CLASS DEMAND OF THE PROLETARIAT WHICH IS RE-BUILDING THE WORLD.
>
> In the first struggles for a clarity of ideology and new forms amenable to our epoch and taking place at the front of culture, the regrouping of strengths and their differentiation have put before us the tasks of utilizing, as rationally as possible, revolutionary artists who would be able to most actively influence the results of these struggles.
>
> The Kiev group, New Generation, which stands on the foundation of a Panfuturist system and is included in the All-Ukrainian Association of Workers for Communist Culture (VUSKK), begins active work in Kiev with the publication of *Avangard al'manakh*, closely uniting it with the all-Union and world movement of revolutionary art.
>
> In Kiev, in this cultural center where there are still many unrecognized youthful forces and where there is a strong stratification of conservative elements which impede the development of proletarian culture, our work must give significant positive results.
>
> Not one of the artistic organizations of Kiev is capable of working out that great task of differentiation and attraction of new strengths which the situation in Kiev demands because all these organizations are either narrowly literary, or they are little interested in work in all realms of art. . . .[53]

In keeping with the aims of Panfuturism, *Avangard al'manakh* had a disparate, multi-faceted character. It was especially actively involved in the pictorial arts, and it featured the work of individual students training at the progressive Kiev Art Institute (KXI [Kyivs'kyi Khudozhn'yi Instytut]).[54] These artists were now "raised on the new ideology, the new life that surrounds them, and the new dynamism and rhythm,"[55] and had begun to surpass that transitional phase of meta-art which Panfuturism emphasized. They were identified as heralds of those searches and pursuits which the New Generation put forth. The Kiev Art Institute was the first Ukrainian higher institution of artistic education to deal with "the problems of higher artistic

education in all of its depth and breadth."[56] KXI kept abreast of the contemporary achievements in art and artistic pedagogy and "was beginning to realize, with honor, the historical tasks of artistic culture in the Ukraine."[57] In this philosophy, it manifested a spiritual link with the Panfuturists, as expressed in 1928 in the first annal of the Institute, *Mystets'ko tekhnichnyi VYSh: Zbirnyk* [Annal of the Artistic-Technical Higher School]:

> Our journal will not glide over the surface of exclusively formal artistic questions; it will principally place art in direct dependence and association with exact science, technique, engineering, technology, economics, politics. . . . Our journal will aim at reflecting not only the life and work of KXI, but will also inform about the state of art and the work of other artistic higher institutions of the Ukrainian SSR and the Soviet Union and abroad.[58]

The goal of KXI was to "build a strong single all-Ukrainian center of higher artistic visual education which would broadly encompass all the demands of visual culture in its revolutionary perspectives and principal organization."[59] These goals were based on the principle of transcending the traditional triad of art (painting, sculpture, and architecture), which it saw as being distant from the masses and from life in general. In its concern with spanning the premises of basically "pure art" with an aim toward "productionist art," the basic tenets of KXI echoed the debates that took place on the pages of *Nova generatsiia* concerning the transition of pure form to its functional aspect. For example, in an article published by *Nova generatsiia*, the Panfuturist I. Terent'iev encapsulated in a simple formula what he considered to be the transition from a Futurist reflection of the environment (i.e., industrial products, machine kinetics, mobility, etc.) to functional Constructivism for the masses (i.e., utilitarian art).[60] He used the example of a chair to demonstrate his point: a chair in its original state is a product of an industrial environment. Hung on the wall, the chair represents its illogical and irrational but intermediate state (Futurism). Once secured to the wall, however, and used as a bookshelf, it discloses its functional potential (Constructivism). Although paradigmatic in nature, Terent'iev's argumentation does serve to illustrate the productionist orientation prevalent at KXI. The aim of the Kiev Art Institute was to analyze the role of the artist and the significance of separate disciplines in a post-Revolutionary culture. Like the Bauhaus, it maintained a philosophy of the "free artist," an idea elaborated at the First All-Ukrainian Conference on the Visual Arts in 1926.

The concept of "free artist" allowed for the separation of all disciplines of art so that they could be rearranged into recognizable outlets for the creation of forms applicable to everyday life. As a result, the artistic faculties and disciplines at KXI became all-embracing, which led its rector, Ivan Vrona, to remark that KXI was indeed a "polytechnicum of art."[61] The hallmark of the teaching method at KXI was a series of so-called formal-technical disciplines

(i.e., drawing, color, volume, and space) to be studied in the first year. The faculty also implemented individual workshops for an integrated environment or a purely technical designation (such as workshops for dwellings, industrial buildings, etc., including such specialized workshops as fresco or portrait painting). Finally, collective evaluations characterized the critical method of teaching.[62]

In a relatively short period of time, the level of KXI had reached the intellectual standards of the concurrently existing Moscow Vkhutein and the Leningrad Academy of Art; by virtue of its size and enrollment, KXI was third in line to these institutions.[63] To implement its high goals, KXI held competitions, canvassing for good artists to strengthen the teaching units at the Institute. As a result of two such campaigns in 1925 and 1926, new teachers were brought to the Institute. These not only included Ukrainian artists who were abroad (such as Vasyl' Kasiian [b. 1896] who had studied at the Prague Academy of Art between 1920–26), but also a number of artists returning from Russia: Viktor Pal'miv (1888–1929) and Pavlo Holubiatnykiv (1892–1942) came to teach painting, while V. Triaskin and Vladimir Tatlin (1892–1953) joined the theatre division. Toward the end of the decade, Kazimir Malevich (1878–1935) also returned to his native environs of Kiev and delivered lectures at the Institute during 1928–29.

The teaching of artists such as Pal'miv and Tatlin was especially critical in the development of Ukrainian artists who were rapidly moving from a Futurist (i.e., destructive) aesthetic to Constructivism both in outlook and artistic product. Pal'miv was a close colleague to the painter and poet David Burliuk (1882–1967), better known as the father of Russian Futurism. In union with Pal'miv, they propagated a kind of Futurist-Expressionism melded by a colorful palette borrowed from Ukrainian folk motifs. In addition, both of them concentrated on the integrity of the tactile, painted surface, giving attention to the physicality of materials. Tatlin, of course, continued this trend, giving special reference to the texture of the materials from which art is made. Born and raised in the industrial city of Kharkiv, Tatlin brought technological relevance to his art. He also introduced a tonic bent, namely organicity, to the rigid geometrics of Constructivism. In fact, Tatlin's Constructivism—like Yermilov's—can be regarded as an instinctive Constructivism, which was the philosophical opposite of the hard, mechanized, and purely technological qualities of conventional Constructivist aesthetics.

These artists also filled out the staff of the former Ukrainian Academy of Art, which included Fedir Krychevs'kyi (1879–1947), Vasyl' Krychevs'kyi (1872–1952), and Mykhailo Boichuk (1882–1939). Other artists incorporated into the teaching corps of the Kiev Art Institute included Oleksander Bohomazov (1880–1930), Mykhailo Kozyk (1879–1947), Lev Kramarenko

(1888–1942), Yevhen Sahaidachnyi (1886–1961), Antin Sereda (1890–1961), Andrij Taran (1886–1967), and Kost' Yeleva (1897–1950). Gradually more artists came from Russia to teach at KXI: Ilarion Pleshchins'kyi (1892–1961), Alexei Usachov (1891–1957) and V. Yung who assisted in the graphics division. The painting staff was augmented by K. Fedorchenko and L. Chutiakov; B. Sakulin and H. Zeiberlakh were incorporated into the architecture staff; and M. Gel'man and P. Sherlaimov joined the sculpture faculty.[64]

For the New Generation, the fresh directions taken on by KXI were vital: the Panfuturist theorizing of *Nova generatsiia* was finally demonstrated in actuality by the practical activities implemented at the Institute. In effect, the training at KXI coincided with the synthetic and productionist nature of *Nova generatsiia* and emphasized the artistic interests of the Panfuturists in many ways. First of all, the typographical concerns in the layout and artistic design of *Nova generatsiia* drew on the expert talents in graphic design at KXI. Secondly, the Tea-Kino-Foto [Theatre-Cinema-Photography] division of KXI, the first of its kind to emerge in the Ukraine, stimulated the inclusion of articles in the Panfuturist journal on experiments in film production and photography, both of which were viewed as newly emergent artistic entities in the realm of international artistic language. Finally, the architecture division of KXI—which enrolled the greatest number of students (followed by Painting, Pedagogy, Graphics, and finally, Sculpture)[65]—was the topic of a voluminous amount of theoretical and critical writing in *Nova generatsiia*. This is particularly true of the Constructivist trends which were beginning to be adapted to city planning by the Kiev art and architecture students.

After only half a decade of activity, the Kiev Art Institute was beginning to produce a variety of young artists who, because of their carefully cultivated artistic perspectives, were counted by the New Generation among its very own. Five students in particular—O. Mordan', V. Ovchynnikov, Yu. Oleksiienko, Yu. Khomaza, and Oleksander Vlyz'ko—were singled out by the Kiev journal *Avangard al'manakh* for displaying evidence of a "true struggle for 'leftist' form"[66] as advocated by the New Generation. Oleksander Vlyz'ko (d.u.), for instance, was described as having an acute "analytical" approach to the study of the object.[67] Under the influence of "leftist" artists such as V. Servanckx, W. Baumeister, V. Tatlin, and V. Pal'miv, Vlyz'ko leaned in the direction of "construction" as a basis for creating his art. Malevich, who taught at KXI and was familiar with Vlyz'ko's work, reaffirmed this when he remarked: "This lad stands on a firm foundation."[68] The cover design for a book of poems by Panfuturist Oleksa Vlyz'ko, *Hoch Deutschland* (fig. 2-3) and another cover design for the Ukrainian State Publishing House (DVU [Derzhavne vydavnytstvo Ukrainy]) (fig. 2-4) which merged the arts of photography, typography, and graphics to produce a functional artistic object, testifies to Vlyz'ko's highly developed Constructivist orientation.

A Constructivist, industrial aesthetic also characterized the work of the young Yurii Sadylenko (1903–67), whose paintings, *Lubok* (fig. 2-5) and *Electra* (fig. 2-6), consist of geometric planes superimposed upon a linear graph. His paintings are inspired by the movement of machines and by robot activity; and his works reveal a predilection for precision painting which differs from that of some of his colleagues (such as V. Ovchynnikov [d.u.], whose convoluted compositions, executed in large patches of color, often have an overbearing figurative content). Ovchynnikov's *The Typist* (fig. 2-7) – whose subject is a woman in the service of urban society—recalls the subjects and handling of concurrent New Objectivity thriving among artists in Germany. A similar, ponderous quality of second-wave Expressionism can also be noted in Pavlo Holubiatnykiv's *Airplane* (fig. 2-8) where peasant women and children are stunned at a rural crossroad as they hear the roar of the airplane pass by overhead. M. Treskin's *A Path in the Mountains* (fig. 2-9) shows the young KXI artist exploiting the expressive forces of color, line, and gesture to activate placid nature into an energetic mass of activity.

The work of Yu. Oleksiienko, especially paintings such as *The Miner* (fig. 2-10) and *Decadent Poet* (fig. 2-11), lies between the highly subjective works of Ovchynnikov and the externalized, objective, highly linear style of Vlyz'ko and Sadylenko. Oleksiienko's paintings, in fact, reveal his fascination with dynamism and movement in a more Cubo-Futurist vein reminiscent of the repetitious, funneling activity of the Italian Futurists and that of the Kiev-bred painter Oleksander Bohomazov, who, at the time, was teaching pedagogic theory at KXI. Oleksiienko rapidly moved into the sphere of nonobjectivity. He had a keen interest in reflexology and was recognized as being able "to unite his creativity with reflexological data, and to unravel the influence of various forms on the individual."[69] Inherent in this aim was the effect of the modern, technological environment on art, an idea which became the lifeblood of the Panfuturists and the New Generation.

The New Generation took into account a broad spectrum of contemporary art. It hoped to create in the Ukraine an atmosphere which would engender divergent artistic currents of both a "destructive" and "constructive" import. Following this line of reasoning and taking advantage of prospering publishing activity, the editors of *Nova generatsiia* began to prepare for press a series of monographs on individual Ukrainian artists as well as separate monographic studies of Western European painters, architects, sculptors, poets, and the like.[70] In addition to books on separate artists, other studies of issues in contemporary art were also planned in order to "highlight all the major artists of new art, beginning with Cézanne."[71] These publications were viewed as a continuation of the interests of the New Generation and the direction originally outlined by the Panfuturist journals.

Articles on the visual arts took up considerable space and were given a prominent position in *Nova generatsiia*. The purpose of these articles was to

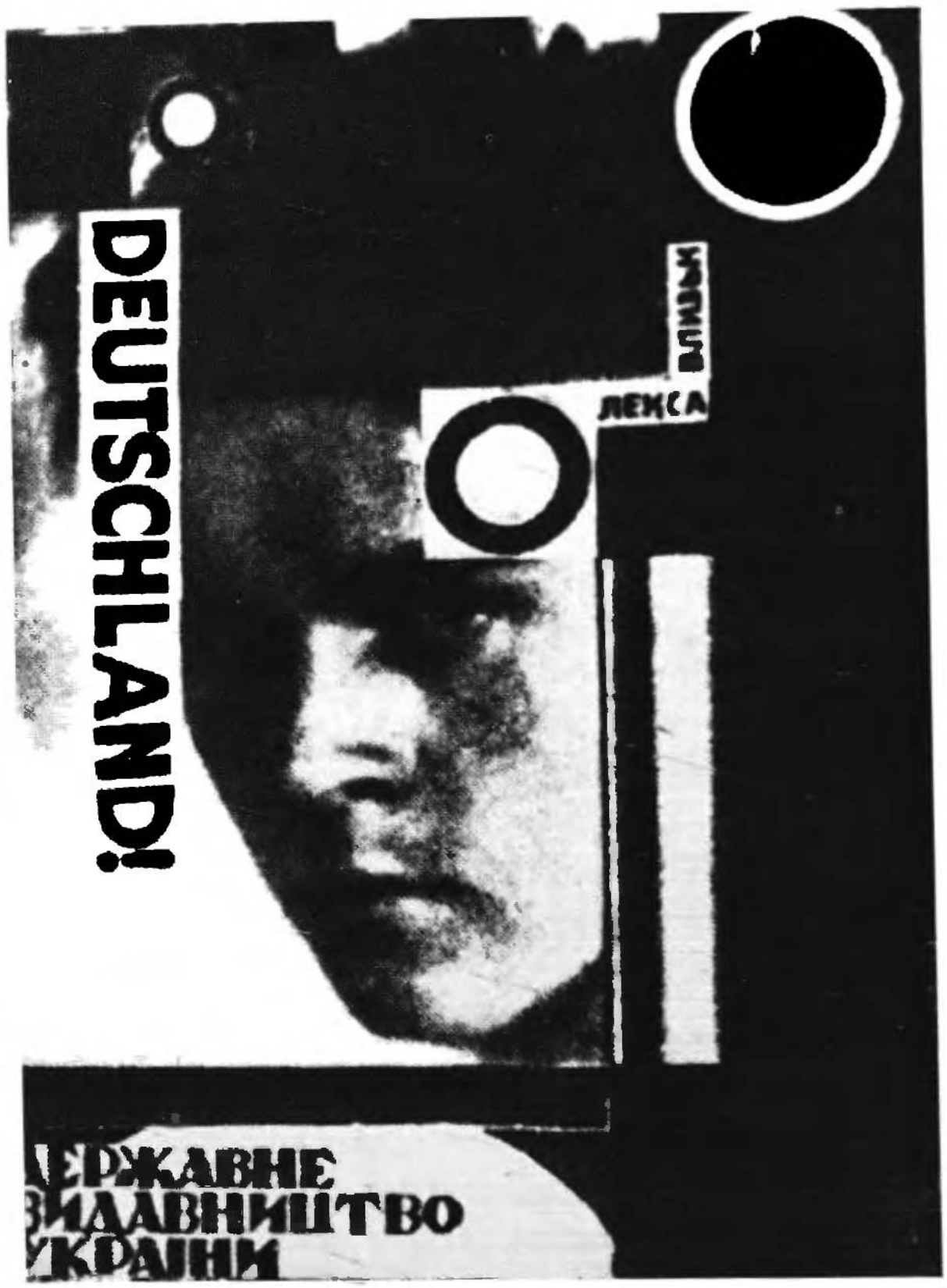


Figure 2-3. Oleksander Vlyz'ko, Cover Design for *Hoch Deutschland*, a Book of Poems by Oleksa Vlyz'ko, 1929 *(Photograph from* Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii," *January 1930)*

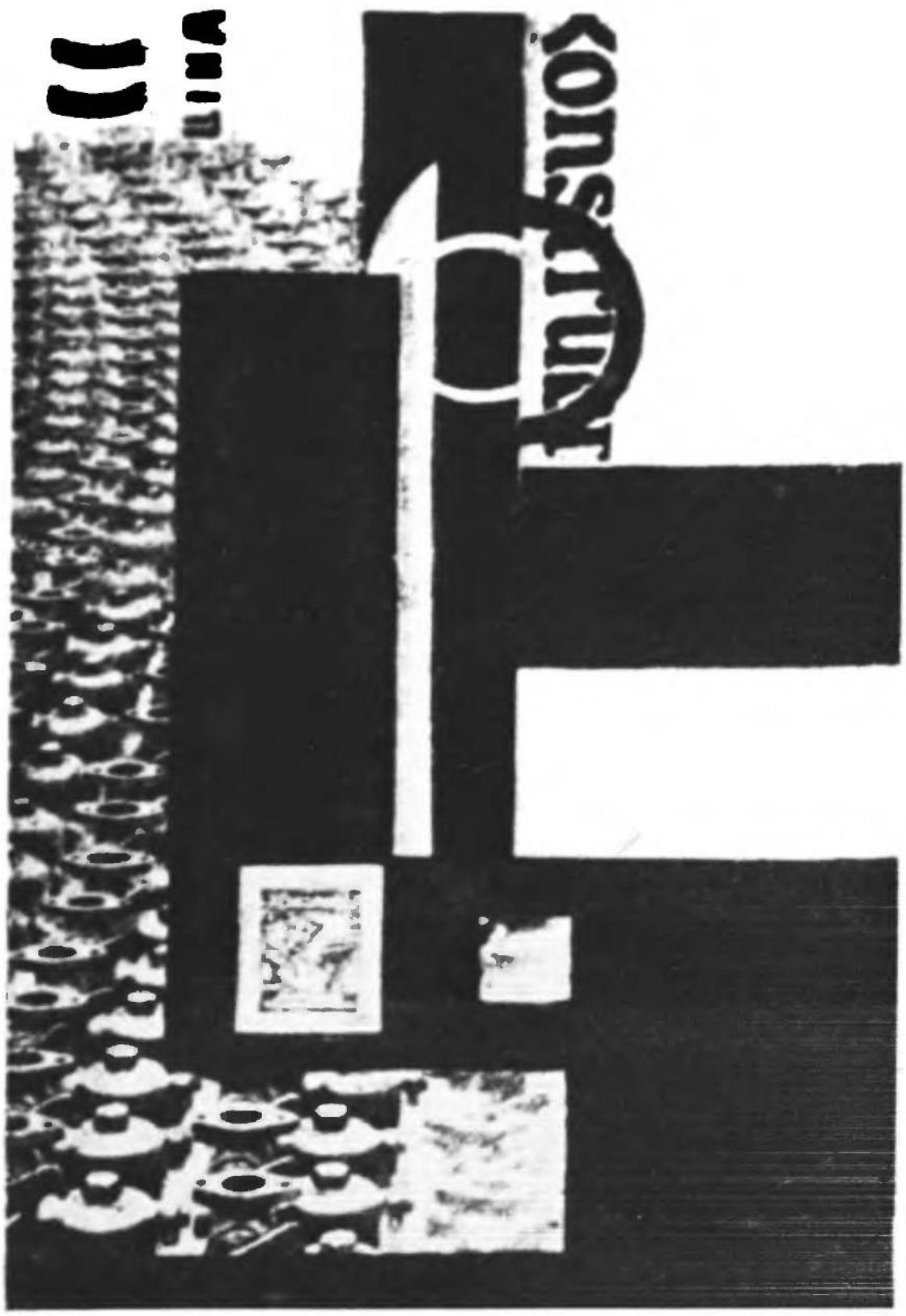


Figure 2-4. Oleksander Vlyz'ko, Cover Design for a Book of Poems Entitled *Konstruktor* [Constructor] *(Kharkiv: State Publishing House of Ukraine, ca. 1929)*

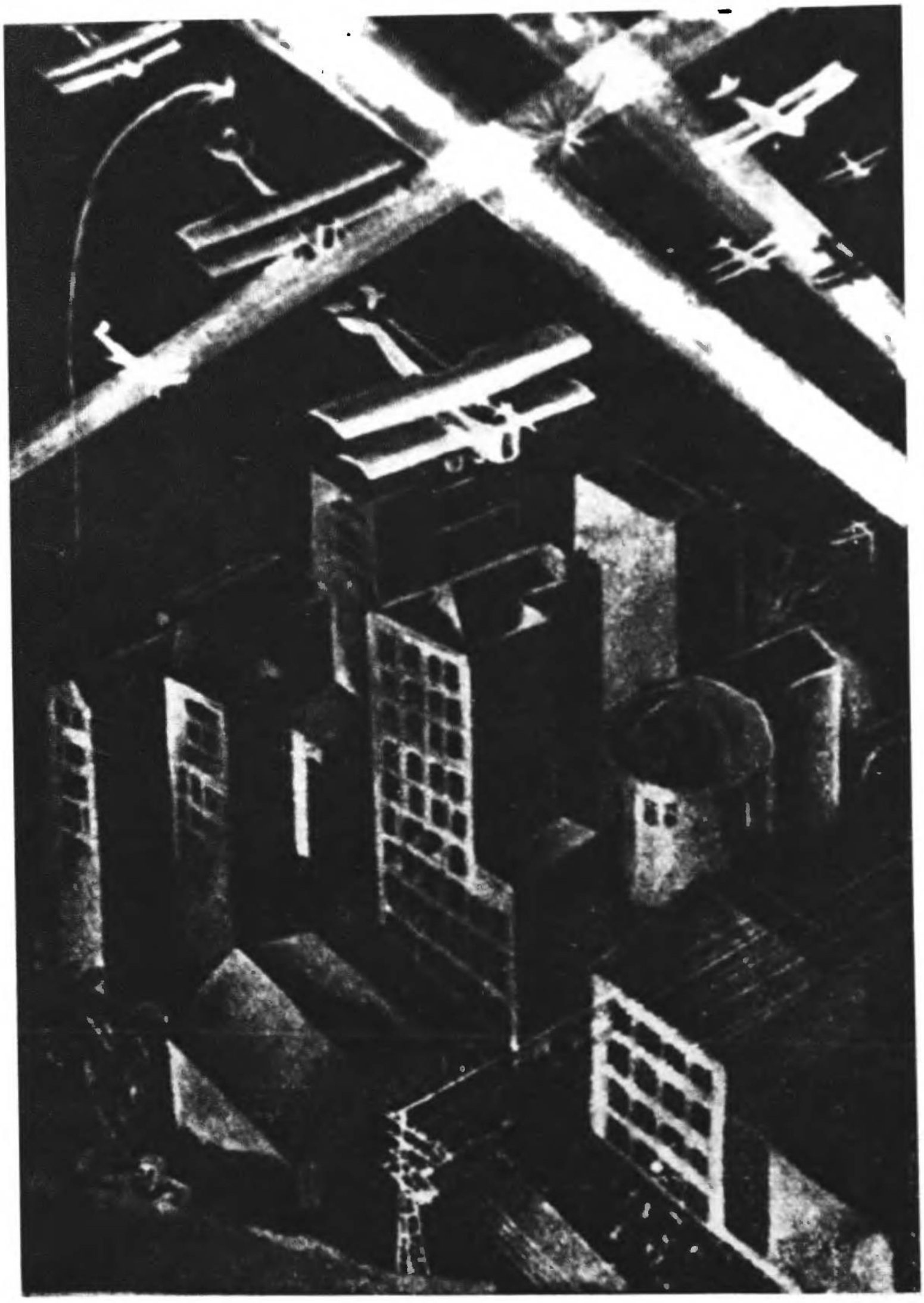


Figure 2-5. Yu. Sadylenko, *Lubok*, ca. 1929
(Photograph from Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii," *January 1930)*

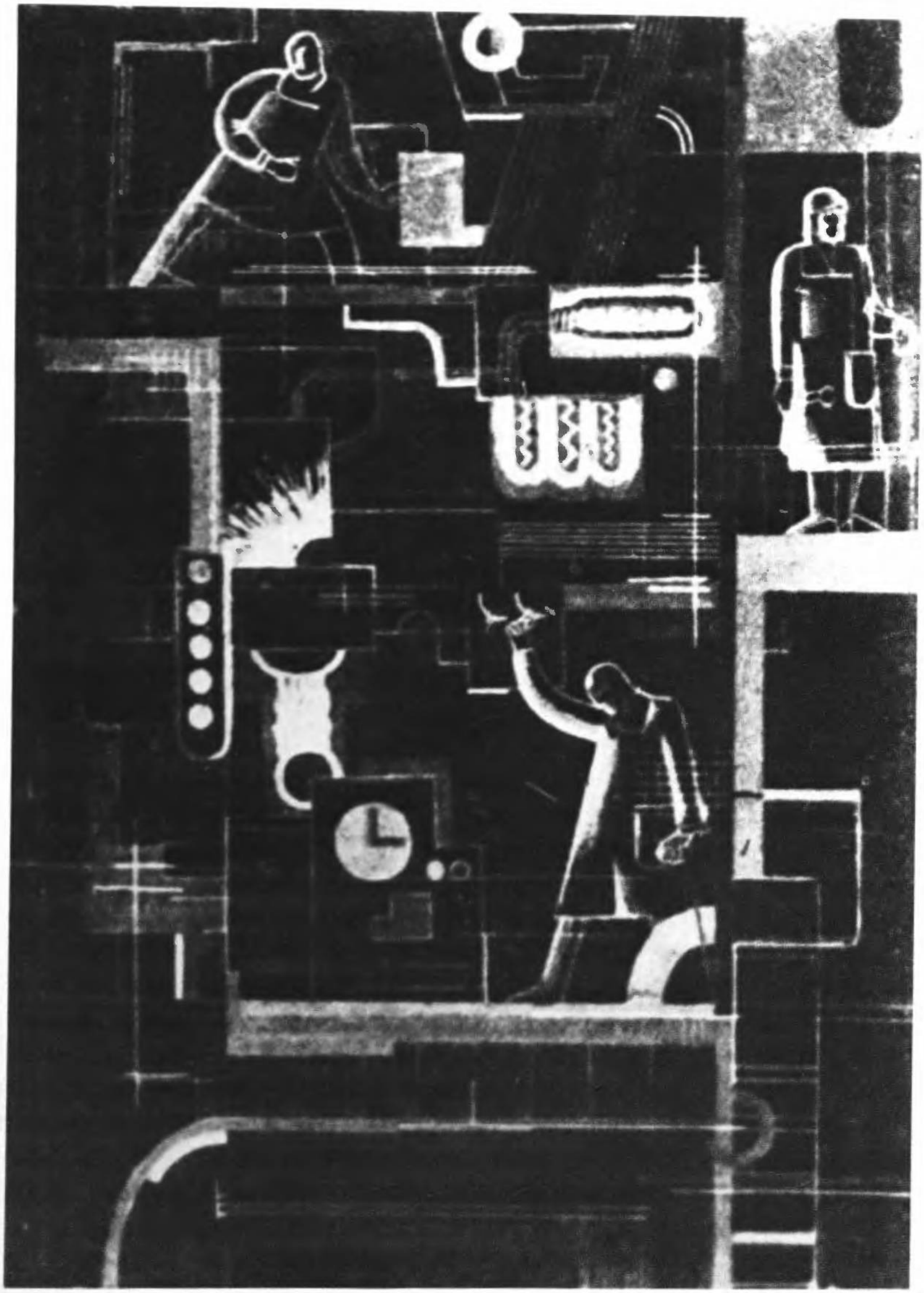


Figure 2-6. Yu. Sadylenko, *Electra*, ca. 1929
(Photograph from Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii," *January 1930)*

Figure 2-7. Vasyl' Ovchynnikov, *The Typist*, ca. 1929
(Photograph from Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii," *January 1930)*

Figure 2-8. P. Holubiatnykiv, *Airplane*, ca. 1929
(Photograph from Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii," *January 1930)*

Figure 2-9. M. Treskin, *A Path in the Mountains*, ca. 1929
(Photograph from Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii," *January 1930)*

Figure 2-10. Yu. Oleksiienko, *The Miner*, ca. 1929 *(Photograph from* Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii," *January 1930)*

Figure 2-11. Yu. Oleksiienko, *Decadent Poet*, ca. 1929 *(Photograph from* Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi generatsii." *January 1930)*

encourage a full-fledged revivification of various formalist strains of modern Western art while simultaneously attacking the outmoded realist and romantic tendencies of past artistic traditions. The most productive result of this expressed intention was Malevich's series of articles on the theory and practice of French Cubism, Italian Futurism, and his own advances in Suprematism and analyses of artists such as Cézanne, Braque, and Gris. Malevich's writings on New Art were intended to offer a survey of the evolution of modern art beginning with Cézanne. This study of formalist experimentation presented in a series of articles in *Nova generatsiia* was continued in *Avangard al'manakh*, where Malevich ultimately drew a correlation between early purely formal pursuits in New Art with its present-day proletarian significance. The editors of *Nova generatsiia*, who frequently included their editorial view on the contents page under the listing of new contributions, introduced Malevich's series of articles thus:

> The distinction of Malevich — the founder of Suprematism — is his experimental research work in the realm of painterly culture. Next to other groups of "leftists" who experimented with establishing the basic premises of the painterly form, Suprematism was successful to put forth most strongly (sometimes even resolving) a series of issues regarding the structure of color and form (weight, statics, dynamics).[72]

Malevich's series of lectures which he had previously compiled for publication under the title *New Art* had been rejected by his Russian affiliates. He was able to publish them in a twelve-part series in *Nova generatsiia* during 1928–30.[73] The purpose of Malevich's twelve-part series of essays or lectures was to carry out a brief analysis of some of the major trends in New Art, an artistic process classified as beginning with Cézanne's late period, followed by the "isms" of modern art.[74]

In addition to Malevich's writings, the highly experimental method of expanded vision of Mikhail Matyushin (1861–1934) was explained in *Nova generatsiia* for the first time in an exclusive article written under the title, "An Attempt at a New Sensation of Space" (see appendix C). Matyushin and Malevich had been in artistic collaboration since the production of the major Futurist spectacle, the opera *Victory over the Sun*. Their mutual activities continued well into the 1920s. However, after 1925 (having been discredited by their countrymen and condemned by some of the very institutions in Russia which they helped to establish) the two of them, along with a score of others, including the theoretician, Aleksei Gan (1889–1942), could no longer publish in Russia and were forced to find a new outlet for their ideas. In this regard, *Nova generatsiia* served as the only remaining citadel in the battle against strict Party intervention in artistic affairs. Moreover, Malevich's contacts with German artists are said to have been one of the reasons for his arrest in 1930.[75] It is not surprising, therefore, that after his return from

Germany in 1927 his only immediate option was to publish in *Nova generatsiia* which still continued to cultivate contact with the West. It was also at this time that Malevich came to the Ukraine to lecture at the Kiev Art Institute. In a sense, Malevich had come full circle: he returned to the Ukraine equipped with theories on the formal aspects of the art of painting, the formulation of which he had begun two decades earlier during his youth spent in the environs of Kiev.[76] Malevich, in fact, was in Kiev to witness his last published article, "Architecture, Studio Painting, and Sculpture," go to print in *Avangard al'manakh*. One of the last exhibitions of Malevich's works planned after he fell into disfavor with his own government was also to have been held in Kiev, but the event never materialized.[77]

Malevich's synopsis of the rapid flux of modern art starting with Cubism, moving through Futurism and Suprematism, and culminating in the functional demands of Constructivism was an important contribution toward the understanding of artistic modernism in the Ukraine. The increasing ranks of avant-garde artists in the Ukraine came under careful scrutiny on the part of the New Generation, and prompted the need for some kind of hierarchical classification of the current artistic status quo. Malevich summarized the situation by identifying two camps of artists as follows: "Some followed the line of purely painterly values, and of their sensations according to one or another of the formulae of imitative expression, whilst the others turned toward utilitarian functionalism. We called the former the group of spatial painting, the latter—Constructivists, functionalists, utilitarians."[78]

Malevich's comment, expressed during the transitional period between the first and formal phase of the Ukrainian avant-garde and the second, expedient and functionalist stage, marked the modification which came about in the Ukrainian vanguard with the change of political destiny. Hence, Malevich's articles in *Nova generatsiia* acquired much importance for the Ukrainian avant-garde. What Malevich had been describing in his series of twelve articles had already been accomplished by Panfuturism. This Ukrainian outpost in the tumultuous cavalcade of modern artistic "isms" blurred (if it did not erase) the borders between Futurism and Constructivism. Partially a result of the global aspirations of Panfuturism, on a practical level, this process was also related to the exchange of artistic ideas between East and West. The succeeding chapters will map the process of this artistic fusion in its varied manifestations.

Part Two: The Painted Image

3

The Beginnings of Formalism

An interchange of artistic ideas with the West, mainly through exhibition activity, began as early as 1897–98 when the Association of Young French Artists held a series of exhibitions in Kharkiv. This group offered the Kharkiv art circles an opportunity to witness and familiarize themselves with current works of French art.[1] That the local art was in touch with developments in Western Europe was especially conspicuous in Kharkiv, since it was the most eastern location to show impressive modernist artistic activity. The tendency of the new generation of Ukrainian artists toward a synthesis of the arts, as well as their determined effort to keep abreast of current developments in Western European art, was made evident by various artistic groups and experimental teaching, and by the kinds of publications known to have been circulating among the artists.

A recognition of this fact occurred in 1906, when the Association of Kharkiv Artists was formed to unify the artistic forces of Kharkiv and "to become for Kharkiv that Kunstverein which we see in the less populated cities of Western Europe, but which is still lacking in Kharkiv as a cultural center."[2] To achieve its aim the Association of Kharkiv Artists subscribed to such journals as *The Studio* (London) and *Art et décoration* (Paris),[3] in addition to having access to Russian journals with a consistently Western bias, such as *Apollon* of St. Petersburg. The Association lasted through 1916 and became the initial core of Kharkiv modernism. David Burliuk belonged to the group, as did the major newcomer to the avant-garde scene, Vasyl' Yermilov. Lesser known figures who were responsible for molding the avant-garde—albeit in an indirect manner in this distant region—were trained academicians: M. R. Pestrikov, A. P. Beketov, and A. M. Liubimov, the future director of the Kharkiv Art Institute (an institution similar in its progressive directions to the Kiev Art Institute).

Before the Kharkiv Institute was formed, the training of Kharkiv artists took place under still rather rudimentary conditions. In 1869, a breakthrough was initiated by the private art school founded by Maria D. Raevs'ka-Ivanova (1840–1912),[4] who first studied painting in Dresden and then at the St.

Petersburg Academy of Arts. When, in 1868, she was awarded the title of "painter" from the Academy, she became the very first woman in the history of that institution to receive the distinction.[5] Throughout her life, Raevs'ka-Ivanova demonstrated a deeply felt concern for propagating an artistic awareness in both the community and in the family setting. In 1879, in concurrence with this interest, she published *An Alphabet of Painting for the Family and the School.*[6] But her greatest claim to fame was the Raevs'ka-Ivanova School of Drawing and Painting.

The school was at first entirely dependent on her personal financing, with some support from local Kharkiv citizens who shared Raevs'ka-Ivanova's concern for the arts. In the early years of the school's existence, therefore, Raevs'ka-Ivanova not only administered the school herself, but took on teaching duties as well. In time, her supporters assumed bureaucratic responsibility, allowing her finally to teach full-time. Just before her death, the Raevs'ka-Ivanova School fell under municipal jurisdiction and was renamed the Kharkiv City School of Drawing and Painting.[7] Shortly thereafter, the St. Petersburg Academy took the Kharkiv school under its wing and implemented a quasi-academic curriculum of study, including such traditional courses as anatomical drawing and sketching from plaster ornaments, masks, and plaster figures. In addition, a number of classes ranging from painting from nature to a drawing class "of singular planes and from geometric models" was also incorporated.[8]

In 1912, the former Raevs'ka-Ivanova school was again officially restructured and renamed the Kharkiv Higher Art School, later to become the progressive Kharkiv Art Institute.[9] Under the direction of A. M. Liubimov, the Kharkiv Higher Art School acquired a special significance in the evolution of the avant-garde in Kharkiv. Generally speaking, the prime movers of the local avant-garde art movements emanated from this school. Moreover, as members of the Association of Kharkiv Artists, they took part in its annual exhibitions.[10]

In addition to the above-mentioned official bodies of artistic education, many other experimental groups also activated the Kharkiv art scene and promoted avant-garde ideas in and around the city. By 1910, workshops such as the Studio of E. A. Steinberg and A. N. Grote were regarded as being in the vanguard because of their program to familiarize Kharkiv students with current trends in art.[11] Eduard Steinberg received his training at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, after which he came to live in Kharkiv. Grote had studied in Paris under Matisse, and often sent his paintings to the West. In 1911, the artist A. M. Zagonov (Steinberg's friend, who also attended the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture) began to direct the Kharkiv Studio-Workshop. Later it came to be known as the "Studio of Steinberg, Zagonov, and Grote," and was likened to "a city of students."

In general, the Studio of Steinberg, Zagonov, and Grote, located on Gospitalnaia Street in Kharkiv (today Maiakovsky Street), emphasized mainly formal techniques and the use of materials. Steinberg, for instance, was absorbed by the use of tempera, especially after the recent import to Kharkiv of a particular brand-name of casein tempera called "Boticelli." One of his major projects during this period, in fact, was the execution of a mural frieze in a round auditorium using the new medium.[12] Steinberg took part in yet another informal studio in Kharkiv where he conducted lessons in drawing from nude models. This studio was given the nomenclature *Zelena sova* [Green Owl] and it was located in the second-floor apartment of Boleslav Tsybys at 39 Chernishevsky Street. Artists gathered here not only for practice sessions in drawing, but also for artistic tête-à-têtes.

Kharkiv was teeming with still other special art workshops, private studios, schools, and groups. In 1907, when the Kharkiv artist Evgenii Andreevich Agafonov[13] completed his studies at the St. Petersburg Academy of Art (where Repin counted him as one of his best students),[14] Agafonov's father opened an atelier for him in Kharkiv. Agafonov worked there, and in early 1910 opened instruction to others. The studio came to be called the *Golubaia liliia* [Blue Lily] and was located not far from the Green Owl at 33 Chernishevsky Street. Many students converged upon him to receive training, as he was considered by his contemporaries to be an excellent painter and draftsman. Some of those attending Agafonov's workshop included D. P. Gordeev, Pavel Korotov, Vasily Prokopovich (De-Grie), Kuz'ma Storozh, Alesha Pochtennyi, K. Storozhychenko, and the little-known painters Orgeniakov and Shcherbakov. In addition, Zelenan (an engineer) and Fedir Nadezhdan (captain of a long-distance swimming team) also frequented the studio.[15] One of Agafonov's most famous students was Maria Mykhailivna Syniakova (b.1898), who soon thereafter became the main catalyst for introducing Futurism to Kharkiv artists. In 1912, Agafonov closed the Blue Lily Studio and left for Moscow. Upon his return to Kharkiv during the winter of 1913–14, he began to frequent the *Budiak* [Thistle], a workshop organized by D. P. Gordeev and attended by artists such as Syniakova, M. Fedorov, and O. Kokel'.[16] A second group, *Vykus* [Nibble], met in the same building where Thistle was organized on Kolodezhna Street (presently Moskalevna Street) and held meetings on days alternate to those of the Thistle meetings. The Nibble had a reputation of being rowdy and boisterous. Its orientation was mostly literary in nature, but artists were welcome. V. Yermilov and A. Liubimov, the director of the Kharkiv Higher Art School, were frequently in attendance.

In general, the Kharkiv artistic community in the early teens represented a kind of bohemia full of unabashed experimentation. The most talked-about studio in Kharkiv which revelled in this reputation was the studio, *Kol'tso* [Ring]. Dimitrii Petrovich Gordeev was one of the major activists in the

Kharkiv Ring, along with artists N. Savvin, and M. Fedorov; it also included the active participation of Steinberg, Zagonov, Grote, and Agafonov. The Studio Ring, already active in 1911,[17] sponsored frequent exhibitions, and was considered to be the nexus of Futurist activity in Kharkiv. The artists of Ring advanced the idea of Rondism, a concept which stressed the aspect of construction in art rather than composition—a distinction Malevich was later to highlight in his essays on New Art for *Nova generatsiia*. Inherent in this notion was the aspect of movement; Gordeev, for instance, was considered to be a Rondist for the reason that in many of his works, his forms were constructed, as it were, in a circular manner.[18] Maria Syniakova also worked in a Rondist manner in an untitled watercolor of ca. 1914–16 (fig. 3-1). The predominant form underlying this rather exotic scene of a paradisiacal environment is, indeed, an ovoid. The most emphatic presence of that shape occupies the central portion of the painting, where in gestures and body positions the figures assume the effect of petallike curves. The flower motifs linking the separate groups of figures, as if in a tapestry weave, continue to repeat the inherent rounded structure underlying all forms. There is, in effect, little in the painting to suggest methods of composition. Rather, a craftsmanlike, decorative patterning, based on curved motifs, identifies the constructive spirit of the work.

Inasmuch as the Syniakov family was directly involved in the growth of early Kharkiv Futurism, it would be worthwhile to examine the climate which nurtured that development. Mykhailo Syniakov, the head of the family, was a wealthy Ukrainian jewelry merchant of kozak lineage on his mother's side. His wife was of Russian extraction and came from a family of composers. She bore nine Syniakov children. Their estate, Krasna Poliana [Beautiful Glade],[19] located outside of Kharkiv near the village of Chuhuyev (Repin's birthplace), was an outpost for artists and poets such as the Burliuks, Vladimir Maiakovsky, and Velimir Khlebnikov. Khlebnikov wrote poems about the Syniakov girls, with whom both he and the writer Boris Pasternak were in love at different times. Grigorii Petnikov, the Russian Futurist poet, eventually married Vera Syniakova; and Nadia, another sister, became Pasternak's wife. Oksana Syniakova married another Russian Futurist poet, Nikolai Aseev. Krasna Poliana was not only a place where the Russian Futurists gathered in the summers to work—during the years of Revolution it also became their hiding place. The Syniakov sisters recalled, for instance, that when the White Guard approached Kharkiv, many artists and poets (including Khlebnikov, who supported the Red Army) hid out at Krasna Poliana, where they remained relatively unnoticed and secluded out in the country. The summers at Krasna Poliana were filled with much creative contact as well as output, both from a literary as well as an artistic standpoint. Evenings consisted of declamations of poetry and music. Zina, another of the Syniakov sisters, was a

Figure 3-1. Maria Syniakova, Untitled, ca. 1914–1916
(Private collection)

singer. Maria illustrated and designed covers for Russian Futurist publications. In the summer of 1914, Krasna Poliana was the birthplace of the Russian Futurist group Liren' [Lyroon].[20]

The major initiators of Liren' activity were Grigorii Petnikov (b. 1894), Nikolai Aseev (1898-1963), and Bohdan Gordeev, known as Bozhidar (1884-1914). Petnikov, the son of a railroad employee, was a student of music in Kharkiv. For a brief period, he pursued Slavic studies at the University of Moscow and then returned to Kharkiv to receive a law degree. The Liren' publishing enterprise was his brainchild.[21] Bozhidar (the brother of D. P. Gordeev, active in the Blue Lily and Ring workshops in Kharkiv) intended to study philosophy at Kharkiv University but committed suicide almost immediately after Liren' was formed. He was considered highly talented by his peers and had already demonstrated much artistic creativity and poetic innovation. One of Bozhidar's poetic traits was the creation of words spelled with a mixture of Cyrillic and Latin letters, a feature which, as we have seen, Semenko himself fostered through Panfuturism and incorporated independently in his poems. N. Aseev, the third literary member of the Liren' group, was a Russian poet who, by his own admission, found himself in the welcome surroundings of Krasna Poliana only because of some quaint attraction for the "provinces."

Syniakova was obviously the artist in the group. In 1914, when Liren' published its first collection (*Zor*, a compilation of Aseev's "zaum" or transrational poetry), Syniakova handprinted and lithographed the texts. Aseev's *Zor* and Bozhidar's *Buben* [Tambourine] were the first publishing ventures undertaken by Liren' to be printed in Kharkiv, with special lithographic illustrations by Syniakova. Other works created by Syniakova included *Porosl' solntsa* [Sunsprouts] and illustrations to the Russian journal *Strelets* [Archer]. In addition, she was a signatory to the Futurist manifesto, *Truba Marsiian* [Trumpet of the Martians] issued by the Futurist colony at Krasna Poliana in 1916.

The Ukraine served a purpose yet unacknowledged in the dissemination of Russian modernism, especially in its early stages. Many first collections of Russian Futurist poetry were published in Kherson and Kharkiv, despite the fact that these publications featured a Moscow or St. Petersburg imprint. The proponents of Russian Futurism who worked at Krasna Poliana sought inspiration "in the provinces." This, of course, was a direction opposite from that taken by Semenko and his Kiev cohorts who formed Ukrainian Futurism. As can be imagined, the quaintness of Ukrainian folk culture and the expression "the provinces" were concepts antithetical to the basic premises of Ukrainian Futurism. Although contemporaneous, Semenko's Kvero-Futurism was very different in spirit from the kind of Futurism propagated at Krasna Poliana by the Russians. The Liren' members, for instance, harbored

the premise that intellect hindered spontaneity and direct perception of the world. Their manifesto, *Letorei* (1915), fostered the use of archaic words for poetry, giving the justification that these words were a link with the veracity and purity of man's existence dating back to prehistoric epochs. Furthermore, they took delight in crude provincialisms. Liren' maintained, for example, that the life of the "living word" was "only in the combination of sounds which remain with people for centuries and reveal themselves suddenly in the harmonious roots in the tongues of various races."[22] By comparison, the Kiev Kvero also sought to find a universal soul (which was one of the reasons for the use of Esperanto among the Panfuturists), but in contrast to the ethos prevalent among the members of Liren', Kvero-Futurism pointedly strove to make a break with the past and especially with folk expression in art. This was, in fact, one of the major reasons why the Panfuturists did not readily sanction the work of certain groups of Ukrainian artistic modernism, particularly the Boichukists of Kiev.

The Boichukists followed the ideas of the artist Mykhailo L'vovych Boichuk (1882–1939?), who propagated an art of monumental painting which evoked the asceticism of color and line to be found in the ancient mural tradition of Byzantium, the Kievan Rus' period, and Renaissance tempera paintings of the early Italian Renaissance, as well as Ukrainian Galician icons of the fifteenth through eighteenth centuries. One of the original faculty of the Ukrainian Academy of Art since 1917, Boichuk conducted a workshop in the Academy where, together with his students, he explored the technique of tempera and fresco and set out on a program of monumental wall-painting in the major cities of the Ukraine, especially Kiev and Odessa. In 1921, Boichuk led a brigade of his students to Kharkiv with an assignment to decorate the capital city in preparation for the upcoming Convention of the Soviets. This was a significant moment in the history of the Ukrainian artistic avant-garde, for it represented the union of two major centers of Ukrainian art—Kiev and Kharkiv—in a mutual search for the rules of construction in art to align the artist with modern artistic expression. For a brief moment, two giants of the Ukrainian avant-garde—Yermilov of Kharkiv and Boichuk of Kiev—were brought together, which ultimately led to a synthesis of their theoretical views.

But while Yermilov's work was held in high esteem by the Panfuturists, they regarded the form and the manner employed by Boichuk as highly objectionable. One of the main reasons they rejected Boichuk's art was that the prevailing image in his paintings was the peasant (fig. 3-2). Traditionally, as the main element of a basically agricultural population, the peasant symbolized the nation. Such a convention was clearly contrary to the ways of the Panfuturists. A similar instance can be cited in the work of Diego Rivera who also depicted Mexican peasants in his murals. For both artists, the figures, though humble in their existence, were always displayed as

Figure 3-2. Mykhailo Boichuk, Untitled, n.d.

monumental forms. The simplicity of their life, the cyclicality of their labors, and the quiet integrity of their entire being was made so important in the work of Boichuk and his followers that the concept became grand with spiritual reverence. This notion is consistent with the rest of Boichuk's work, for his artistic method again and again reinforced a direct connection with traditional religious art: he not only revived for modern Ukrainian art the ancient techniques of tempera and fresco painting, but also reinstated the methodical workshop methods used by icon painters for generations. The Panfuturists vehemently attacked the Boichukists not only for resuscitating artistic relations with outmoded artistic traditions, but for perpetuating the role of antiquated institutions such as the church (viewed by the Futurists as an outdated norm in any society). The "school" of Boichukism was especially criticized for having the support of the L'viv Metropolitan of the Uniate Church, Andrei Sheptyts'kyi, who initially provided an art scholarship for Mykhailo Boichuk to begin his artistic training in the West. The opportunity, well taken advantage of, gave rise to the group of Boichuk's followers who, in 1910, were named Neo-Byzantinists by Guillaume Apollinaire. The Panfuturists, on the other hand, regarded Boichuk's art as nothing more than church art, full of religious mysticism which had no place in a modern, revolutionary society.[23]

To draw parallels between the Constructivist work of Vasyl' Yermilov (figs. 1-5 and 1-6), and the art of Boichuk appears to be somewhat incongruous at first. An affinity of artistic aims between the two (recognized at the time) only becomes clear when considering the intensity of these artists' interests both in the process or craft of making art, and in understanding the rules of artistic construction in the past as well as in the present. For the Panfuturists this could only mean that the artists such as the Boichukists could not really be producing a revolutionary art, since their emphasis on construction was misplaced somewhere in the medieval systems of craftsmen's guilds. Hence, in their eagerness to abandon historical epochs, the uncompromising Panfuturists could not reconcile the fact that artists should be concerned with structure in old art in order to create new art.[24] Semenko's more citified inclinations—his preference for works more urban in flavor with an almost total subjugation of subject or narrative content to form—could not make room for Boichuk's brand of modern art, just as the Futurism of Liren', which sought the "primal essence" of art and was heavily immersed in the surrounding rural folk culture, was also loathsome to the Kvero-Futurists.

In the case of Syniakova, however, even though her subjects were not at all urban, the redeeming quality of her work was that she encompassed the universal artistic aspirations which the Panfuturists boasted. Syniakova studied in the art studios of Kharkiv and Moscow, and was a member of *Soiuz molodezhi* [Union of Youth], a diverse society of artists in St. Petersburg. She

also traveled widely to Germany and Central Asia, the influence of which became markedly noticeable in her work. In addition to these broad experiences, many of her works, mostly watercolor, were suffused with a powerful folk spirit combined with an evocative "exotic" quality reminiscent of Henri Matisse and Paul Gauguin. In Syniakova's paintings, the presence of long-haired, tropical-looking women and the depiction of virginal forests and uncultivated terrain created an aura which was unmistakably "primal" but also universal in conception. These works are bound, at least in spirit if not by any definite tribal or iconographic coincidences, to Gauguin's Tahitian pastoral scenes.

In the central vertical area of two untitled, but compositionally paired works (figs. 3-3, 3-4), for instance, is a standing nude female figure, with long dark hair hanging loose down her back and mysterious almond eyes who is surrounded by ferns and other foliage. A sense of virginity and innocence pervade both paintings, much like the ambiance of Gauguin's Oceanic landscapes. This is further intensified by the penetrating stare of the nude female (seen from both the front in one painting and the back in another) as she gazes beyond the viewer without taunting him or being embarrassed by his presence. In the space beyond, reclining figures emerge out of a forest environment. An idyllic no-man's land is created by the sweet, quiet deer sitting reposefully amidst the foliage. Along with the deer, other animals emerge, including mules and cows; horses are given special prominence.

The image of the horse left an indelible mark of childhood associations for Syniakova, for it was only by horse that one could reach Krasna Poliana (after taking the train from Kharkiv to Mokhnoia station). Therefore, animal and female rider imagery were often depicted in many of Syniakova's works.

The spirit of Gauguin or Matisse present in Syniakova's watercolors here was most likely derived from her viewing the collections of Ivan Morozov and Sergei Shchukin in Moscow, collections with which the new generation of the avant-garde had become increasingly familiar. A strong Matissian element is especially evident in the dark outlining of shapes and figures, and in the wavy, fluid lines of Syniakova's forms. Even the position of the ploddingly posed nude in the center of both compositions mirrors Matisse's nudes. In the case of the reclining figure just above the bathing pool on the right hand side of both works, one gets the sense that Syniakova is responding specifically to Matisse's *Blue Nude* of 1907. References to Matisse's *Joy of Life* of 1905–6 are also undeniable, as this work offers similarly posed figures in a landscape. Furthermore, in the overall decorativism of her compositions, Syniakova's paintings also bear some of the same ethereal aura elicited by Matisse's Algerian works. Overtones of Matissian *joie de vivre* are especially sensed in the painting *Harem* (fig. 3-5), one of the few signed by Syniakova. Here, the flat decorative patterns of the floriated interior resemble a drop curtain; and in

Figure 3-3. Maria Syniakova, Untitled, ca. 1914–1916
(Private collection)

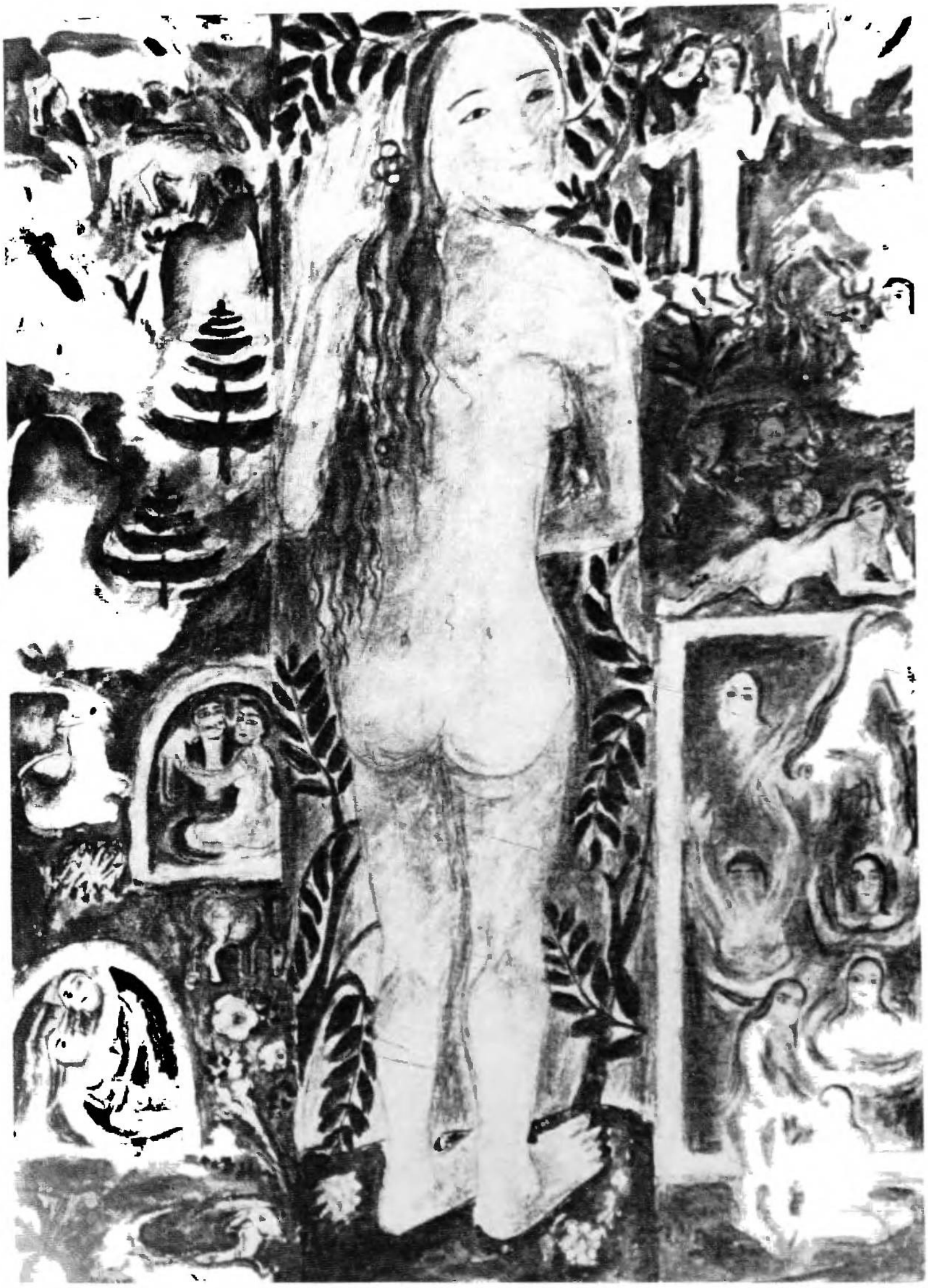


Figure 3-4. Maria Syniakova, Untitled, ca. 1914–1916
(Private collection)

Figure 3-5. Maria Syniakova, *Harem*, ca. 1920
(Private collection)

the absolute dismissal of a designated "stage space" in which the action takes place, the simplified flat patterns of the flowers and the silhouetted and/or frontal figures reflect the visual organization of Caucasian tapestries. Line, as the inherent formal element in Syniakova's paintings, delineates contours and separates color masses, much like the yarn which weaves in and out of a tapestry. That same line serves an essentially painterly function in this work, keeping the color flowing throughout. Syniakova's decorative use of color was also partially derived from her intense fascination with Ukrainian folk art, as she herself admitted. Its most effective use was in her ceramics.

From the love of the crude and primitive to a kind of Asiatic and native flair for ornament, Syniakova's work can be said to embody (at least to some degree) the mood of newly emergent Neo-Primitivism, a direction which had come into its own idiom around 1908, but which was made even more popular with the publication in 1913 of Aleksander (Oleksander) Shevchenko's theory on the new direction.[25]

A. Shevchenko, who lived from 1882–1948 (and who should not be confused with the national poet Taras Shevchenko), was Kharkiv-born and Kharkiv-trained. Although he studied in the Paris studio of Carrière (1905–6), his early travels through the Caucasus had a considerable impact on the formulation of his theory of the Eastern or Asiatic origin of Slavic art and its disorientation from the West, which he wrote about in his booklet entitled *Neo-primitivizm*. Shevchenko's awareness of Western notions was vital in his assessment of the East-West dichotomy in art. In 1913, when he published another essay on *Principles of Cubism and Other Contemporary Movements in Painting in All Epochs and Nations*, Shevchenko pointed to the richness of artistic stylization in Egyptian and Byzantine art, upon which, he maintained, contemporary Russian Cubo-Futurism only modeled itself.[26] This traditionalist view was an idea favored by the Boichukists, although they evolved toward it independently and bore no links with Shevchenko nor with the Neo-Primitivists. In addition and by contrast, the Boichukists worked alongside Western modernists, whereas Shevchenko demonstrated his allegiance only to the East and actively took part in anti-Western shows such as the Donkey's Tail and Target, both of which became platforms for the vociferance of deliberate denial of European tendencies in Russian art. It should be noted, however, that A. Shevchenko, in proselytizing the artistic practices endemic to his native culture, laid particular emphasis on primitive forms of art, including the icon. This work was appropriate to bolster the naive and rudimentary aspects of art cultivated by the Liren' group. In every regard, such Russian Futurist directions—cultivated mainly in and around Kharkiv—were considered archaic and contrary to that which the Kvero-Futurists were hoping to attain.

There was, however, in Kharkiv, a rising sphere of like-minded artists whose cosmopolitan interests fused more readily with Kvero-Futurist inclinations. This new generation funneled its artistic verve into a modern art association which functioned with unfettered confidence, determination, and direction of purpose. This small group of artists (seven of them at the start) not only called themselves Futurists, the Ukrainian vanguard of Kharkiv, but conformed to this nomenclature in no uncertain terms. When the Union of Seven (Soiuz 'Semi') was formed in 1915, the members of the group—Mykola Myshchenko (1895–1960), Borys Kosariev (b. 1897), Volodymyr Bobryts'kyi (d.u.), Volodymyr Diakiv (d.u.), Mykola Kal'mykov (d.u.), Heorhii Tsapok (1896–1971), and Boleslav Tsybys (d.u.)—did not adopt the stubborn, anti-Western air of the Neo-Primitivists, although they did, nonetheless, maintain that, "In contradistinction to academic art cultivated in numerous centers toward which artists are drawn, Futurism can arise and develop anywhere, no matter where its ideas penetrate. No longer is it necessary to have a familiarity with the academic wisdom of Paris, Rome, and Munich—each Futurist artist holds the canons of his art within himself."[27] Indeed, these artists did not feel themselves secluded or isolated, nor did they seem to mind living outside a universally recognized major art center. They did not feel constrained by working in Kharkiv. Taking advantage of their unique situation, the Kharkiv Union of Seven saw itself "not as a provincial copy of the innovations of the capitals, but as a fully independent kernel of a new cultural-historical movement, beginning in Italy and already encompassing the entire world."[28] Within two years, the group expanded its membership to include three other artists: Alexander Gladkov (d.u.), Mané-Katz (b. 1894), and Yermilov.[29] The Kharkiv Higher Art School, as discussed earlier in this chapter, functioned as a link and common basis for most of the members of Kharkiv's Union of Seven, the majority of whom had at one time or another attended or had been associated with it.

The Union of Seven succeeded in unifying a number of other artists of Kharkiv, beginning with their first exhibition in 1917. The catalogue of this exhibition listed one hundred forty-two works by the original members of the group, with an additional seventy-three works contributed by other Kharkiv artists such as Karl Avotin, Yakov Bine, Teofil Hrudzinski, Avgust Dyryk, Ivan Ivanov, Vasyl' Kovalevs'kyi, Pavel Korotov, Yan Straut, Tiagus, and Evgenii Fedorov. These additional artists were relegated to a separate section in the catalogue.[30] Aleksander Gladkov and Yermilov also exhibited with this latter group, and the collector Miankal' showed embroideries gathered for his collection from Bukhara, Samarkand, Tashkent, and other places.

Although frequently referred to as a Cubo-Futurist group, the Union of Seven really went beyond such narrow limitations in their artistic activity. A

homogeneous stylistic quality did not pervade their work. So diverse were the members' individual styles and so varied were their technical pursuits that one would hardly suspect that the artists of the Union of Seven even belonged to the same artistic circle. Mané-Katz, for example, concentrated on regional subjects, especially themes from Jewish life in Kharkiv. Tsapok was interested in simple drawings with a sophisticated, cosmopolitan (and even American) content. Kosariev's collage constructions were juxtaposed with Bobryts'kyi's theatre design; Yermilov's reliefs were contrasted with two-dimensional "Cézanniste" paintings by Diakiv.

In 1918, the Union of Seven published an extravagant collection of the work of its members entitled *Sem' plius tri* [Seven Plus Three].[31] This handsome and impressively illustrated publication may be considered to be the peak of the Union of Seven's collective activity and one of the most important documents of early Kharkiv artistic modernism. Insofar as the collection contained such contrasting elements as Cubo-Futurist works and Persian carpets, it fused the most avant-garde with the most traditional, easel art with craft, the East with the West. This synthetic quality was heightened by an overall graphic sensibility reminiscent of Persian calligraphy and by a peculiar but distinctive script developed by Yermilov which he "built upon simple and clear proportions of the sections of letters" and made responsive to the epoch of industrialism. Valeriian Polishchuk, spokesman for the Constructive-Dynamists and Yermilov's biographer, described the "Yermilovian script" as being analogous to Elzevir printing.[32]

For Yermilov, the Elzevirian print had a special significance in that it graphically molded fluid Cyrillic letters into hard-edged Latin letter forms. This was a means of underscoring the synthetic and universal flavor of the Union of Seven and a merging of East and West in *Sem' plius tri*. The collection involved typographic considerations which unified the design of the cover with the contents presented within, including the title, the vignettes, and end-papers. Furthermore, in keeping with the functional exigencies of the period, it also maintained an "advertising" quality which immediately attracted the reader. The typography of *Sem' plius tri* was considered to be so refreshing and creative that it was reviewed in the newspapers as being a luxurious artistic publication, "something to which we have become unaccustomed due to the existing poor quality of typographic art."[33]

As diverse as were the interests of the Union of Seven, the artists were linked to each other in the philosophy of cultivating artistic freedom and individualism. In its syncretic quality and lack of uniform direction, it was a true manifestation of a vanguard of artists searching for modern expression by any means possible. Syniakova's quiet influence made an especial impact on the values established for modern art by the Union of Seven. Her contacts in the Union of Youth helped to spawn Futurism with Expressionist overtones

among her Kharkiv colleagues. Dr. Nikolai Kul'bin (1868–1917), friend of Syniakova and close collaborator to Khlebnikov, Maiakovsky, and the Burliuks, helped to organize the Union of Youth in 1909. He was a constant supporter of the avant-garde, and an avid sponsor and organizer of numerous exhibitions of modern art. Kul'bin's attitude toward the arts was that art should base itself on the freedom found in living things. In 1910 he wrote an influential essay on that theme and extolled the virtues of disharmony, which he saw as the most natural reflection of the way things are in nature. In his essay, "Free Art as the Basis of Life: Harmony and Dissonance in Nature," Kul'bin selected the medium of music to demonstrate how dissonance can lead to the most novel artistic creation. The wide range of interests demonstrated by the Union of Seven was a means of exploring these most natural means of artistic expression without attempting to fit into any kind of special mold. The members of the group adopted Kul'bin's notion of a "free and independent art,"[34] and took one of his poems for their motto:

> Let everything be—genuine.
> In music sound.
> In sculpture form in the strict sense.
> In word the values of nomenclature.
> In the new synthesis of art we
> know, where lie the seeds and where the peel.
> Painterly painting—that is
> the motto of a painter.
> And everything else—freedom.[35]

The sculptures of Union of Seven member Boleslav Tsybys, most evidently reflected this search for a common, free, and unsentimentalized basis for art among the Union of Seven. Tsybys attended the Krakow Academy in Poland, after which he traveled to America and exhibited there as a painter. While still in Kharkiv, however, he had executed several illustrations to Maiakovsky's works and was reputed to have both belonged to the Brotherhood of St. Luke and painted religious works.[36] Soon Tsybys set out to find mankind's primordial, pagan roots and to encompass them in his sculpture. He delved into the origins of the Slavs and became fascinated by the steppe culture of the southern Ukraine. His works were reminiscent of the stone female fertility figures *(kamiana baba)* which were scattered in abundance in the steppe regions of the Ukraine. In a sense, Tsybys was an archaist who studied the forms of ancient Slavic amulets and redefined them in a modernist idiom. His sculptures, generally monolithic in form and anthropomorphic in content, were composed spherically and angularly, never splintering the massive blocks from which he carved. The sculptural shapes rendered by Tsybys had the appearance of swelling from the ground upward

as if by their own power. The forces then would round out in the head of the figure and return downward back into the earth. Contemporary criticism of his work states that, "The blocks from which the sculptures are cut remain blocks even after being worked on. The material is not forced to fit the form; more than that—the form sometimes serves as the characteristic of the material, so that in some places, the waviness of the form imitates the striation of a tree."[37]

Looking at Tsybys's work, the viewer is confronted by a shape filled with striking steadiness and stark immobility. Tsybys never dismembered his statuary mass, and the composition was always based on a strict vertical backbone. As one critic remarked: "...the head everywhere is as if flowing into the body; nowhere are the extremities separated from the torso, nor one from another."[38] Tsybys's talent for solid composition revealed that exterior surface tension played a greater role than the interiorizing sentiment or soul in the figure. There was no penetration into the psyche of his anthropomorphic forms, just as there was no correlation with the surface lines of his forms with any interior substructure.

Construction was, of course, one of the key elements revealing the sources of novel formalist experimentation among the Union of Seven artists. While painters Mykola Kal'mykov and Mané-Katz, during their extended periods in Paris, looked to Cubism and Fauvism for new concepts in artistic handling, a practical source for artistic construction could also be found in the flat tapestry designs viewed by Union of Seven artists during their travels through Central Asia. Clearly, the inclusion of these objects from Miankal's collection in the Union's elegant compendium *Sem'plius tri* (fig. 3-6)[39] is the result of the Eastern interest first proliferated among the Neo-Primitivist thoughts of Shevchenko and the Caucasian travels of Syniakova, Shevchenko, Yermilov,[40] and others. In encompassing a "frame within a frame" pattern, the Central Asian rug maintained an extremely linear, almost graphic surface quality in its construction. At the same time, hard, angular edges are intermingled with semicurved ones. Carpets of this type, based on geometric figures and recurring colors, were readily adopted by people with primitive ideas of ornamentation. Consequently, for many centuries the designs of these rugs were copied repeatedly with only slight modifications. The idea of the timeless repetition of a single design was attractive to the Kharkiv Union of Seven artists, who sought a generational link with past and present culture.

Therefore, the Union of Seven artists fused what they distilled from the modern culture of the West with an impassioned absorption of the long-established tradition and culture of the East. Conventional theory and Western modernism—though learned and assimilated—were reinterpreted.

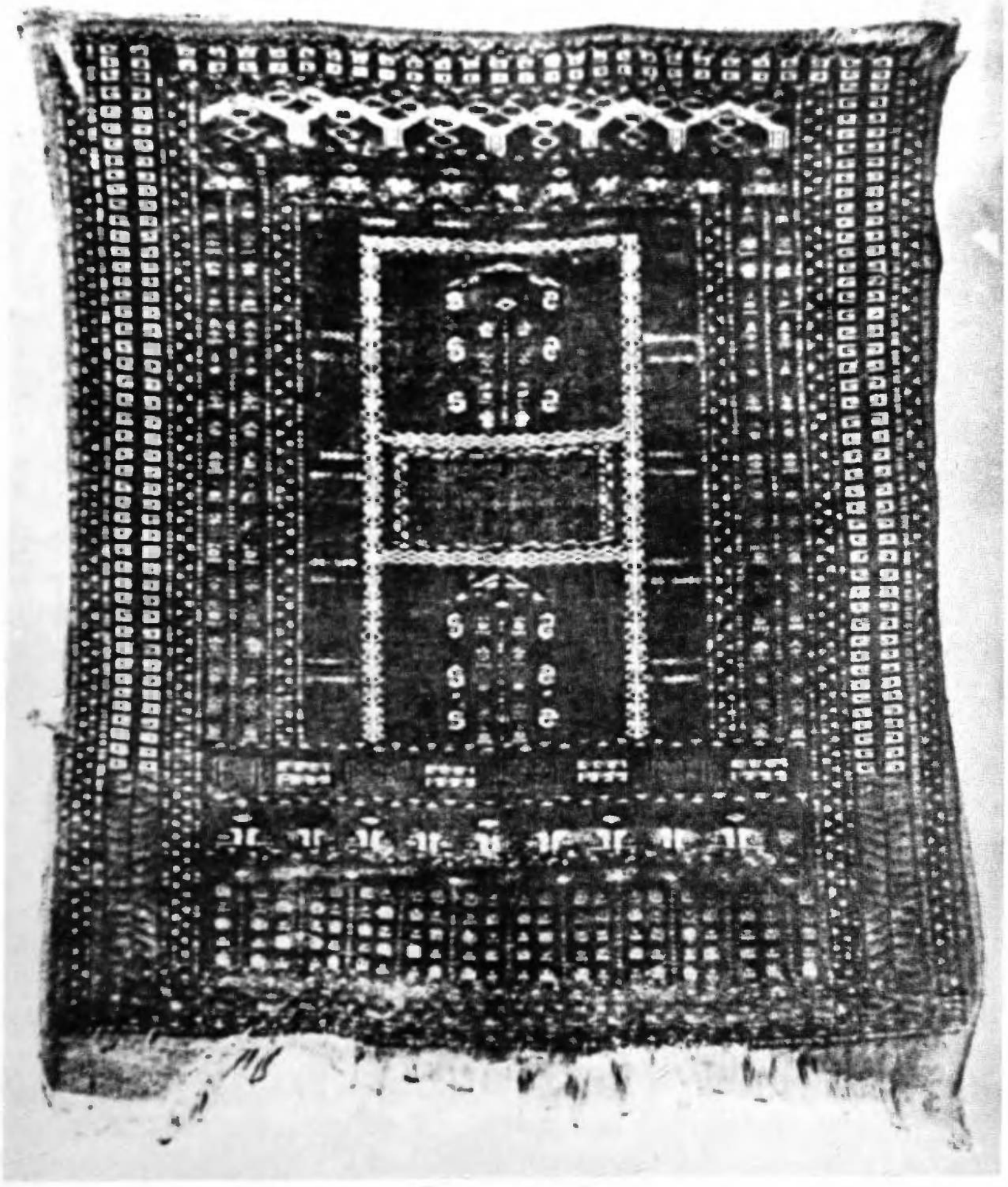


Figure 3-6. Prayer Rug of the Salor Tribes in the Pindé Pattern, Acquired from the Collection of Count Romanskyi by Miankal' in 1917
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

The result was works such as Volodymyr Diakiv's oil painting entitled *Still Life* (fig. 3-7), which reveals a conscious flatness of the surface with a tapestrylike patterning of repeated forms sprawled over the picture plane. The flower and fruit motifs tease the viewer's perceptions by befuddling his understanding of depth and volume. In his work, Diakiv shows complete involvement with surface quality. A floating or gravitating nature in the overall design is emphasized by giving it the effect of a wall hanging or theatre backdrop. Neither the fruit in the bowl nor the vase with a flower in his *Still Life* have the semblance of standing upright on a foreshortened surface. Instead they are rendered in one dimension, as if about to slide off the flat picture plane.

The problems encountered by the new art created by the Union of Seven had basically very little to do with subject matter or a common theme, and that is why *Sem' plius tri* appeared to be downright disjunctive as a compendium. But through it, a modern statement on art was being made, precisely because of the individual artist's grappling with the formal elements of art and resolving them in a unique and singular manner of approach. The target of this overt artistic struggle was the artwork itself, which is as varied in its manifestation as it could possibly be. The problem addressed in Diakiv's painting therefore only anticipated the kind of theorizing which eventually took place on the pages of *Nova generatsiia*. Malevich, in his twelve-part series on modern art, tried to instruct his readers on the kinds of formalist concerns expressed by artists of the avant-garde: "the object's image has been completely lost, and we can merely discern indications of its elements which have been deformed and scattered over the entire surface of the work. But these indications are scattered according to a definite law. This law is guided by a feeling for intensity of contrast in the juxtaposition of one element or form to another."[41]

Little is known about Diakiv's background aside from the fact that he completed the Kharkiv Art Institute at the age of twenty-eight and submitted as his diploma work a still-life painting. As his works became known through his association with the Union of Seven, it became obvious that his artistic interests were directed at breaking with academic norms such as perspective in depicting images. This is demonstrated in another of his paintings, *Harlequin* (fig 3-8). Here, measured spaces within the picture plane and calculated gradation of the sizes of forms to denote distance are ignored, while the flat quality of the surface is again reconfirmed. "Nothing ought to be lost in the picture, nothing ought to be removed. If so, color, its value, its nuances are lessened; in line, its perspective divergence."[42] In this consuming neglect of spatial rendering, it is possible to perceive an overall Cézanniste spirit in Diakiv's painting. Diakiv dissolved all Renaissance conventions completely and reinstated a flat, planar treatment which did not mask the physicality of

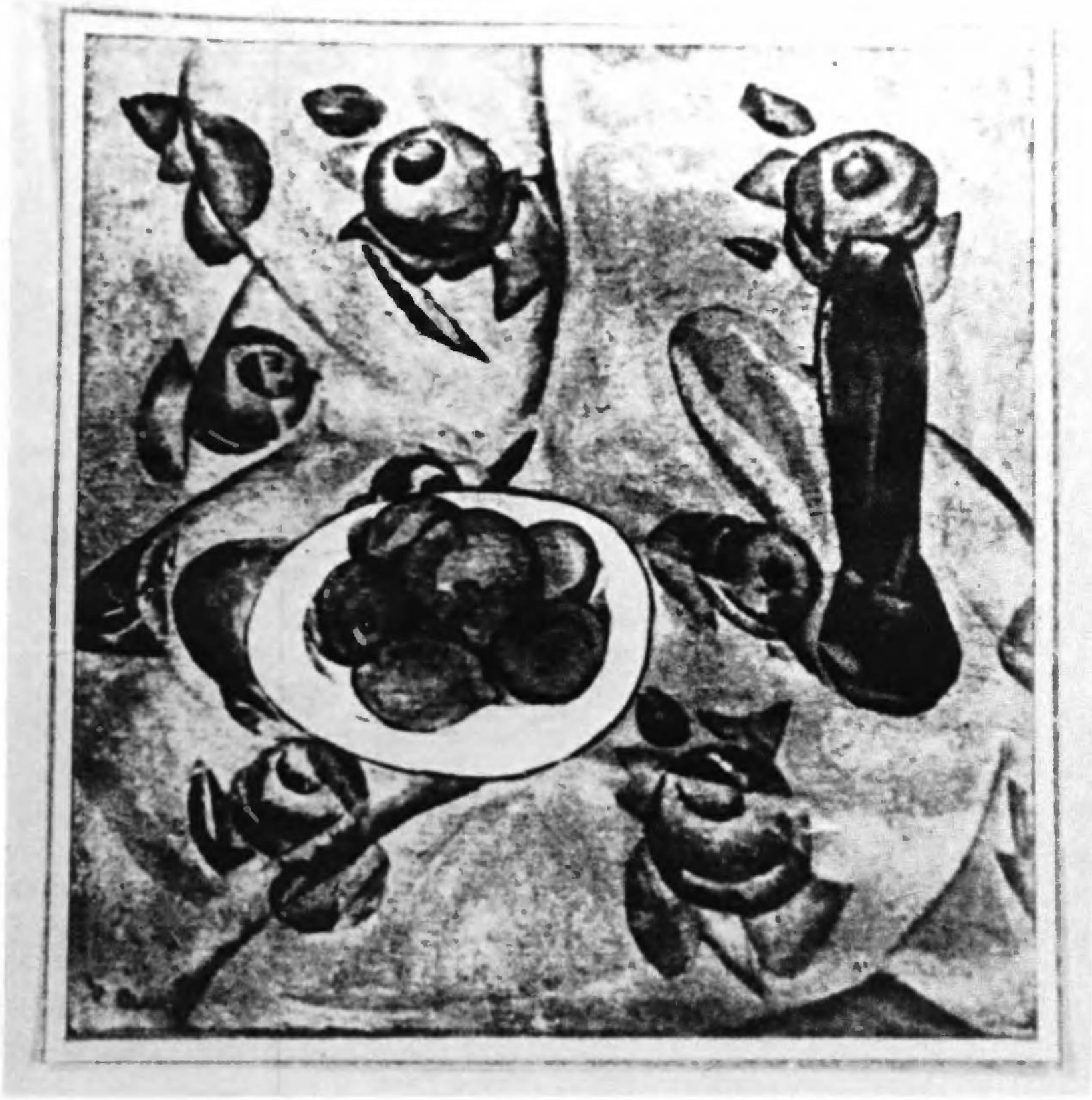


Figure 3-7. Volodymyr Diakiv, *Still Life*, ca. 1917
Oil on canvas.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

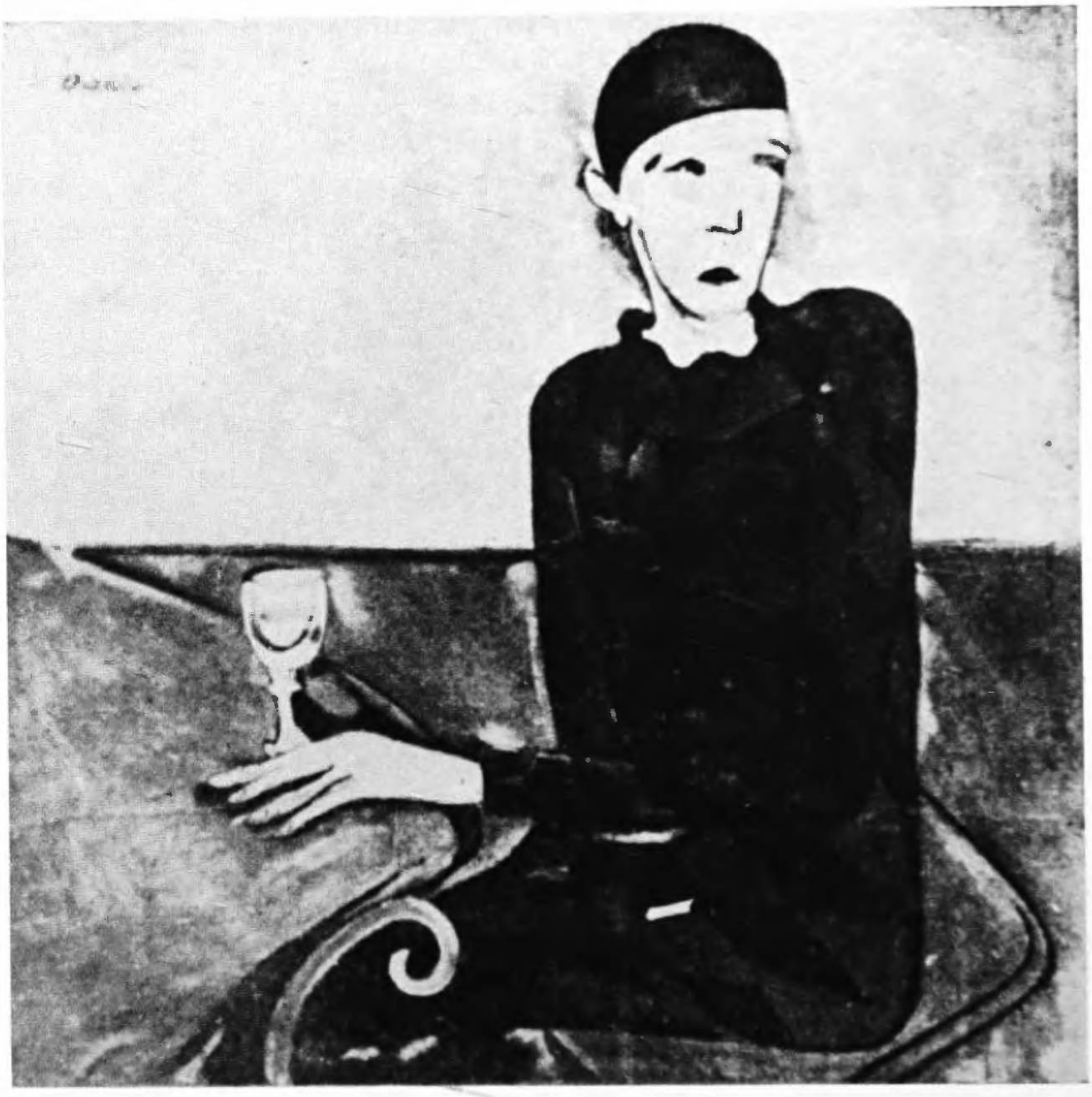


Figure 3-8. Volodymyr Diakiv, *Harlequin*, ca. 1917
Oil on canvas.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

the painting. Illusionism was categorically rejected. A conscious construction of the formal elements was reinstated in its place.

From the few works available for consideration, it becomes clear that the Union of Seven's claim to universality was underscored by its centrifugal character. It was natural, therefore, and expected, that its members would borrow art forms from various sources, not least of which were Cubism and Futurism. As they themselves stated, the works which formed the corpus of their collection *Sem' plius tri* were printed (metaphorically) "in all the languages of the world," implying of course, a multiplex visual language created by the condensation of the pictorial arts from many parts of the world and from many cultures. For some, this may have signified a purposelessness in the foundation of the group; for others, it may have signaled a shallow eclecticism marred by their late arrival on the world art scene. But such attitudes were of no consequence to the Union of Seven and they plodded on with unswerving enthuasism: "We are not afraid of the fact that we are late in fashion, we only fear whether we will have time to rework the vast artistic knowledge of the West and the East in their respective achievements."[43] Hence, Cézanniste devices, Asian tapestry motifs, and monolithic vestigial forms all found their place within the Union of Seven. Even stage design, represented by the work of Volodymyr Bobryts'kyi, was acceptable as an exemplary product of the formal problems encountered and explored by the new generation of artists.

Bobryts'kyi, who eventually emigrated to the United States, was reputed to have been an excellent graphic artist in the English graphic style of Aubrey Beardsley and Edmund Dulac. His costumes for *Salomé*—a tribute, in a sense, to Beardsley's own work—received special acclaim in 1916. In another extremely linear and graphic stage design for act 2 of Boillier's mystery, *Once Again on the Earth* (fig. 3-9), the most compelling feature in the work is that Bobryts'kyi creates a border much like that in the Central Asian prayer rug reproduced with it in the *Sem' plius tri* collection (fig. 3-6). In stage design, where one would normally expect a traditional theatrical treatment of illusory space, Bobryts'kyi's design suggests spatial depth by providing only the glint of bright light at the center. The light emanates beyond all possible orthogonals. The light rays serve only in a directional, rather than in a spatial or truly depth-creating, capacity.

More important about the work of Bobryts'kyi is that he often constructed his work along a central axis. "Conception is always central," he postulated.[44] In a pencil rendering of the *Portrait of N. N. Evreinov* of 1919, Bobryts'kyi starkly divides his composition down the middle into two halves. Each corner of the square picture surface is then severed by long cross-diagonals which section the composition further into triangular compartments. Although fluid forms mask this harsh linear substructure, the

Figure 3-9. Volodymyr Bobryts'kyi, Stage Design for the Boillier Mystery *Again on the Earth*, Act Two, ca. 1917. Autolithograph.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

carefully planned grid carries with it an aura of calculated draughtmanship and construction. In this regard, there existed a kind of spiritual artistic bond between Bobryts'kyi and his fellow Union of Seven member, Vasyl' Yermilov, both described as Centralists by their contemporaries.[45] Bobryts'kyi and Yermilov sharply divided their compositions vertically and horizontally into small squares and triangles, and underscored these subdivisions by the accentuation of strong diagonals decidedly directed at the center. The composition of Yermilov's collage, *Night Café* (fig. 3-10), for example, was based on a diamond shape and on triangles created by the criss-crossing of diagonal lines. With the inclusion of lettering, spelling out "CAFE," both an active vertical and diagonal reading of the painting is introduced, for to read the painting, the viewer must move his head up and down and from side to side, thus becoming kinetic in the way that the painting is dynamic. Yermilov's *Night Café*, partially etched and covered with newspaper strip and lacquer, points, moreover, to a deliberate cultivation of texture or facture of the surface of the work.

The Union of Seven artists were clearly indebted to Cubism for an expression of contemporaneity, and in 1919 issued the statement: "He who does not paste newspaper pages, material, a cigarette onto his painting; who does not include within it pieces of wood and metal; who does not drive real knives and forks into it—in a word, he who does not offer authentic facture—is not contemporary."[46] A decade later, when describing the evolution of New Art, Malevich ascribed similar features to Cubism: "In actual fact, all Cubist painting is textural, i.e., each form of its body has its own texture or surface, which may be called glossy, hard, rough, dull, transparent, opaque, etc."[47] This awareness was demonstrated forthrightly in Borys Kosariev's *Portrait of Evreinov* (fig. 3-11), reproduced in *Sem' plius tri*, a work executed in a pure collage technique. Evreinov was a colorful theatre director and playwright who was close to the Kharkiv Futurists at Krasna Poliana, and particularly to David Burliuk and Vasily Kamensky. Bobryts'kyi was rightfully attracted to him because of the artist's theatrical interests. Kosariev's painting, rendered in tempera on silk with pasted scraps of material and applied silver, was a collage triptych which bore a direct relationship to Vasily Kamensky's *Kniga o Evreinove* [A Book about Evreinov], published in Petrograd in 1917. The book, a biography of the playwright, historian, theoretician, and theater director Nikolai Evreinov (1879–1953), accentuated Evreinov's major theatrical theory—a practice he called "Theatre for Itself." One aspect of this notion involves a theatrical production in which the parts of the human body, be it limbs, the heart, the head or whatever, receive and play designated roles, a type of "biological" theater.[48] Kosariev, who was born in Kharkiv in 1897 and spent his entire career there mainly as a designer for the stage, openly reminded the viewer of the association between the book and the painting.

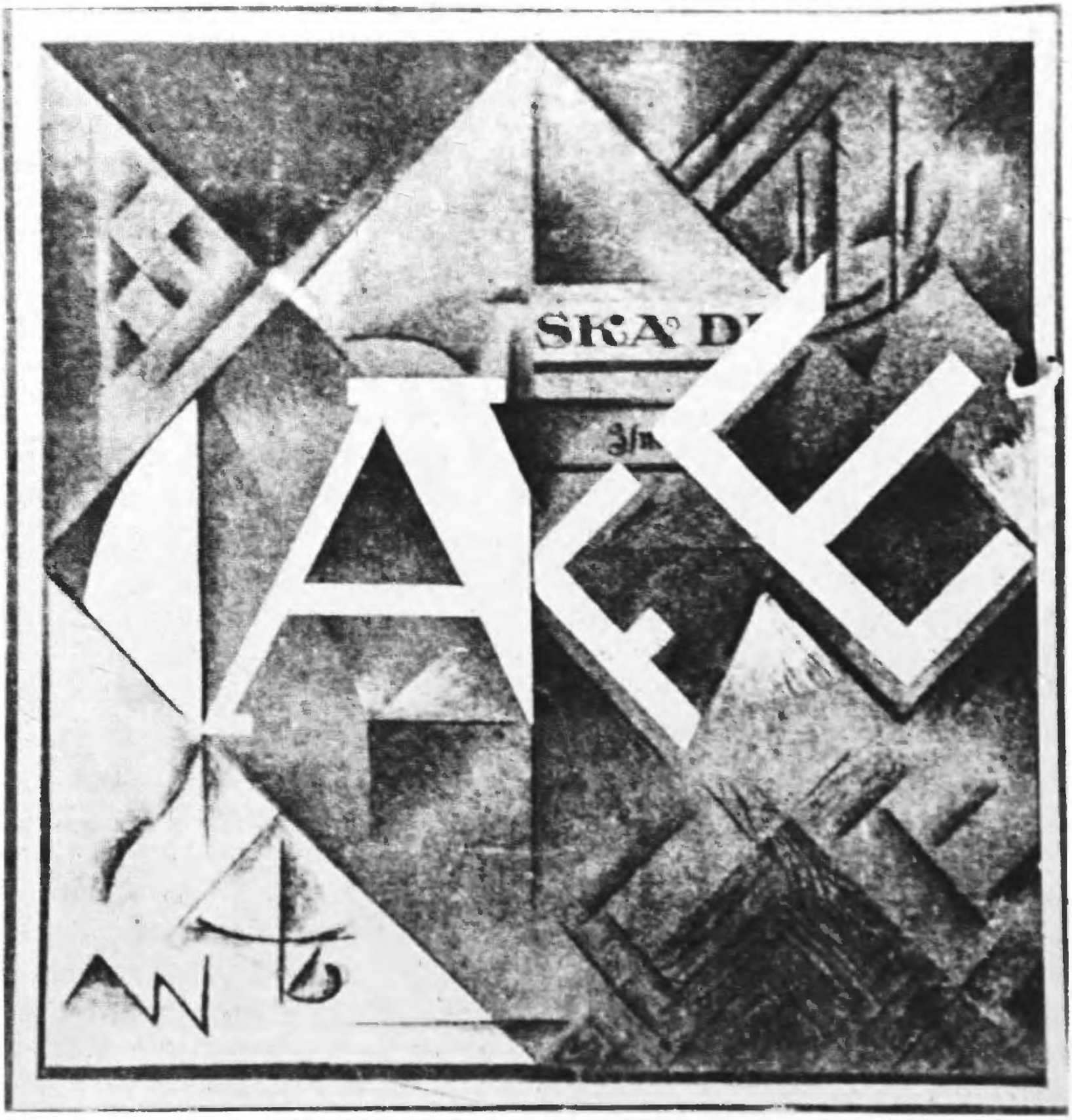


Figure 3-10. Vasyl' Yermilov, *Night Cafe*, ca. 1917
Etching, newspaper, lacquer.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

Figure 3-11. Borys Kosariev, *Portrait of N.N. Evreinov: A Triptych*, ca. 1917
Tempera, gold, fabric.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

The infusion of phrases, such as the spelling out of Kamensky's book title in the central area, or the mention of Evreinov's theatrical discovery, "Theatre for Itself," in the lower right corner, serve as evidence for Kosariev's direct reference to the book. Using Cyrillic lettering, Kosariev underscored the narcissistic value of Evreinov's brainchild and enlarged the letter "Я," which, translated from Russian or Ukrainian, means "I." In a sense, Evreinov's biological Theatre for Itself was rendered anatomically, as severed limbs were shown gesticulating in the two lateral sections of the triptych composition. Moreover, a sliced profile of Evreinov is visible in the central area near the upper right corner. His face and hair are rendered harshly and angularly. Toward the lower portion of that central area, two lighted candles contained within rounded candleholders appear to be sliding off the flat surface of the picture plane. In keeping with the theatre atmosphere, stage masks are surreptitiously incorporated within the entire collage effort.

Kosariev's incorporation of lettering into the composition of his painting, and particularly the elongated words broken up at each side of the work, bears resemblance to interests manifest in the work of other Union of Seven painters. The very same words, fractured and partially indecipherable, appear both in another of Kosariev's painting, *A Portrait* (fig. 3-12), and in Mykola Myshchenko's *Musical Window* (fig. 3-13). Unlike the collage mechanism of Kosariev's *Portrait of Evreinov*, however, the words and lettering in both these works are not simply sliced off—they are set to tumble about as if energized by some inexplicable dynamic force. Increasingly apparent is the fact that along with surface quality, another important aspect of modernism as pursued by the artists of the Union of Seven was, indeed, Futurist dynamism. In this regard, although in Cubism, they found a "new determination of all painterly problems,"[49] in the final analysis no separate distinction was actually drawn between Cubism and Futurism for the Union of Seven.

In the case of Mykola Myshchenko (1895–1960), who was musically inclined, the Futurist reference is highly appropriate. Myshchenko loved to compose and sing his own musical renditions or improvisations. Myshchenko and Kharkiv literary Futurist, G. Petnikov, gained the reputation of a jolly twosome who often entertained their friends in song at Krasna Poliana. Myshchenko, who was was born in Kharkiv and completed the Kharkiv Higher Art School in 1919, worked rapidly when painting and frequently employed musical themes as subject matter. His paintings, *Musical Window* and *Departure* (fig. 3-14), together with Mykola Kal'mykov's *Cellist* (fig. 3-15), all deal with the issue of dynamism—a universal concern of Futurists. But dynamism as interpreted by the Union of Seven members was not the result of conflict which arises between a stationary and immobile picture surface on which a moving object is represented. This was a problem which the Italian

Figure 3-12. Borys Kosariev, *Portrait*, ca. 1917
Oil on canvas.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

Figure 3-13. Mykola Myshchenko, *Musical Window*, 1917
Oil on canvas.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

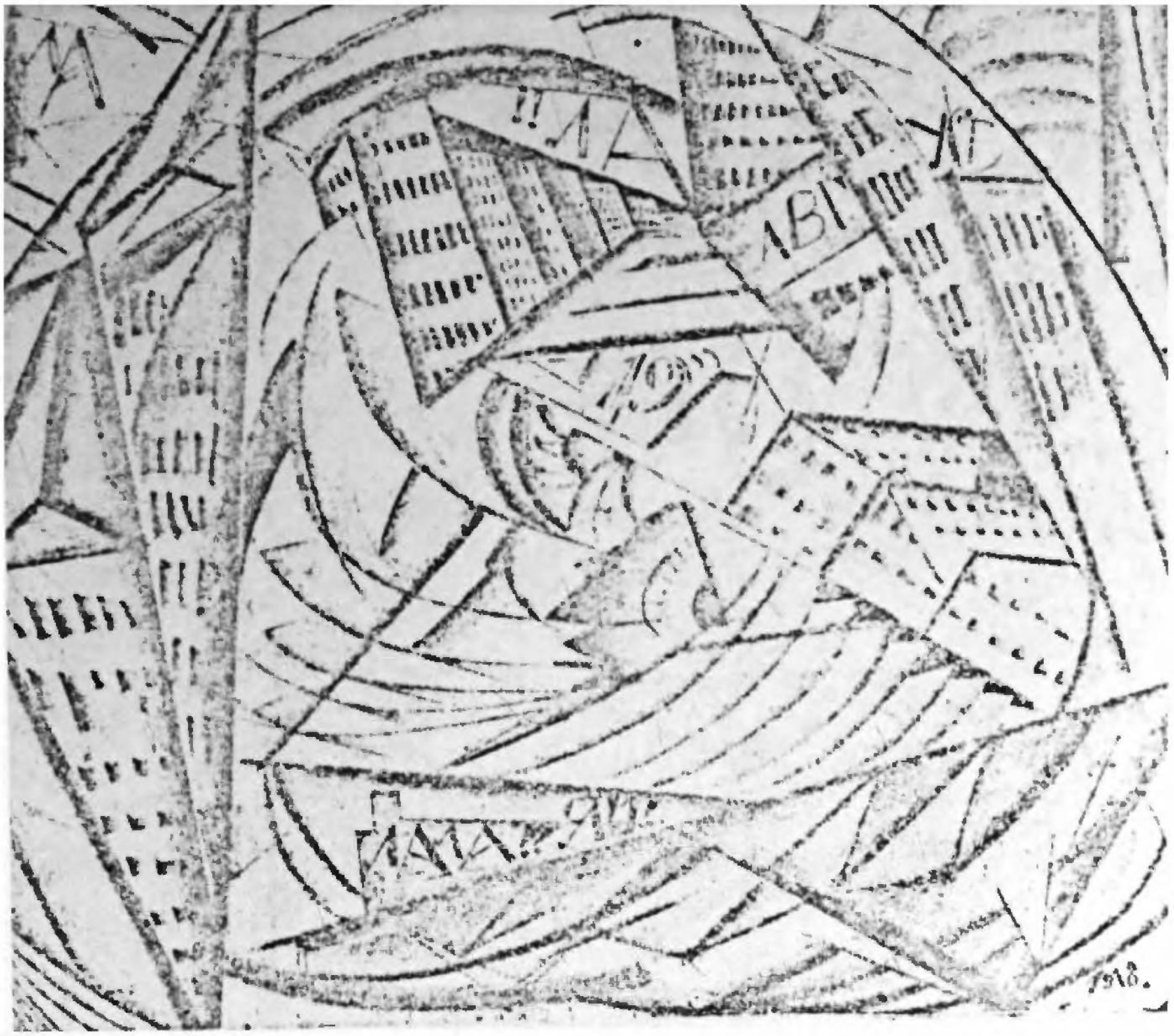


Figure 3-14. Mykola Myshchenko, *Departure*, 1918
Pencil drawing.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

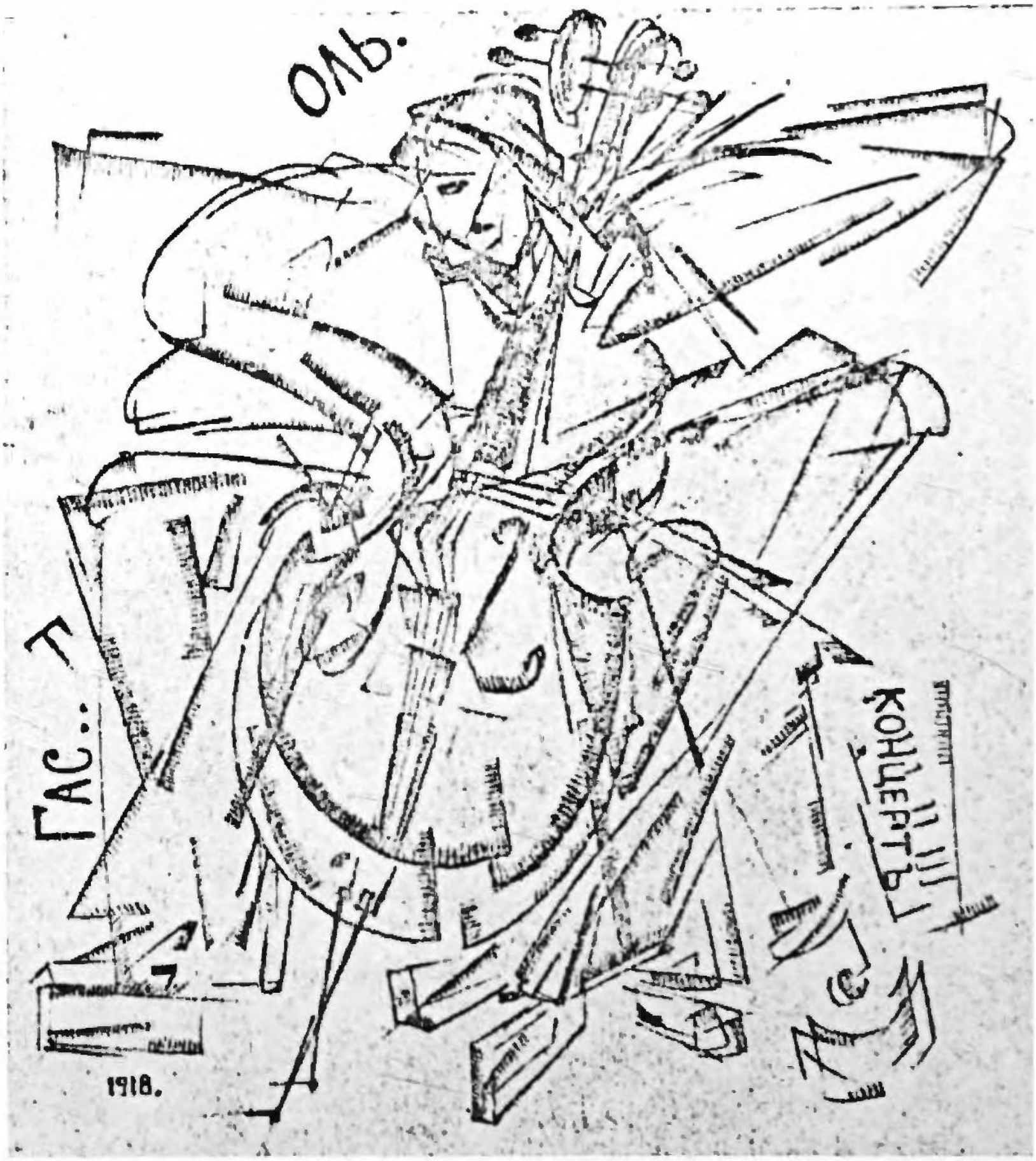


Figure 3-15. Mykola Kal'mykov, *The Cellist,* 1918
Pencil drawing.
(Photograph from Sem' plius tri, *Kharkiv: Semi, 1918)*

Futurists faced and subsequently resolved by showing an image in repeated positions, e.g., Balla's *Violinist* with six arms, or Carrà's bucking *Red Horseman* with some twenty legs. Although Kal'mykov (who lived briefly in Paris) attempted this kind of representation in the *Cellist* (1918), the Union of Seven members maintained that human consciousness could not perceive movement in that mechanized, repetitive manner; and that rendering a form which was not static could only be dealt with theoretically. "Our consciousness only allows for a general presentation of the object, i.e., a single form of the object within itself and not a multiple one," they said.[50] But inasmuch as dynamism was defined as a "painterly feature" for the artists of the Union of Seven, more important was that it was to assist the viewer's consciousness in perceiving nonstatic forms, and "utilizing the dynamic feature, it promises to show us that which our consciousness is not in a position to show."[51] Malevich was later to reiterate this same position in *Nova generatsiia:*

> Futurism is the sensation of dynamics and of the relation between elements which create the sensation of movement in various functions and objects, but it is not the art of creating the movement of objects . . . the form of objects, motors, aeroplanes, running horses or people who are building is not the form of expression, but, on the contrary, is dissolved in the Futurist's dynamic sensation into separate elements, the relations between which express the amount of movement that is sensed.[52]

In contrast to the Italian Futurists, therefore, the Union of Seven chose to interpret dynamism in a stricter compliance with its derivation from the Greek word *dynamis,* thus giving it more the connotation of power than of movement. Prompted by this distinction, the Union of Seven chose to depict the dynamism of an object by rendering its power. But to elicit power, they maintained that an "intuitive penetration into the essence of the object" was required. In *Nova generatsiia,* Malevich spoke of a similar concept as he compared Futurism with Suprematism:

> The difference between the Suprematist revelation of dynamic sensation and Futurist revelation is that the Futurist reveals dynamic sensation through the phenomenon of the model, i.e., man, and then through the movement of things. The Suprematist revelation of sensations of the same power, on the contrary, does not depend upon any objects or natural phenomena but creates a special form, with the help of which it reveals the power that is sensed.[53]

Both of Myshchenko's works, *Musical Window* (1917) and *Departure* (1918), seem entirely alive and energized by an inestimable power or dynamism inherent in the forms which have of their own accord activated the shapes rendered. *Musical Window,* for example, is composed of segments of musical instruments, piano keyboards, and a suggestion of musical notation, and

creates a visual panoply of crescendos and diminuendos. Gravitating back and forth and diagonally side to side, the musical energy evokes a visual glissando beginning in the top right corner and cascading downward over the surface. The same vortexlike motion of *Musical Window* is reenacted in Myshchenko's pencil drawing *Departure*, but this time, urban dwellings and skyscrapers replace musical instruments. Even in Kosariev's *Portrait* (fig. 3-12), a cyclone of activity surrounds the female form. The staid central positioning of the figure that would normally and automatically suggest a semblance of stability, has an opposite effect in this painting. Everything around the sitter is in a state of tumultuous disarray and collapse; the folds of the fabric of her dress also reveal a convulsive jerkiness which has stricken her entire being. Her necklace lies askew and her spindly fingers, quivering ominously, disclose an uncontrollable life of their own.

In the pursuit of power or dynamism in their art, in their exploitation of surface texture, and in the analogies to the other sister arts such as music and theatre, the work of the Union of Seven proved to be all-pervasive in techniques, materials, and media. Furthermore, a contextual cohesion among these artists could be found in the accent placed on an intellectual rather than emotional approach to artistic expression. Even in the thoroughly agitated works of Kosariev, Kal'mykov, and Myshchenko, there is no place for subjective emotion. First and foremost for the Kharkiv modernists, and particularly significant in terms of their trying to achieve international union, was the fact that their art was not to be emotional. This was precisely the wording that the Kharkiv New Generation (Panfuturists) employed in outlining their own directions. The basic premise upheld by Semenko's followers was that it was the lack of emotion and sentiment which made art accessible and comprehensible to mankind, for the absence of penetrating psychologism created a detached objectivity which helped to unfold the harmonious common root linking all people. Blending cosmopolitanism with regionalism, fusing fine art with folk craft, Kharkiv's Union of Seven was merely a preview to the full flowering of the Ukrainian artistic vanguard in the twenties as promoted by the Futurists.

By comparison with the more bombastic attitude of Russian iconoclastic groups, such as the Donkey's Tail or Target, the Union of Seven offered a more restrained approach, although one charged with intention. Avoiding the cynical arrogance of the Dadaists, or the shock quality of the Kvero-Futurists, they acknowledged simply,

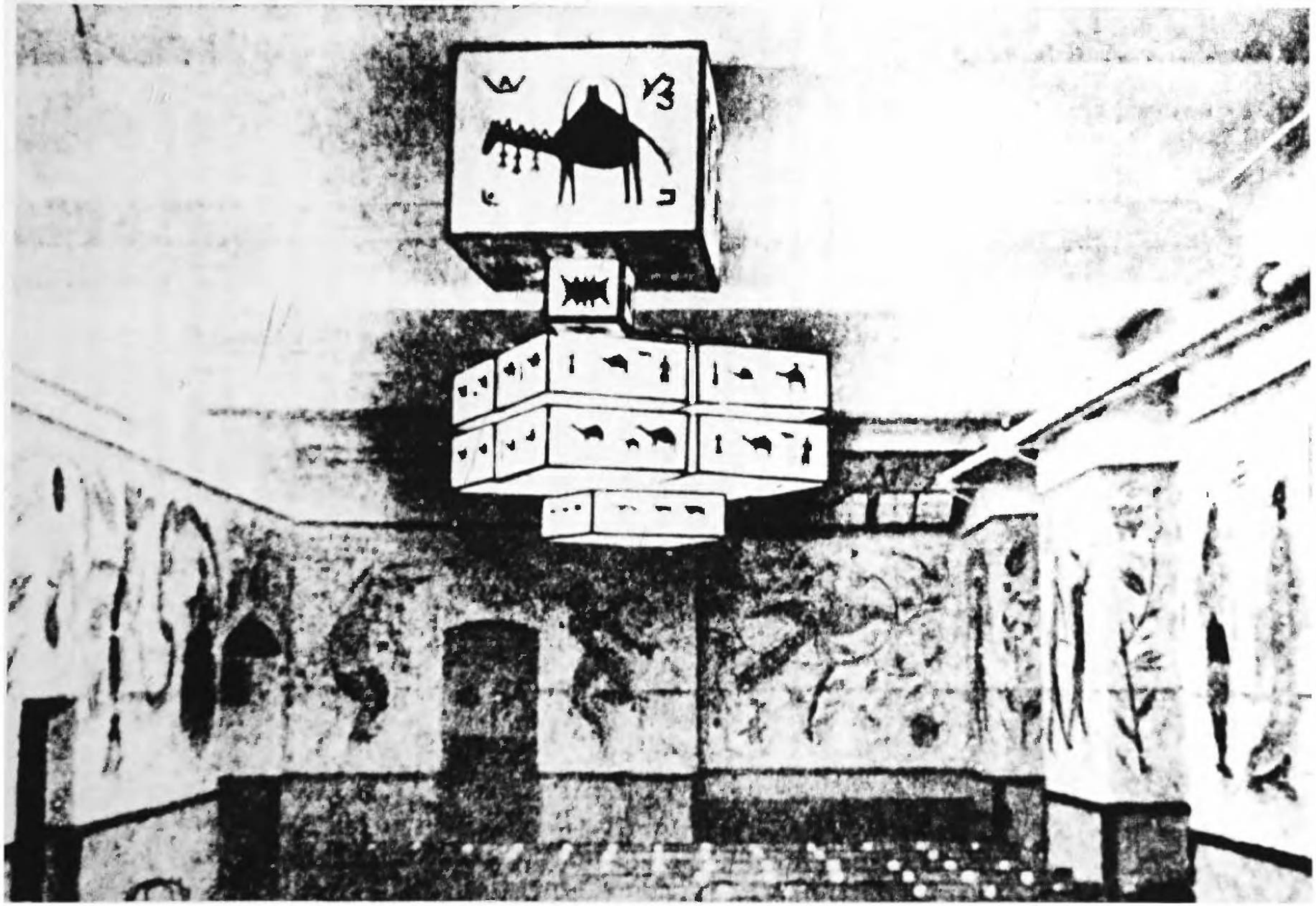
> We do not claim mastery, although, speaking directly, we worked very much on technique; we have long been freed from the weight of illustrating literature and music; we consider that although our works are still weak, very weak, but in them, there is the beginning of new discoveries which could be decrepit and dead in the West; but for us, wanting to work and not to thrash over old straw, we are new.[54]

The Union of Seven artists were a practical lot and welcomed various commissions which demonstrated their versatility in several media. They undertook vignettes for journals, or individually took charge of the design of art journals or projects for publishing firms. Collectively, Bobryts'kyi, Yermilov, Kosariev, and Tsybys executed a poster under the motto, "In unification is strength!" Sometimes they worked as a brigade on group commissions, as in the case of monumental painting or wall decoration and interior design. This gave them the impetus to become more directly involved in the constructive and functional trends rapidly emerging upon the artistic vanguard. Their slogan proclaimed, "We are united only by youth!"[55]

In 1918, a communal, collective project was undertaken by three of the artists of the Union of Seven—Kosariev, Bobryts'kyi, and Tsapok. They were given the task of decorating the interior of the Artists' Cabaret located in the basement of the Salamander Building in Kharkiv (fig. 3-16). A fourth artist, Oleksander Levada, also assisted in painting the Cabaret, although he was not responsible for designing any project in particular. Painted directly on the wall surface, the decoration of the Cabaret was rendered in four principal colors: rose, blue, black, and green. Color was not of prime importance, however, since the sizing and washes employed throughout eventually discolored on the matte surface of the walls. Acknowledgment of a light source in the selection of colors was also ignored. Light, as the four artists understood it, should not indicate a specific time of day; artificial light was preferred. In this regard, the brigade was also charged with designing and installing new lamps for this purpose. Kosariev, professing to have architectural expertise as a result of his early training at the Kharkiv Art Guild, executed the silver work in the new chandeliers. If there was no preoccupation with natural light, then indeed, there would be little need to give such attention to color. To demonstrate their ambivalence on this count, the brigade qualified their color choices by stating: "Color is determined only by formal means in the hands of the artist, and the latter can utilize them according to the way he sees, decorating the objects with any color, not taking into consideration either the impression of time, the illusory color of the object, or the presentation of its constant, true color."[56]

Relying on these tenets, it is no wonder that many of the Union of Seven artists developed a strong graphic sense which was clearly expressed in the interior of the Artists' Cabaret. Kosariev demonstrated a particularly strong tendency toward graphics and drawing. He based his work on a motto derived from Albert Gleizes's and Jean Metzinger's *Du Cubisme* of 1912:[57] "Knowing how to draw consists of establishing a relationship between the curved and the straight."[58] To practice this maxim, he carried out the architectural detail of the interior design of the Artists' Cabaret along a beltline rim running throughout the perimeter of the room. There were both Western and local

Figure 3-16. Volodymyr Bobryts'kyi, Borys Kosariev, Heorhii Tsapok, Decor of the Kharkiv Artists' Cabaret, 1918
(Private collection)



elements present in the decor of the Cabaret. First of all, the Artists' Cabaret of Kharkiv was an attempt to create an atmosphere of commedia dell'arte and was decorated in keeping with that spirit. However, the artists drew on aspects of the local culture as well. Intermingled amidst the images of pierrots and harlequins, therefore, were elements of both Eastern exoticism and Ukrainian folklore. When Tsapok rendered the bar scene, he featured a rowdy eating-fest with a magician presiding. In executing the repast, Tsapok depicted Ukrainian folkloric and culinary customs, infusing the mood of his drawing with a hearty dosage of folk humor.

Tsapok's manner was distinguishable from that of the other artists in the group in that his forms were more highly constructive in nature than theirs. In a scene with two bulls depicted next to a series of palms against a blue sky, the design was clearly organized on the basis of a centralized composition. But at times, Tsapok's style was also reminiscent of the naive painting of the Georgian artist, Niko Pirosmanishvili. The visual connection with Piro is a telling one because Piro's primitive paintings were of paramount importance to both Neo-Primitivism and the bold manner of Futurism. Piro's impact on Russian modernism in particular can be equated to the discovery and effect of the Douanier Rousseau's paintings on French modernism. This is especially clear in the quality of Piro's tavern signs, the spirit of which was translated wholeheartedly in Tsapok's work. As a Georgian, Piro represented to the Union of Seven that Eastern input into modernism which they were keen on introducing into their art. This was true even in terms of subject matter, for many of Kosariev's designs for the Artists' Cabaret involved scenes with camels, which he copied from Turkish kylyms. The boxlike constructivist design of the Cabaret, combined with the exotic motifs of its interior decor, not only reflected the East-West universalism of the Union of Seven, but was a precursor to the synthesizing collective efforts supported by *Nova generatsiia*. In a sense, when in the pages of *Nova generatsiia* Malevich stated: "the line is subject to two influences—[those] of Asiatic architecture and European painting, . . ."[59] the Artists' Cabaret was based on the same fusion, but the mediums and their respective sources were reversed.

Armed with the experience of monumental public works such as the mural paintings of the Artists' Cabaret, and filled with the optimism of the post-Revolutionary period, several of the Union of Seven members continued their artistic endeavors in more socially oriented areas of art after the Union disbanded in 1918. Their activities ceased when the White Army entered Kharkiv; but in the years of its official existence (1915–18), the Kharkiv Union of Seven had the reputation of being the "left guard" of Ukrainian art in Kharkiv, and became the object of increasing interest among the general art viewing public. Described as the "living growth of local artistic culture,"[60] the Union established a quite favorable reputation not only through its

exhibitions, but also through its publications. It had planned three publications similar to the collection *Sem'plius tri* which were to contain the works of other artists who gravitated to the Union's circle after 1917, including Ivan Ivanov (1894–1969), H. Yanovyts'kyi (d.u.), and Kharkiv sculptor Yosyp Ryk (1897–1958).

As in Semenko's publications on Futurism (*Mystetstvo, Katafal'k mystetstv, Semafor u maibutnie*, et al.), there was clear testimony in the Union's publications to the synthetic nature of the group's pursuits.[61] Much of this activity was spawned by, first of all, the kind of varied artistic training received by the Union of Seven members, and secondly, by the ideological stance put forth by the almanac and miscellany issued by the Union just prior to the dissolution of the group. The Kharkiv Union of Seven (which, as a Futurist organization, upheld the premises of a synthesis of the arts and universal artistic communication) was known to have access to numerous periodicals, following in the footsteps of the Association of Kharkiv Artists.[62] The Union of Seven's *Sem'plius tri* was strictly artistic in nature. Literature was almost excluded, but before the Union of Seven fell apart, its members succeeded in preparing for publication its own *Sbornik novogo iskusstva* [Miscellany of New Art][63]—a document of indigenous ideas concerning literary-artistic activity in Kharkiv. The choice of the term "New Art" for the almanac was appropriate because, from the moment of its inception, the Kharkiv Union of Seven believed itself to be on the path to just that. The *Sbornik* was sponsored by the All-Ukrainian Section of Art under the Commissariat of Popular Education, a post-Revolution bureaucratic establishment. It was compiled and ready for printing in the spring of 1919 (as indicated by the publication date), but in actuality did not appear in the bookshops until 1920.[64]

The *Sbornik novogo iskusstva* featured the art of Union of Seven members, the drawings of Maria Syniakova, and also the poems of Elena Guro, Boris Pasternak, Velimir Khlebnikov, Nikolai Aseev, Vladimir Maiakovsky, and Aleksei Gastev. From a literary vantage point, the *Sbornik* was comprised of works by poets and writers already known beyond Kharkiv. However, their works were supplemented by the writings of individuals who were still known only locally in the Ukraine. Consequently, *Sbornik novogo iskusstva*, issuing from Kharkiv, helped give exposure to those artists who were involved in avant-garde literary circles in what had heretofore been referred to ingloriously as the provinces. To all contributors, whether literary or those involved in the pictorial arts, Futurism posed problems which each tried to resolve individually and according to the peculiar methods of his respective medium. A general consensus existed on one single point: "Futurism is a transitory phenomenon; it is stormy and does not fit into the borders of a decided aesthetic *credo*, but it is essential within the limits of the completion of the historical process; it is legitimate and useful in itself."[65]

The Union of Seven was only one such group representing a cohesive unveiling of an indigenous avant-garde in Kharkiv. Granted, it was self-serving in its activities; and although one senses that formally its members borrowed a great deal from contemporary Western art (particularly Cubism and Futurism) nonetheless there was unequivocal evidence of a complete self-sufficiency and artistic self-reliance. As a result, its history is one of relative isolation, with little direct affiliation or attempt of such with Western counterparts. Therefore to suggest clear lines of communication between the members of the Union of Seven and the artists of France, Italy, or Germany would lie purely in the realm of speculation.

By contrast, contemporaneous events in Kiev shed light on a more active interchange between Ukrainian artists and their European counterparts. One of the major figures who promoted exposure to contemporary European trends in the Ukraine was the Kharkiv-born, poet-artist David Burliuk. Before departing for Munich in 1903 and then Paris in 1904 to receive his artistic training, Burliuk had attended the local art schools of Kazan, Odessa, and the Art Academy of St. Petersburg. He assumed a very active role in the dissemination of materials on modern art among his Slavic compatriots. Moreover, he was one of the first to expound on modern art in a critical vein. Burliuk's declaration, *"Golos Impressionista—v zashchitu zhivopisi"* [The Voice of An Impressionist: In Defense of Painting] (1908)[66] was perhaps the first theorizing on modern art to emerge from Ukrainian territory. It was published in the catalogue to one of the earliest exhibitions of nonacademic and progressive art trends in the Ukraine, called *Zveno* [Link], organized by Burliuk together with Alexandra Exter (1882–1949). The Link exhibition, held in Kiev from November 2–30, 1908, was, in certain respects, a demonstration on the part of local artists of their intent to counteract the popular, emotionally bittersweet, regionalist art of the Realists who still dominated the art world at the time. By imitating Cézanne and other post-Impressionists, therefore, the Link participants sought to forge a new vitality in both the form and the content of their art. For the most part, the subjects rendered by the exhibitors were still lifes and pure landscapes. But, in contrast to the rural, home-bred scenes and textual narratives of foremost Realist painters such as Ilya Repin (e.g., *Religious Procession in the Kursk District*, 1880), who constantly returned to his Kharkiv environs for creative inspiration (e.g., *Archdeacon of Chuhuyev*, 1877), the artists represented in Link, such as A. Exter, concentrated on scenes of Paris, the Brittany coast, and Switzerland.

Contributors to the Link exhibition were a motley assortment of artists. They included Burliuk's brother and sister (Vladimir and Liudmilla), Mikhail Larionov, Natalya Goncharova, and Oleksander Bohomazov, Exter's close Kiev colleague. There was also L. D. Baranov, and the Kharkiv teacher E. A. Agafonov. Despite the varied contributors and uneven contributions to this

exhibition, one thing that can be said about Link is that the interests of the artists, unlike those of the Union of Seven, were directed outward—a clear indication of a desire on the part of these artists to move beyond the narrow confines of a regional artistic vision to one which took into account the ramifications of artistic progress in other parts of the world. Subsequent modern art exhibitions, such as *Venok* [Wreath] in Kherson connected artists who were beginning to show aesthetic and formal changes applied practically in their own work. Such groups signaled the emergence of a new artistic generation in the Ukraine that was prepared to replace the placid, monotonous academic art of the Wanderers and other local provincialisms.

The desire to expand on artistic vision and to deal with artistic issues outside the homeland led in some instances to a string of emigrations, most noteworthy of which was that of Alexander (Oleksander) Arkhipenko (1887–1964), the Ukrainian sculptor from Kiev. Soon after his participation in the Link exhibition, Baranov, too, emigrated to Paris and adopted the name Baranoff-Rossiné. Exter herself traveled to Paris in 1908, the very same year that Arkhipenko emigrated,[67] and frequently visited him at the artists' colony La Ruche, where many emigré artists lived until 1914. Between 1909 and 1914, Exter divided her time between Kiev, Moscow, and Paris, taking part with Arkhipenko, Baranov, and Burliuk in such major Parisian expositions as, for example, the 1914 Salon des Indépendants[68] and also informing the local Kiev artists about happenings in the West by publishing a report on the Parisian avant-garde in the Kiev journal *Iskusstvo* [Art].[69]

The importance of Exter's emissorial role in disseminating information on the Parisian avant-garde and developments in contemporary European art in general cannot be underestimated. Her direct involvement with the local artists began with her early training at the Kiev Art School, together with Arkhipenko and Bohomazov. The school was opened in 1901 and lasted until 1921. Exter completed her education there in 1906. Although little is known about the structure and format of the teaching at the Kiev Art School, and even less is known about its staff and history or its goals, it nonetheless had the reputation of being one of the best art training institutions of a secondary level in all of the Empire.[70] Moreover, the Kiev Art School was the formative body which linked many artists both within and outside Ukrainian avant-garde circles: the Burliuks, K. Malevich, and emigrés such as Sonia Delaunay and Louis Lozowick.

One of the milestones in the development of Ukrainian artistic modernism in Kiev was Exter's close working relationship with Oleksander Bohomazov (1880–1930). Together they promoted formalist interests in the arts and carried the spirit of the Western avant-garde to their Kievan colleagues. At about the same time that Semenko was formulating Kvero-Futurism—a venture into formalist experimentation in literature—Bohomazov organized the Circle Art in Kiev, which was devoted specifically

to formal experimentation in the visual arts, with an aim to create New Art, a term adopted by Bohomazov in 1913. The first exhibition of Circle Art was held at the Kiev Polytechnical Institute in 1914. It was called *Kol'tso* [Ring], and had no connection to the Studio Ring of Kharkiv. Twenty-one Kievan artists (including Exter) contributed a total of 306 works to the exhibition. The highlight of the show, however, was the eighty-eight works of Bohomazov, who spearheaded the event.

The objective of the Ring exhibition was to bring attention to the artistic talent in the city and to demonstrate how Kiev artists were beginning to work in an idiom which liberated the elements of art from stifling overusage. Consistent with, and parallel to, formal experimentation in literature, the Ring exhibition was the first attempt, as stated by Bohomazov in the catalogue introduction, at an analysis of "the essence of the four elements" in painting: line, form, color, and the picture surface. In contrast to the amorphous spirit of the earlier Link exhibition, therefore, Bohomazov's undertaking professed clear-cut aesthetic aims:

> Beauty is not in the visible, but in that which is sensed, experienced. There is no subject; there is no object; but, there is something else, concealed, and that something else is the world of mutual relationships, influences, strangely beautiful stories of lines and colors; a world captured by the spirit, accepted by it, and understood only by it. When the soul looks, the world is transformed in its eyes. When it wants to imprint the visible, it gives birth to Art. It was from the heart that the first beautiful line was born; from the soul the first color resounded! Rhythm is a Mysterious Director managing everything: color, line, word, sound, etc.
>
> Opening the present exhibition of pictures, we have in mind not so much this first exhibition as much as a series of consecutive ones in the future. The present exhibition is not a clear indicator of all achievements; it is only the first link, the first independent voice in the defense of New Art. We place as our task the liberation of painterly elements from the clichés which shackle them. We protest against the imposition on these elements of conditions alien to them, eclipsing and squandering the painterly sense of the picture (e.g., the literary narrative). Therefore, we welcome the striving of the artist to shatter the shell in which his artistic personality had been imbedded by Academism. Setting out with only local forces, by the same token, we indicate the presence of artistic strengths in our city. Every art is endowed with specific elements: poetry—the word; music – sound, etc. Painting governs four elements: Line, Form, Color, and the Picture Surface. Opening this exhibition, we turn our attention to the following positions.
>
> **THE ESSENCE OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS**
>
> **LINE.** Line has its image. For the artist, it is the entire alphabet of letters, words, images, etc. – his individual alphabet (speech) with which he ought to speak. Line is free, and submissive only to Rhythm. The feature of Line is movement: i.e., gravity, levity, quickness, slowness, color, softness, dryness, and the like. Hence, Line, depicting only a natural table but not transmitting the rhythmic fluctuation of its lines, loses its painterly sense; and vice versa, the lines of that very table, associated with a specific rhythm, are full of meaning. The subject changes, but in its stead, the painterly value is manifest.

FORM. Line gives birth to form. Form is not perceived similarly in all of its parts, otherwise, the tension of the form varies. The corner of a building in a bright sky has a greater power and tension than another corner, found against a dark background. The strengthening of form, the movement of its lines against another, subjugates or negates the weaker form. This results in the vanishing of Line toward a weaker section of the form. The combination of form depends on the individual strength of each form, resulting, in this manner, in their moving closer to that or another form. The features of form are weight, levity, softness, hardness, color, and the like.

COLOR. Color fills form and gives it a clearer expression of all the features of the given form. Color is not for the purpose of giving the subject its visible coloration, but makes possible a fuller expression of its painterly merits. The red color of a scarf on the head of a young girl is only important inasmuch as it influences the general rhythmicality of patches [of color] and lines.

THE PICTURE SURFACE. The Picture Surface accepts painterly content onto itself and unites with it. Accepting it, it changes and submits everything to its basic form and participates in the influence of the painterly content. One and the same method, painted into a square or circle will be different in its composition. The Picture Surface is not passive.

A relationship with these painterly elements creates an artistic personality. Therefore, the artist ought not to be a passive imitator of nature, but an active expressor of his relationship to it. The artist with an artistic individuality will reflect himself. From the artist we demand sincerity and vitality. He creates a new world—the pictorial world—from the features of the world uncovered by him. The picture is not a copy of reality, but the result of the relationship of the artistic personality with it—its penetration into the internal sense of its compiled elements. The artist is indifferent to the desires and aspirations of the public. We reject architectural perspective and promote the perspective of rhythmic vibrations of lines, form, and colors, which are more suitable and more expressive of our aesthetic emotions.[71]

Bohomazov's comments are significant in that they are, in a sense, a manifesto calling for a reorientation toward artistic perception and understanding. They are, moreover, the basis of a longer treatise on art, "Iskusstvo zhivopisi" [The Art of Painting],[72] which he wrote in 1914 and which became the basis for educating artists at the Kiev Art Institute (KXI) from 1922–30. Bohomazov's theory advocated a blend of Futurist kineticism and Cubist stolid analysis. On the one hand, he made urgent the necessity to analyze the objective world on the basis of these four basic pared down units of art. At the same time, he exhorted that these elements should be a means of recording the inherent rhythmic quality found in nature. With the immediacy and spontaneity of the charcoal medium, Bohomazov tried to capture this duality in a series of sketches of the city. Bohomazov's *L'viv Street* of 1914 (fig. 3-17) is exemplary of the artist's goals. Bohomazov, who didn't venture far beyond his native Kiev, depicted his favorite city not with nostalgia or historical reverie, but with an active, dynamic spirit, modern and mobile in its essence. He wrote: "Kiev in its plastic outlines is full of beautiful, varied, and deep dynamism. Here the streets lean on the sky; the forms are tense, the lines are energetic; they fall, split up, sing, and play. The general tempo of life

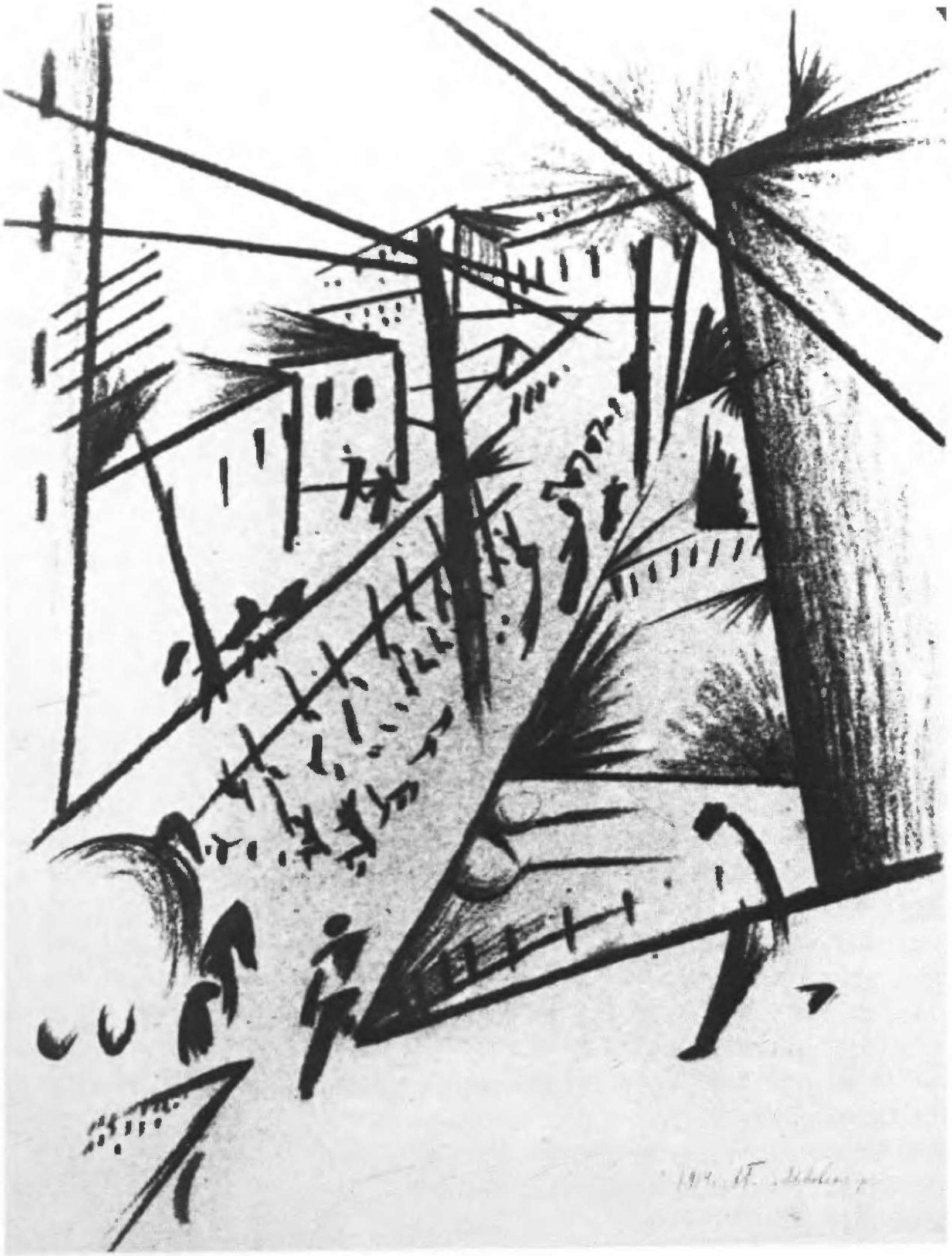


Figure 3-17. Oleksander Bohomazov, *L'viv Street*, 1914
(Private collection)

underlines this dynamism even more; it gives it what might be called an ordered basis and broadly flows over throughout, until it rests on the quiet shores of the Left Bank of the Dnipro."[73]

In his work, Bohomazov addressed artistic perception from the standpoint of "what one senses" as opposed to "what one knows." It was not pure sensation as such, therefore, that preoccupied Bohomazov, but rather, sensation viewed specifically as the internal agitation and dynamism inherent in nature. Knowledge or academism (i.e., that which one knows) could only assist in the comprehension of nature on the surface, the kind of training received by the adepts of Old Art. According to Bohomazov, acute sensory perception and sensitivity to subtle movement in the environment (i.e., sensation), was the key to artistic liberation, and also the first step toward the formation of New Art. One was dynamic, the other static. Sensation—the key element underlying Bohomazov's theory—evolved out of the artist's Symbolist-Futurist artistic formation in the same way that Vasilii Kandinsky's Symbolist beginnings also predisposed him to clothing sensation in the appropriate artistic form.

It is significant that Bohomazov explored sensation through art at a time when this interest in Western art was at a peak as well (one need only mention the Italian Futurists, the Orphists, the Vorticists). But what is also revealing is that he attempted to teach sensory perception of movement in nature to his followers. In this he was close in spirit to artists who recorded movement in nature, including Bohomazov's Kiev colleagues, Exter and Arkhipenko, and most importantly, his contemporaries, K. Malevich, M. Matyushin, and V. Kandinsky.[74] The idea of sensation as the key to the cognition of the world ran through the theoretical concerns of a number of leading Russian artists, not least of whom was Nikolai Kul'bin, one of the first to state the issue in 1910: "The world of the artist is the reflection of his sensations, his will, and his cognition."[75] The dichotomy between sensation on the one hand and cognition on the other, was later reiterated by Malevich in *Nova generatsiia:* "two principles always begin to clash. Both claim supremacy—the principle of knowledge, the centre of consciousness, and, on the other hand, the centre of the subconscious, or sensation."[76]

During 1913–14 Mikhail Matyushin had also been conducting studies and experiments to help guide the artist in becoming sensitive (or, as Bohomazov called it, a "sensitive resonator"). Matyushin devised a program which he called Spatial Realism, a series of exercises meant to develop a multi-sided vision, that is, from the front, left, right, and back of the head. These exercises were to assist the artist to become acutely receptive of the vibrations in the visible world. In this theory of Spatial Realism, the volumes of the earth and sky fuse, rendering perpetual motion in nature which the sensitive artist must learn to perceive. Bohomazov and Matyushin were thus in agreement

that knowledge could only assist in the comprehension of nature. The key for the artist, however, was acute sensory perception and sensitivity. In similar observations, Malevich noted in *Nova generatsiia:* "There are movements of small tension and movements of great tension, and there is also a movement which our eye cannot catch although it can be felt."[77]

Throughout the remaining teens and on into the twenties, Matyushin continued to expand on his theories of Spatial Realism. Like Malevich, Matyushin published a summary of his findings in *Nova generatsiia* in a long, but clearly organized article entitled "An Attempt at a New Sensation of Space" (see appendix C).[78] The events leading up to the appearance of Matyushin's article in *Nova generatsiia* are uncertain; his long association with K. Malevich may have given him the impetus to publish his ideas alongside those of his colleague in the Kharkiv periodical. It can also be speculated that just as Malevich was encountering increased pressure and meddling by the government in his formalist pursuits, Matyushin too had no other outlet in Soviet Russia at the time through which to express his theoretical postulations or even expound on his formalist practices. Matyushin's essay was originally prepared for publication at Inkhuk (Institute of Artistic Culture) in Moscow in 1926 where it only reached galley stage. The article written for *Nova generatsiia,* however, was written exclusively for that journal.[79]

The spirit of Bohomazov's works during the period just prior to the Ring exhibition and shortly thereafter, works dated from 1913 to 1916 in particular, reflect (as did Matyushin's exercises) the artist's consuming concern with the subtle movements in nature. In an untitled charcoal drawing of 1914 (fig. 3-18), the directional forces within Bohomazov's work are set into motion as a result of the artist's trying to record the unseen vibrations in nature. In this active "environment of volumes," as Bohomazov describes it, one senses an uncontrolled agitation which envelops the space depicted. A clear, conventional horizon line establishes reference to the natural world, but Futurist dynamism and "lines of force" draw out the internal rhythm of that world. The deep middle ground in Bohomazov's drawing where the diagonal lies, indicates a forceful thrust of directional movement surrounding a lone figure, a miniscule form, which in turn is overcome with an inner dynamism of its own. For Bohomazov, the emphasis placed on "sensation" was significant in that it "struggles with the ordinary knowledge of the subject." An expression of this kind bears association with the quest for contrast in art which N. Kul'bin propagated in his "Free Art as the Basis of Life: Harmony and Dissonance in Nature." Kul'bin's essay, it will be remembered, served as a philosophical basis for the Union of Seven artists who adopted Kul'bin's ideas with great verve. Matyushin, too, structured his study of nature by stressing the unison of the "outer form and inner structure in a single point of

Figure 3-18. Oleksander Bohomazov, Untitled, 1914
(Private collection)

tension."[80] It is this point of contrast which makes art alive, vital, active, and most important. Convinced of this, it is through contrast or differentiation that Bohomazov chose to bring forth those very sensations found in the environment. In another drawing of 1914 (fig. 3-19) Bohomazov records these contrasts in nature by carefully observing the plasticity of urban topography.[81]

Bohomazov's works were singled out by the young critic (and first biographer of Exter) Ya. Tugendkhol'd, who wrote: "the imprinted rhythms of the drawings of Bohomazov seem to polemicize with the brilliant manner of the Impressionist paintings. The artist is perplexed by an uncontrollable desire to transmit nature as real—to underscore all of its outlines, its structure, its skeleton."[82] This kind of orientation, already keenly perceived by Tugendkhol'd, was the first step toward the development of an abstract idiom among Ukrainian artists. Bohomazov's organization of the Ring exhibition, moreover, was the first public display of local artists beginning to understand the medium in its raw and nondescriptive aspects. Furthermore, the basic premise behind the Ring exhibition was very similar to the precepts to be outlined by Semenko in Panfuturism five years later, particularly as regards the breaking down of art into fundamental component parts in order to elicit artistic synthesis among all the media. The impact of Bohomazov's elementarist and fundamental approach to New Art is supported by some of the titles of the works by various of the other Ring exhibitors: S. S—ov, *Grey Motifs* (#261) and *Sun Study* (#253); M. Levin, *Color Gelatin* (#174-#179) and *Color Windows* (#181-#182); Ekaterina Vasilieva, *Study in the Movement of Colors* (#104) and *Drawings from the Poems of Livshits in the Movement of Colors* (#105). Many of these titles suggest formal problems and exercises rather than completed representational works. Nevertheless, they indicate that struggling with the grammar of art was a challenge heartily welcomed by the artists, moreso than the simple and ordinary representation of an object. Significant also was the fact that this was not merely formal experimentation: this new, innovative activity in art was bolstered by strict theoretical principles.

Bohomazov's ideas, as already seen through his works, were a blend of many of the urgent current issues of art discussed at the time. In fact, Bohomazov's emphasis on the four basic elements—line, form, color, and the picture plane—which dictated the theme of the Ring exhibition in Kiev in 1914, echoed ideas first suggested by V. Kandinsky in "Kuda idet 'novoe iskusstvo'?" [Whither the 'New Art'?] which he published in Odessa in 1911: "art is turning to those very media without which we cannot conceive of it and which we acknowledge as eternal language: in literature—the word, in music—sound, in sculpture—volume, in architecture—line, in painting—color."[83] While for Kandinsky at this stage only color and form were the

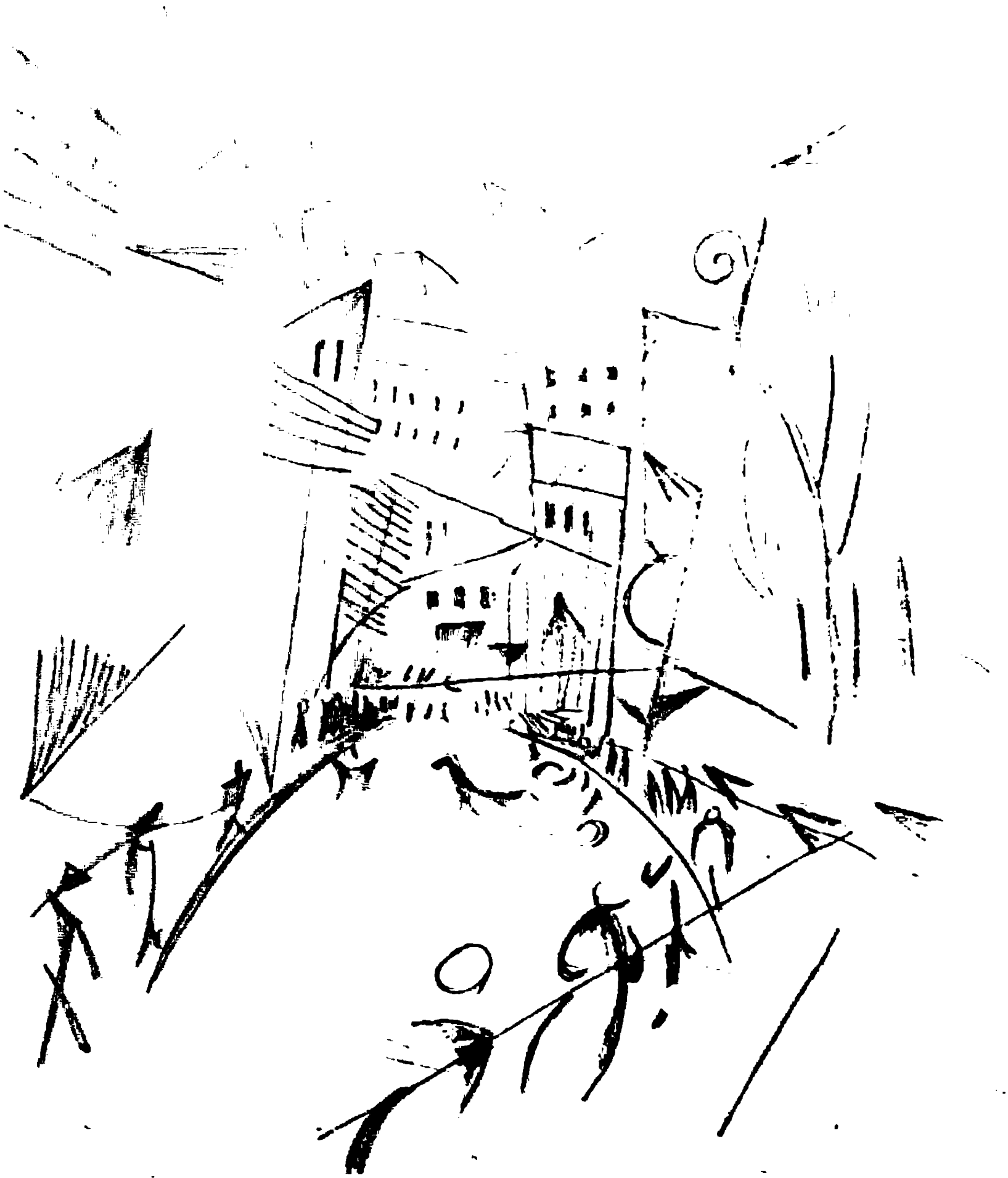


Figure 3-19. Oleksander Bohomazov, Untitled, 1914
(Private collection)

major subdivisions comprising all the elements of art (even though eventually he would elaborate on the significance of line and plane in his essay *Punkt und Linie zu Fläche* [From Point and Line to Plane]), Bohomazov extended the grammar of art to give line and the picture plane equal status along with color and form. Bohomazov reconciled his four-point categorization of artistic units with a synthesis of all the arts in general by suggesting that "elements of all the Arts have one nature—only that material which the art utilizes changes—but the principle of relationships to that material is absolutely the same for all the arts." In this context, the most compelling aspect of Bohomazov's grammar, therefore, was that "the Artist ought to be able to translate the sensation from one Medium into another in order to find such rhythmic expressions of the elements in the visual sensation which would carry within them the possibility of a reverse sensation of another order."

In keeping with this synthetic approach later to become a signpost of Panfuturism—the Ring exhibition was a display of various aspects of art: architecture, sculpture, graphic works, and stage design. That "generalizing principle" of which Panfuturism spoke could be found by analyzing the separate elements which are contained in all the arts. This would ultimately create a synthesis of art. This thinking was confluent with what Kandinsky proposed in *On the Spiritual in Art:* "comparing one art with another unites them in an *inner* aspiration . . . one must learn from another how it can use its own media."[84] In essence, what both Bohomazov and Kandinsky were suggesting is that an element such as color can be an expression not only of visual sensation, but also of auditory and even gustatory and olfactory sensations as well. The synaesthesic approach in Bohomazov's theory was the result of his preoccupation with movement and dynamic energy: "Each sensation has its own mass. Particular quantities determine visual sensations and each separate quantity of mass contains its own energy."[85] This synaesthetic approach was taken even further by both artists to include taste and smell as well. "Sight should harmonize not only with taste but with all the other senses," said Kandinsky in *On the Spiritual in Art*, "one might assume that light arouses the sensation of acid in the taste organs because of its association with a lemon."[86]

Similarly, Bohomazov drew on the dynamic qualities inherent in Futurism to develop a concept of "color thinking" or "color feeling," and exposed his own synaesthetic intentions when he wrote in "The Art of Painting": "the audial sensation from a musical work can be translated into the visual." Kandinsky's own research in music and painting equivalents was also initiated at this very same time, but his studies were more akin to those of Kul'bin and the composer Skriabin, who drew parallels between the seven colors of the spectrum and the seven notes of the diatonic scale. For his part, Bohomazov offered the notion of white sound.[87] Bohomazov's analogies between painting and music were not as rigidly codified however:

> One can speak of color in music, of movement and tension of musical forms and lines. Widespread among singers, for example, is the concept of white sound which by itself expresses the absence of expressiveness. It would probably be better to call such a sound empty or colorless.
>
> And conversely, there are sounds which are clear, lush, powerful, etc., just as colors are sombre, loud, happy, etc. All of that is so related, so close to painting, that one evokes the other. In the elements of those two arts, the general nature of their development—movement—is revealed so amazingly distinctly that often it gives rise to homogeneous rhythmic values: there are short sounds, thick ones, thin ones, green, red, yellow, etc.[88]

Nikolai Kul'bin, in a joint article with Nikolai Foregger, published the only known commentary on the 1914 Ring exhibition. Their article appeared in the Kiev journal, *Muzy* [Muses],[89] a publication of 1913–14 which not only highlighted the issues of Futurism in art, literature, and the theatre, but also focused on the Kiev avant-garde. Instead of Bohomazov's works, however, Kul'bin and Foregger selected individual works by Vasilieva to illustrate the article.[90] All in all, the individuality of Ukrainian art was beginning to take shape. Relatively obscure artists living in Kiev who had never traveled to Western Europe, such as Boris Andreevich Barbot-de-Marni, Khristian Kron, Isaak Moiseevich Rabinovich, Nisson Abramovich Shifrin, Sarra Shor, were already breaking with the mode of traditional academism by selecting to join in the Ring exhibition and to contribute their varied works to it. Two years later, at the Exhibition in the City Museum in 1916,[91] Bohomazov's works won the attention of the critics and his perspicacious resolution of formal problems in art made way for innovative mutations and adaptations of Western modernism in Ukrainian art. One of the final exhibitions to take place in Kiev just prior to the Revolution summarized in name, and assuredly so in the items submitted, the varied modernist ambitions of Kiev artists. The name of the show was *Vinets* [Crown], but was subtitled the "Exhibition of Pictures of 'Individualist' Artists."

While both Kiev and Kharkiv each had their own distinctive groups which gave these cities their individual artistic physiognomies, a third center, Odessa and its environs, provided a climate for modernist invention in the visual arts quite unlike the atmosphere to be found in the other two cities. Exter's role in breaking the seclusion of Ukrainian artists went unabated, even as concerns this outlying and most southern region. Photographs of the latest works of Parisian Cubism and Italian Futurism proliferated from her Kiev apartment, and in the early 1910s David Burliuk took these reproductions to Chernianka, in the south of the Ukraine, where fellow artists studied them assiduously.[92] Until that time, and as a result of the impact made by the Association of Traveling Exhibitions (the Wanderers), the art of the Realists had made a profound impression on the local artistic talent of Odessa. As a result, a Ukrainian counterpart to the Russian Peredvizhniki was formed in the south with its base in the port city. The Odessa-based Association of South

Rus' Artists (known by its acronym TYuRKh)[93] was formed in 1890 and lasted through 1922. It was organized by the initiators of, and participants in, local and regional exhibition activity in the south of the Ukraine during the 1880s—K. K. Kostandi, M. H. Kuznetsov, H. O. Ladyzhens'kyi, and the sculptor B. V. Eduards. This represented a rather original group of Ukrainian artists, each of whom had an organic tie with artists of various regions of the Ukraine. The main figure of the group was Kiriak K. Kostandi (1852–1921), founder and long-standing president of the Association.

The prominent feature of TYuRKh was its orientation toward realism, although intermittent ventures into purely formal problems among its members could also be detected.[94] Vasily Kandinsky, for instance, exhibited annually with TYuRKh beginning in 1898,[95] as did Vladimir Izdebsky, the Odessa sculptor, who, along with David Burliuk and Natan Al'tman, contributed to the annual TYuRKh exhibitions until 1911.

Of those who were beginning to turn their backs on realism, V. Izdebsky is particularly worthy of note. V. Izdebsky, like Kandinsky, was a former student at the Odessa Art School and was known to the Odessa art circles as a formalist sculptor. In 1909, with the assistance of Alexandre Mercereau, Izdebsky assembled over seven hundred works for an exhibition of new art in Odessa. There were two such exhibitions during the winters of 1909–10 and 1910–11. Kandinsky assisted Izdebsky in organizing the exhibitions in Odessa and thus still maintained ties with the city where he first trained as an artist. Hence, although a champion of modernism in Germany and a pioneer of Blue Rider expressionism, Kandinsky still continued to retain a favorable degree of contact with the local artists of the Ukraine.

With the famed Izdebsky exhibitions, the first great exposure to modern European art (with further-ranging consequences than the local exhibitions in Kharkiv or Kiev) was brought to Ukrainian soil. The first was a show of mainly imported works from France. Here the works of A. Exter, M. Matyushin, G. Lukomsky, A. A. Krüger-Prakhova, P. Volokydin and N. Al'tman, among others, were exhibited alongside the post-Impressionists and the Nabis (Signac, Bonnard, Vuillard, Valloton), the Symbolists (Maurice Denis, Odilon Redon), the Cubists (Braque, Gleizes, Metzinger, Laurencin), the Fauves (Van Dongen, Vlaminck, and Matisse), and the Futurist Balla. Its success led to a subsequent exhibition, or "International Salon," as it was called, the following year. The exhibition went on tour throughout the Empire, showing in St. Petersburg, Riga, and Kiev.[96] The event did not pass without bitter controversy, however. Kostandi, president of TYuRKh and stalwart supporter of what might be called "realist modernism" (as opposed to "formalist modernism")[97] strongly protested the occurrence of these exhibitions. His stance led to lively debates in the Odessa newspapers about what is modern art.[98] This resulted in a scandalous falling out between the

two, and Izdebsky was attacked for brainwashing some unknowing TYuRKh members such as P. O. Levchenko and I. F. Kolesnikov, who unaware of the more formalist direction taking shape in the exhibition, also sent their works to the Izdebsky Salon. When the Salon traveled to St. Petersburg, similar protests were instigated by the father of Russian Realist painting, Ilya Repin.

With the momentous historical precedent of the Izdebsky Salons, the tendentious realism practiced by the Wanderers was finally overturned and a new wave of formalist artistic expression took hold, nurtured continuously by an exchange of ideas with the West. While Exter fostered a close contact with French and Italian artists, the Burliuks maintained a vital association with German modernism. In the autumn of 1910, both Vladimir and David Burliuk took part in the second exhibition of the Neue Künstlervereinigung,[99] and an influential interchange with Central Europe was established by the strong Slavic contingent in the German Expressionist movement of the Blaue Reiter group—Bekhteev, Jawlensky, Werefkina, Münter, and Kandinsky. At Kandinsky's invitation, David Burliuk took part in the exhibitions of the Blaue Reiter; and on many other occasions, his works were well exhibited throughout Germany and parts of Eastern Europe.[100] He thus brought attention to the artistic worldview of the Slavs who until that time were considered artistically unaccomplished by Western standards and—because of their isolation and distance—inconsequential to the mainstream of modern art.

To combat such attitudes, and as if perhaps to parallel Franz Marc's *Blaue Reiter* article on the "savages" of Germany, Burliuk accentuated the presence of a flourishing modern aesthetic among the Slavs, one concomitant with Western objectives, in his *Blaue Reiter Almanac* article of May 1912.[101] In his remarks, Burliuk took a somewhat haughty and argumentative tone, and attempted to display his own artistic erudition by citing the works and writings of contemporary French painters. His manner was meant to suggest that, although Slavic art had some distance to go in order to reach the same heights of modernist expression already recognized in the West, there was already a storehouse of artistic accomplishment in Slavic culture that had to be reckoned with. This situation was remedied by the second Izdebsky Salon, when, as if by a reversal in circumstances and symbiotic blending of East and West, the German Expressionists were featured in Odessa together with the works of the Burliuks, Exter, Arthur Fon-Vizen, and even Vladimir Tatlin. One of Kandinsky's woodcuts was used for the printed cover of the catalogue.

The assimilation and exploration of purely formal art in the Ukraine in the first decade of the twentieth century was rapid; and the path toward any achievement was, at best, uneven and marked by sporadic successes. Nonetheless, the fact that such activity did take place in unrecognized hubs,

and in locations far from the mainstream, already gives evidence of choices and conscious decisions made by individual artists to seek out an original artistic language. They wished this language to be modern and correlative with existent trends, but also both unique by virtue of geographic distancing and avant-garde by local standards. Kiev, Kharkiv, and Odessa formed that geographic triangle that identified the spread of the Ukrainian artistic avant-garde during the teens. In the twenties, Kiev and Kharkiv (both designated capitals of the Ukraine at different times) were to become the seats of concrete and practical artistic adaptation of what was only purely formal experimentation in artistic language before the Revolution. These issues will be addressed in the following chapter.

4

From Futurism through Constructivism

By the late 1910s, the Futurists of the pre-Revolutionary years were beginning to reveal their changing image. This may have had something to do with a rising degree of disinterestedness in pure adventures into formal experimentation, or the fact that the question of art's role in society became more of a burning issue. Perhaps the newly declared independence sparked their artistic fervor. Whatever the motivation, by the time the Revolution broke out, artists were ripe and ready to seize the opportunity and to take a leading role in shaping a modern Ukrainian culture. In 1910, A. Gastev already prognosticated this change when he analyzed the New Art in an article for the Union of Seven *Sbornik*. He took the liberty of dividing the Futurists into two camps. The first he called the "perceivers of life," the second, the "doers of life."[1] The first category could easily have included those artists and literati such as the Kvero-Futurists who broke with convention not only in form, but also in content; or those who used the word Futurist as a catch-all designation or conventional term to indicate any new pursuits in art. Oleksander Bohomazov continued to seek Futurist dynamism and agitation in nature even after 1917; but after that time, the subjects of his works change, although his initial pursuits remain unfettered. The fleeting figures that one passed on Kiev streets leaving behind their rays of movement in Bohomazov's works are gradually replaced by more solidly constructed figures in the act of intense, concentrated labor. Sensation is now examined by Bohomazov not in terms of passing lines, but in terms of different degrees of color vibrancy.

This distinction in the visual arts marked the transition from purely experimental art, coinciding with that analytical, searching side of Panfuturism called the destructive phase, to a direction aimed at a constructive artistic future. Part of this transition was undoubtedly based on political reality, coming about only after the great changes in the post-Revolutionary socio-political climate. However, part of it had to be attributed to the more systematic and principled artistic training programs which began to spring up throughout the Ukraine, concentrated mainly in Kiev, Kharkiv, and Odessa. The kind of teaching that began to permeate the art schools

joined the changing ideology to bring about the new orientation. A critical institution to promote the new learning was the Art Trade School Workshop of Decorative Painting in Kharkiv, which produced an entire generation of Kharkiv avant-garde artists who became active in more practical, constructive ways in society. Ladislav Yosyfovych Trakal (d.u.), living and working in Kharkiv and director of the Kharkiv Art Trade School Workshop, organized and modeled its pedagogical program on the system of the Prague Art School: the curriculum consisted of a four-year program of which three full years were regarded as practicum. In the fourth year, each student had his own exhibition, culminating in the attestation of "Master of Decorative Painting." At fifteen years of age, Yermilov was the youngest student to receive this title in 1909.[2] The copying of Western originals was highly advocated as a method of teaching in Trakal's school. Watercolor, oil, and tempera painting were taught thoroughly, as were drafting, modeling, and perspective.

Another artistic institution in Kharkiv responsive to the more practical demands on artists of the new generation was the Kharkiv Art Guild, known to have been in existence since at least 1914, but definitely by 1916.[3] Located at 14 Sumsky Street next to the Artists' Cabaret in Kharkiv's Salamander Building, the Guild promoted a craftsman's approach to art. The teaching force of the Kharkiv Art Guild was comprised of artists such as Leonora Blokh (former student of A. Rodin), E. A. Agafonov, S. Dziuba, Nadezhda Eingorn, K. Kostenko, O. Kostenko, P. T. Kovalenko, L. Rozenberg, and Maximilian Voloshin. Former Union of Seven members, such as Mané-Katz, H. Yanovyts'kyi, and I. Ivanov, found refuge here after the Union of Seven disbanded. Other individuals, such as V. Averin, Eduard Steinberg, and I. Erenburg assisted in the promotion of the Guild's ideals, particularly by writing articles for its journal, *Tvorchestvo* [Creativity], edited by I. Ya. Rabinovich beginning in January of 1919.

In its aspirations, if not in its name, the Kharkiv Art Guild was formed on the communal, composite character of the medieval system for artists-craftsmen and evoked the concurrent spirit of the Weimar Bauhaus. Just as the Bauhaus artists symbolized their efforts in the image of a medieval cathedral, so too the artists of the Kharkiv Guild declared: "Based upon the popular beliefs of the medieval period when raising a building, it is necessary to lay the foundation of a living essence and to place the cornerstone on [that very force of life]—its blood; the building will never deteriorate. In the last five years [we have] apparently followed the medieval testament: we have done much in order that the building never fall down. . . ."[4] The Kharkiv artists, like their Bauhaus contemporaries, used the symbol of the building as indication of an artistic product that was both useful for society and aesthetically productive in terms of fulfilling specific artistic aims. Moreso, it was a symbol of mutual collaboration in the making of art. The idea of a collective also had

its positive overtones for the bettering of society, and for defining the role of the artist within that society. This statement, therefore, gives reference to the process of art, to the confluence of design and function, and finally, to the idea of permanence. Although the Kharkiv Art Guild was not promulgating architecture as such (as was certainly the case with the long-existent Deutscher Werkbund, which formed the model for the German Bauhaus), the declaration of the Kharkiv Art Guild did bear a remarkable resemblance to the 1919 Bauhaus Manifesto of Walter Gropius, especially in the idea of an edifice as the ultimate artistic product and in its focus on the process of "building" itself. Coinciding with Bauhaus aims, the Kharkiv Art Guild also made no essential distinction between the artist and the craftsman. The Guild was assembled on a network of workshops which interacted among each other. In October 1918 a special Section of Painters and Sculptors was opened and divided into two workshops—the decorative and the graphic—which collaborated closely with the Guild's Theatre Section. As applied art became the central focus for the Guild, knowledge of the nature of materials became of utmost importance. I. Erenburg, a member of the presidium of the Kharkiv Art Guild, and the painter Mané-Katz, expressed it thus:

> Like a building, man is constructed of blocks, of a multitude of forms, and for an artist, it is important to know, is it brick or granite? Therefore, for him, there is no dead material; every inch of the picture lives its separate life, has its own individuality, its character. It is not the distribution of man or objects into dry geometric bodies; it is penetration into the very essence of the form.[5]

Reports of activities within the Kharkiv Art Guild were reported in the chronicles of the Guild's publication, *Tvorchestvo*. In composition, *Tvorchestvo* was very much a miscellany combining the productionist aims of the Guild with discussion and inclusion of articles on diverse subjects of art and literature. Granted, contemporary critics (unaware of the multifarious nature of the Guild) were perplexed by the seemingly unrelated subject matter contained in its journal. A single issue, for instance, included extracts from the writings of contemporary authors (O. Mandel'shtam, Andrei Askalon, Georgii Shengeli, and Vasyl' Picheta), combined with translations of Italian short stories of the Renaissance and the plays of Romain Rolland. Also included was an article by the Russian intellectual A. G. Gronfel'd (a contributor to *Russkoe Bogatstvo* [Russian Treasures]—a journal on Russian antiquity), next to articles on Russian and Jewish *lubki*, and an essay on *Kozak Mamai*, an avenger of the common people depicted in Ukrainian popular genre. One reviewer contended that *Tvorchestvo* was nothing more than an attempt of the Ukrainian editors "to throw dust into the eyes of the capital"[6] and to create a Ukrainian journal copying the Russian *Apollon*. Indeed, both *Apollon* and *Tvorchestvo* were oriented toward the applied arts

and displayed directly the craftswork of its artists by allowing them to take charge of the decorative layout of its pages. The Russian journal *Apollon*, however, was not associated with any single art group as directly as was *Tvorchestvo* with the Kharkiv Art Guild. Furthermore, *Tvorchestvo* was a major milestone in the kind of synthetic artistic pursuits around Kharkiv introduced by the Futurists at Krasna Poliana and developed further by the Union of Seven. It was a forum in which an interest in past art was fused with the art of the present, where fine art and folk art could be discussed in the same context, and alongside a discussion of the performing arts and literature. In its uniting of all artistic media and its blending of a contemporary view with a concern for the past, *Tvorchestvo* was more often widely praised than criticized, and was summarily described as "truly a journal of an art guild and not a pillar for the pasting of posters and advertisements. . . ."[7] Frequently, former contributors to *Apollon* submitted their articles to *Tvorchestvo*.

What was important about the Kharkiv Art Guild was that, though modeled on the medieval guild system with an emphasis on craft, it also reflected the new proletarian attitudes which pervaded the industrial city. By virtue of this type of training, the Kharkiv avant-garde artists became "leftist" in their social orientation, a feature which began to alter the physiognomy of art in Kharkiv. The Kharkiv Art Guild, with its underlying principle of proletarian painting, promoted this new orientation, as did artistic groups such as the *Soiuz Levykh* [Union of Leftists] and the *Soiuz Iskusstv* [Union of Arts].[8] The change of direction harbored by the newly emerging art associations replaced the more whimsical nature of groups such as the Blue Lily, the Green Owl, or the Thistle.

The Union of Arts was founded in the spring of 1918, filling the void left by the dissolution of the Association of Kharkiv Artists in 1916. Its formation was the outcome of a deeply felt need to unify all the divergent artistic groupings in Kharkiv. Even though its role was more organizational than ideological, it proposed, at least in principle, "to add the broadest strata of society to the arts and to do research into the ways of installing art into the life of the people."[9] Over two hundred activists in all the various media of art were incorporated into this bureaucratic body, whose main purpose was to provide a service for the cultural life of Kharkiv. The Kharkiv Union of Arts sponsored series of musical evenings, lectures, concerts, and even art exhibitions. Many of the Union of Seven artists displayed their works in the First Exhibition of the Union of Arts in 1918. In addition to integrating the art workshops of Kharkiv, a major long-range goal of the Union of Arts was to erect a House of Art in the city. But these were only temporary, rudimentary measures taken as a response to the need for more organization—and perhaps control—of artistic groups taking liberties in the wake of political, social, and economic revolution. The aim to take control on the part of the Union of Arts

represented a mere interlude. Of all existing artistic unions in Kharkiv at the time, the Kharkiv Art Guild successfully retained its posture of presenting a uniform set of goals and consistent point of view, one in concert and tightly connected to the newly burgeoning proletarian strength of the city. The craftsmanship which it so vigorously promoted contributed to the functionalism of productionist art, and ultimately to the birth of Kharkiv Constructivism. The principles underlying the program at the Guild led to practical artistic ends, ones confluent and responsive to the needs of a society ensconsed in the confusing aftermath of social upheaval.

A prime example of the artists' direct involvement in these affairs occurred in 1919 when Vasyl' Yermilov, together with the artist Bernard Kratko[10] opened the *Uchbovo-vyrobnychi maisterni* [Teaching-Productionist Workshops] of Kharkiv. These were separate and distinct from the Kharkiv Art Guild and similar in nature to the Vkhutemas [Higher Technical-Artistic Studios] of Moscow. The aim of the Teaching-Productionist Workshops was "to open a new type of school where there would be no professors, no students, but only masters and apprentices. The school—a productionist entity would continuously supply an artistic design product, design state and civil commissions, and in this way, be directly associated with life. Only then could it create useful objects for living people and not for museums."[11] Even though the Kharkiv Art Guild concurrently pursued the "medieval" orientation of the Bauhaus, the Teaching-Productionist Workshops were more similar to the organization of the Bauhaus in their aim to experiment with design and create an artistic product, and especially in their promotion of a technical aesthetic, i.e., the creation of objects for everyday living. A conscious rejection of mere representational art on a flat surface characterized the activities of the participants in the Teaching-Productionist Workshops, as is evidenced by the workshop career of O. Khvostenko-Khvostov,[12] who came to be known as a Constructivist set designer in the Kharkiv art circles, aligned himself with the Constructivist faction of Kharkiv, and contributed to their journal, *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu* [Artistic Materials of "Avangard"]. Another artist, A. Basekhes, also became a theatre designer. Still others, the sculptors, Zh. Dindo[13] and M. Novosel'skyi,[14] brought their new awareness of art process and material to the medium of sculpture. Because of their training, the artists of the Teaching-Productionist Workshops viewed the elements of art in a very practical light: "When art by its colors and lines creates newly organized forms on a surface, different from the realities of life, then the Constructivist deems it necessary to pull these forms from the surface, and in that way, they become objects themselves, but now artistically designed."[15] Yermilov's work was clearly exemplary of such convictions. He proved his commitment to these principles and dexterity in carrying them out by making minor, more intimate objects of

everyday living, such as shelves, tables, and frames. In describing Yermilov's products, his colleague Bernard Kratko recalled, "I am familiar with the work of Yermilov on the simple stool; [he made] an entire series of stools in which each one gives a new Constructivist beginning to the art of wood-making: i.e., [they are] extremely economical (in material and in working time), and with that, beautiful, new and artistic."[16] Despite the fact that artistic materials were limited during the time, Yermilov continued to produce with "maximum expediency," and carried out one of the major dicta of the Teaching-Productionist Workshops. As one observer wrote:

> The maximum accumulation of material and surface was, in those times, not only a principle, but a necessity. That is why the most effective posters of the first years of the Revolution still impress us even today, and will continue to impress with their maximal effect, by joining the goal with its artistic means. This was necessary to give the greatest visual and actual effect to counterbalance the paucity and limitations of the materials.[17]

Before Yermilov became actively engaged in the activities of the Teaching-Productionist Workshops, he and Kosariev participated in making posters for UkrROSTA, the Ukrainian chapter of the Russian Telegraph Agency. This institution, with its branches in all territories once a part of the Russian Empire, was a mechanism for the Russians to still hold control over these regions even after individual nations had already declared independence from Russian intervention. As a propagandistic device utilized effectively to agitate and proselytize socialist ideas among the populace and to align the universal proletariat under Russian hegemony, the *agit-prop* art of ROSTA was also oftentimes highly defamatory in its antinational images. From September 1919 to February 1922, ROSTA commissioned posters for mass propaganda as a means of disseminating information on the Civil War. At other times, upon the receipt of prompt news releases, groups of artists were required to illustrate the information spontaneously, sometimes caricaturing it, producing a humorous synopsis of both information and commentary. The work was as difficult as it was intense, dictated by a frenzied atmosphere filled with hourly deadlines. Those who worked for ROSTA painted and drew satirical scenes of world events and then put them on display in the windows of shops and workers' clubs. In most cases, writers and artists collaborated on these window projects. While the artists caricatured and illustrated the content, poets would compose rhyming verses which served to elucidate the subject in a witty manner. Many cities in Russia had a branch of ROSTA. In the Ukraine, Kharkiv and Odessa were the two major outlets for the organization. Kosariev had worked in both cities, while Yermilov stayed in Kharkiv. The stencil art of UkrROSTA was also extended to the design of agit-trains, or propaganda locomotives. Yermilov's reputation as an artist of the revolution was based largely on his designs for these trains that traveled

the countryside and spread socialist ideas. Posterlike stencil designs glued to the train cars appeared as if the design had been physically painted onto the cars. Once the image was recorded, Yermilov's technique was to paint on it and draw over the already stenciled surface. In some cases, however, wagons were painted directly, following the artist's preliminary sketches.

As with UkrROSTA windows and agit-trains, May Day celebrations were also given concentrated artistic attention to attract and edify the new citizens for a future workers' society. Kosariev described how a small group of artists were responsible for five thousand posters for the May Day festivities which were to be on display in Kharkiv and Odessa. Stenciled tableaux, painted in various colors, embellished the streets and squares of all major cities and small towns beginning in 1918, and continue to do so to this very day. In his special contributions to these celebrations, Yermilov began to work with concrete workaday objects and materials. He designed fences, flags, the stage, and automobiles, i.e., "the content of the street," and became a skilled builder of platforms and gala entrance arches. The Soviet-Russian government was fortunate, in fact, to have available to it the exceptional artistic talent of those such as Yermilov. The vigor with which this government promoted the socialist revolution in the Ukraine is transmitted in the art. The May Day decor was most striking in its pervasiveness, its immediacy, and its bold optimism. Yermilov's role in setting the trends for this kind of decor remained unchallenged. An eyewitness recounts: "All the streets and buildings shouted with colors, mottos, flowers, shields, and gateways of the work of V. Yermilov. This was the pathos of the revolution in colors. Nothing was similar to it until now, and unfortunately, it did not remain a legacy. This was an inimitable style of an epoch."[18] The modernism lauded by Yermilov could only survive, however, as long as it aligned itself with these socialist dicta.

This period in the Kharkiv avant-garde came to be known as the *dyktovyi* [tableau] period of Ukrainian art. Because of Yermilov's vital participation in it (if not because of his trend setting leadership), it has, in retrospect, also been called the "Yermilovian period," christened so by the literary critic and historian Volodymyr Koriak. In addition to Yermilov and Kosariev, other artists involved in these activities were Synel'nykov, Pochtenyi, and two artists who had spent time in Paris before returning to the Ukraine. These were Fazin, who did many of the initial sketches for posters which Kosariev later enlarged to their actual size; and Abram Borysovych Kozlov, who first trained under K. Kostandi in Odessa.[19] As the trendsetter in this realm, however, Yermilov's street art ministered the greatest input and carried over into the interiors of workers' clubs, soldiers' barracks, etc.

Beginning with his diploma work of 1909 from Trakal's school, a mural panneau entitled "Monastery Wall," Yermilov's penchant for decorative wall

painting had been fostered from early on in his artistic career. In 1919, together with several other artists, he decorated the foyer of the Kharkiv Circus and executed murals based on Khlebnikov's poetry for the Actor's Building in Kharkiv. In rendering wall paintings for the Central Garrison of the Red Army Club in Kharkiv in 1920, for example, Yermilov fused the UkrROSTA stencil manner with the linear features of the Artists' Cabaret, designed by the Union of Seven in 1918. The subject of the interior decoration of the Red Army Club (located on Rymarsky Street in Kharkiv) featured peasant and city folk at labor—peasants in the fields, city people building factories. Yermilov frequently employed folk motifs in his rendering and among them were interspersed the titles and mottos of the day such as "Factories and industries—to the workers; the soil—to the peasants; education for all!" The slogans, executed in his distinctive Yermilovian script, created a compositional montage with the rest of the images. Yermilov's interior design allowed him to divest himself of the narcissistic pleasure of "art for oneself" and permitted him to devote himself to society through his art.[20] Contemporaneous to Boichuk, who revived the fresco technique and use of tempera at the Kiev Art Institue, so too, in Kharkiv, Yermilov also used the medieval medium of tempera paint to decorate the Artists' Cabaret. But whereas Boichuk's manner had come to be called "Neo-Byzantine," Yermilov's approach was described as being "a restrained attempt to utilize Cubo-Futurist devices."[21]

Always sensitive to the contemporary world and tied to the industrial environment of Kharkiv, Yermilov passed through European modernism, absorbing the tenets of both Cubism and Futurism, and molded these experiences into an avant-garde based on Constructive-Dynamism—an art of the proletariat under the aesthetic mark of Futurism. Vasyl' Sedliar, a contemporary Ukrainian artist and Boichukist from Kiev, responded to what he called the "hygienic" appearance of Yermilov's conceptions. By the use of this term, Sedliar wished to underscore the laconic simplicity and infectious technical expertise which was part of Yermilov's mastery. As testimony to this fact, Sedliar narrates how the productionist character of Yermilov's work even extended to the crates he constructed when sending his works to the All-Ukrainian Jubilee Exhibition in Kiev in 1927: "We received a crate of Yermilov's works. The box was built meticulously; it was screwed and not hammered with nails."[22] Because of a tersely compressed, architectonic clarity imposed upon his designs, Yermilov himself came to be regarded as an "artist-constructor," a master and organizer, the designer of a new lifestyle. This was all part of the training he received at the Teaching-Productionist Workshops, where the "material formulation of things" served as the foundation of artistic pedagogy.

The Teaching-Productionist Workshops of Kharkiv gave rise to Constructivist art in the Ukraine. Notwithstanding the importance of their

role, in 1920 the National Commissariat of Education (Narkomos) abolished them with the hope of totally reorganizing artistic education in the Ukraine and restructuring it under centralized supervision. Bernard Kratko became the chairman of the All-Ukraine Committee on the Visual Arts (Vseukrkomizo), while former Union of Seven member V. V. Bobryts'kyi became the chairman for the All-Ukraine Theatre Committee, both subdivisions of Narkomos. Understandably, the Committee on the Visual Arts postulated a program of pro-proletariat art. As its basic and single, all-encompassing task it proposed: "To listen keenly to the pulsation of the new rhythm of life and, in correlation with it, to destroy the oppressive copying of past generations, to project an outline for future rules of art, to create objective conditions for the free creative expression of the mass and to materially and technically assist in that expression."[23] The Committee then established a Central State Museum of Artistic Culture which, in 1921, sponsored its first annual All-Ukraine Exhibition of Artistic Culture. In addition, in 1920 the Committee finally reorganized Kharkiv's Teaching-Productionist Workshops into a State Factory of Artistic Industry with affiliates in Kiev, Yekaterynoslav, Odessa, Luhans'k and Poltava, each with its general office. It established a library, a logo, and stamp, and sponsored series of lectures and other forums for the discussion of art. Envisaged as an amalgamated "factory of art," seeking broad aesthetic methods in the visual arts, the Kharkiv State Factory of Artistic Industry was based on a "mutual corelationship of all art media into one harmonious whole, resting on a broad social basis."[24] Its major goal—to produce qualified workers in the visual arts—was based on presenting its students with an education in the productivist process while encouraging a mutual interconnection of pragmatism in all the visual arts media. In 1921, Yermilov became the master of the Factory's central workshop of artistic reproduction and agitation.

Despite the ongoing efforts of the State Factory of Artistic Industry, formal artistic education in Kharkiv was in a state of crisis, caused mainly by the lack of jobs and positions for its matriculated students, and by the dissolution of the Teaching-Productionist Workshops. Consequently, there was a deeply felt need to reorganize the *vuzy* [higher institutions] of art education in Kharkiv, a task for which V. Yermilov assumed most responsibility. The result was the creation of the Kharkiv Art Technicum.[25] After completing the Technicum, artists were expected to be able to work in clubs, on various demonstrations, satirical windows, and posters; and the themes of their labors were to "reflect moments of productionist work."[26]

Like the Kharkiv Art Guild upon which it was modeled, the Kharkiv Art Technicum also consisted of a series of workshops comprised of ten to fifteen individuals. Yermilov was in charge of the graphics workshop. Among his students were Maria Kotliarevs'ka[27] and Oleksander Dovhal'[28] who eventually joined Yermilov in the Constructivist-Dynamists. The

overwhelming emphasis in these workshops was on the technology of materials. Eventually, the Art Technicum was absorbed by the Kharkiv Art Institute and its productionist principles became the mainstay of Kharkiv Constructivism throughout the 1920s.

Yermilov's axial role in the evolution of Ukrainian Constructivism was certain. From the moment of his participation in the First Proletarian Art Exhibition of Kharkiv in 1919, his break with academic and easel art had been complete. Even then, as a "master of decorative painting," Yermilov integrated the purely visual arts with the artistic design of functional items such as tobacco and cigarette boxes and album and book designs. When, in 1922, Yermilov won a gold medal at the International Graphics Exhibition in Leipzig, his works in lithography, book covers and posters "simply amazed the perceiver by their unusual sparingness and restraint in coloration and drawing on the one hand, and by their brightness on the other,"[29] and brought to him the acclaim of having forged a new aesthetics for Ukrainian art.

Yermilov also executed two *stinhazety* [wall newspapers], for one of which, *Generator* (fig. 4-1), he received a prize at Cologne's International Press Exhibition in 1928. Yermilov began the construction of wall newspapers during his years at the Kharkiv Art Technicum, where he conducted the graphics workshop from 1922. As the wall newspapers were viewed in the hallways of the Technicum, one observer noted:

> On the first encounter, it was as if this was an ordinary wall newspaper but separated from the wall; but in order that the back surface not be lost, Yermilov folded it into a square roll and placed it on a high and light tabouret so that the text would fall at the same level as the level of the eye. Upon this were painted or written notes, news items pasted on cards which were conveniently placed in the grooves or slots of the high tabouret, and the newspaper could be read from four sides. Essentially, this was a synthesis of a pedestal, a frame and the wall newspaper, but Yermilov still endowed it with simple beautiful proportions and connectedness such that the entire wall newspaper embellished the empty portion of the entire hall.[30]

In many ways, the wall newspapers were modeled on Yermilov's collapsible kiosks built of standard sections which could easily be disassembled, moved, and reconstructed. The simplicity of their design took into account the surrounding light and shadow; and they were so conceived that the essential sections were placed in the most auspicious position in relation to the body and the reader's eye level. In *Generator*, for example, the simple parts of the design simulated the parts of a generator, while the wall newspaper, *Kanatka* [Cable] (fig. 4-2), was described by a contemporary "as if capturing the idea of a complex icon."[31] In both these works, Yermilov created wall constructions where the play of colors not only emphasized this or that section of the newspaper, but also advanced the basic idea, i.e., the newsbreaker, placed in the front plane for easy optical attention. Employing

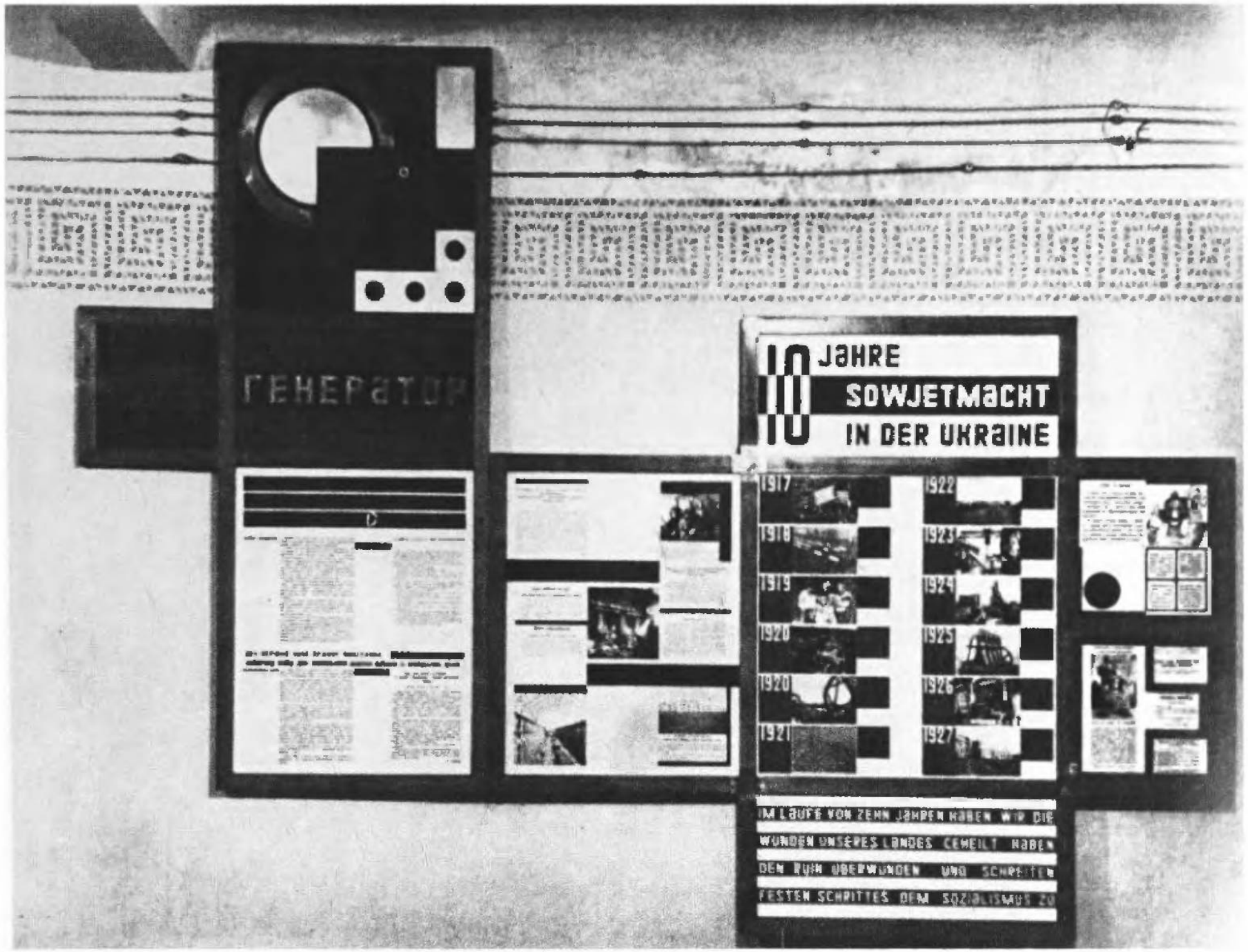


Figure 4-1. Vasyl' Yermilov, *Generator*, 1927
Wall newspaper.
(Photograph from Zinovii Fogel', Vasilii Ermilov, *Moskva: Sovetskoi khudozhnik, 1975)*

Figure 4-2. Vasyl' Yermilov, *Kanatka*, 1928
Wall newspaper.
(Photograph from Zinovii Fogel', Vasilii Ermilov, *Moskva: Sovetskoi khudozhnik, 1975)*

polished wood, burnished copper, rough cloth, and paper, the idea of the poster was here fused with the idea of the newspaper itself.

The development of Yermilov's career from mural painting to constructed works coincided with Malevich's vision of the New Art as described in *Nova generatsiia:* "... all earlier painterly *surface* of the picture in Cubism, as we have already examined it, developed in a vertical direction.... the process should continue in a perpendicular direction."[32] Yermilov's complete break with easel art in the twenties and his embarkation on the road to construction was precisely the fulfillment of Malevich's utopian endeavors to bring art into real space through architectonic means. As acknowledged by Yermilov: "Painters must make color and line constructive, indeed for life, and not for the museum, just as the surface and the space is plastic. Form and the individual parts of a work belonging to it must correspond to each other in the way that entire complexes of forms do in real life—that is the task of the painter and of the plastic artist."[33]

In a low relief composition (fig. 4-3), Yermilov approaches the fusion of art and life literally. He builds his surface from the base layer by securing the background to it with screws. Items of everyday living, such as a culinary or carpenter's knife, a matchbox, and a piece of sandpaper are then glued overlapping each other. Yermilov's attachment of items of daily living to his painting surface, especially elements of a gastronomic order, was not an unusual exercise for the period: Kazimir Malevich attached a wooden spoon to his painting *An Englishman in Moscow* (Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam), while Ivan Puni secured a plate to his monochromatic surface and entitled it simply *Plate on Table* (1915). The matchbox in Yermilov's work—a Western product of the Vulcan Company—gives even greater reference to the abandonment of painterly principles in deference to pure construction.

Yermilov's work embodied an overall clarity and simplicity in keeping with the "hygienic" quality that V. Sedliar had already perceived in the artist's wall paintings. This is particularly evident in Yermilov's experimental compositions of 1922–24, where a stepped-up, gradated architectonic element prevails in his works. The relief of the surface of *Composition No. 13* (fig. 4-4) can be sensed by virtue of the light reflecting off of it. In *Composition No. 3* (Museum of Modern Art, Riklis Collection of McCrory Corporation) of 1923 (fig. 4-5), a straightedge, secured to a rectangular wooden frame forms a sharp right angle; the implementation of the carpenter's arc establishes a fine rhythmical balance against the hard terse edges throughout. Yermilov had been predisposed to this carpentering approach to art not only by his practical experience in the art of woodcraft but also by his association with the Futurists around Kharkiv. When (at the end of 1915) Yermilov's colleagues Khlebnikov, Syniakova, Burliuk, Petnikov, and Aseev had announced in the "Letorei" manifesto of the Liren' group: "We—the stern carpenters—again throw ourselves and our names into the bubbling pots of beautiful tasks,"

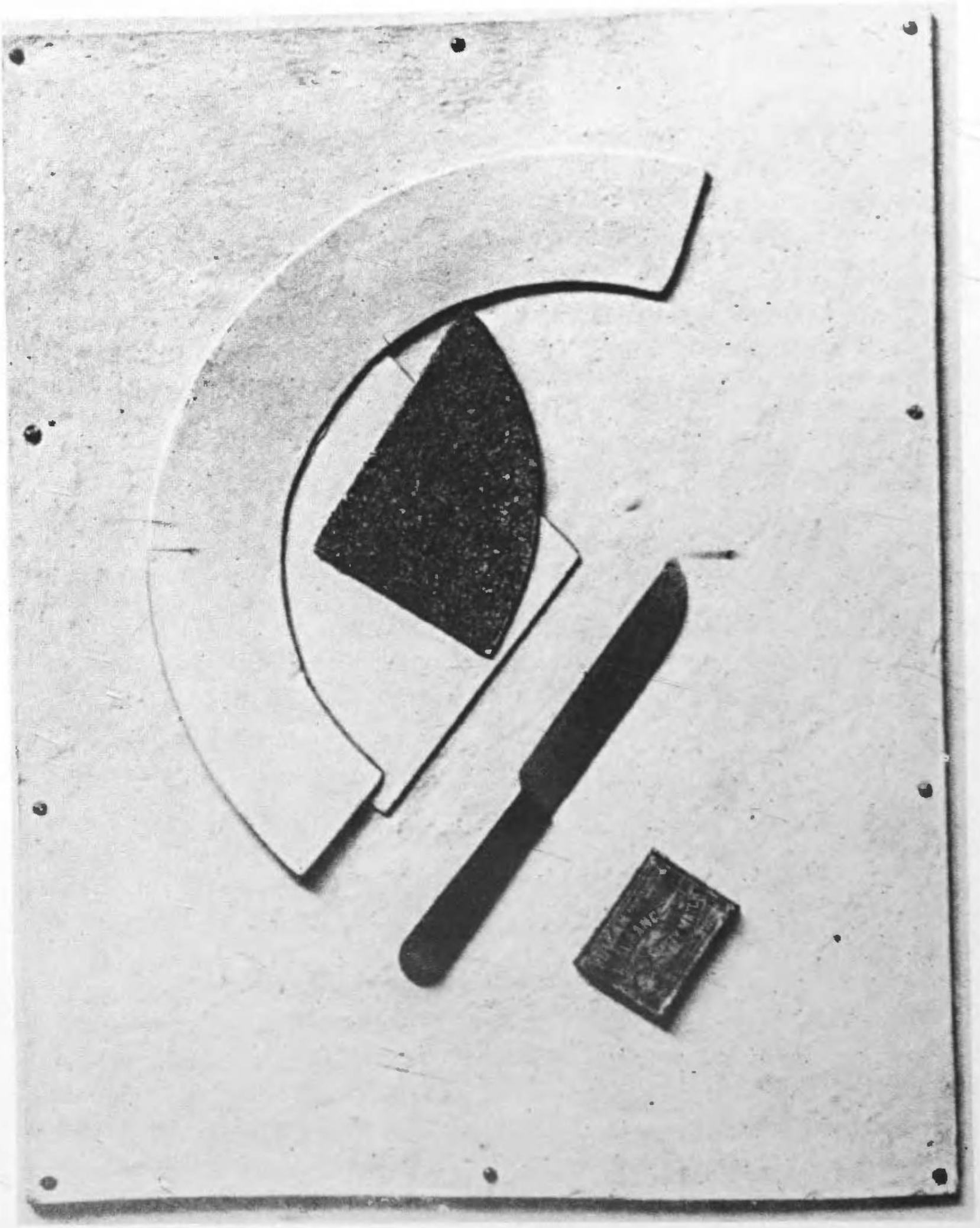


Figure 4-3. Vasyl' Yermilov, Untitled, n.d.
Construction in industrial materials and found objects.
(Photograph from Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu, *1929)*

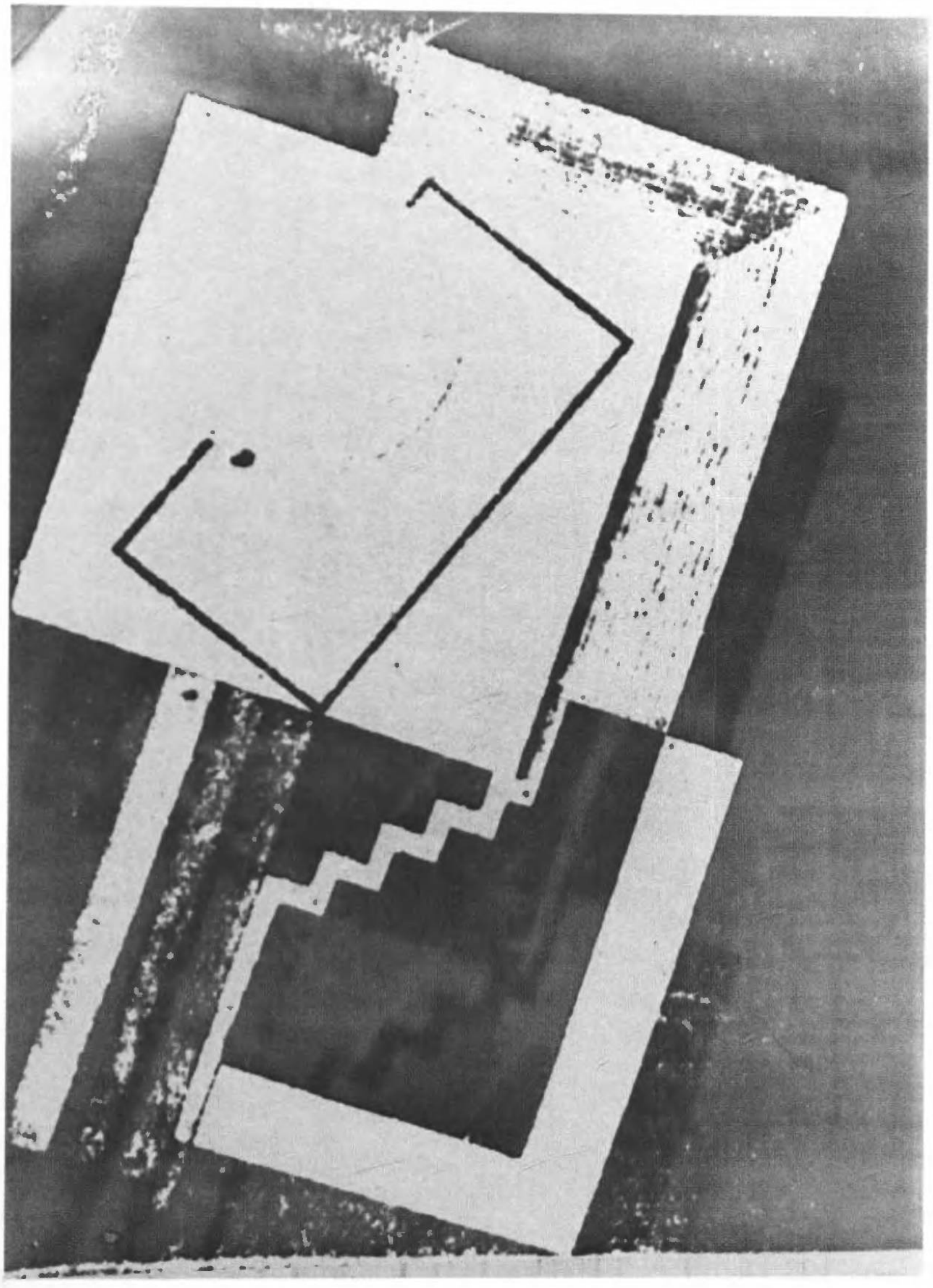


Figure 4-4. Vasyl' Yermilov, *Composition No. 13*, n.d.
(Photograph from Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu, *1929)*

Figure 4-5. Vasyl' Yermilov, *Composition No. 3*, 1923
Wood, brass, varnish, and paint. 32" × 17" × 3".
(Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Riklis Collection of the McCrory Corporation)

Yermilov had fulfilled this dictum literally.[34] Yermilov not only operated with wood, but also with metal, glass, and paint. His instruments were no longer the canvas and paintbrush or palette knife, but rather a carpenter's bench, a pointed tool or chisel, a hewing instrument, a carpenter's leveller and a drawing knife, saw, and gimlet. For the 1922 relief, *Window* (fig. 4-6), another experimental composition in painted wood and metal, Yermilov built an entire window frame displaying his expert craftsmanship without resorting to the application of found objects to his art. Corrugated metal and a conical disk nailed to the surface were contrasted against the planar, flat-lying forms and shapes. The entire composition was the result of a clear-cut, hard-edged assemblage of forms and materials which underscored Yermilov's skill as a craftsman. Despite the window frame, the space beyond it was blank, revealing only the surface plane and forcing one's attention on the nature of the material from which it was made, and not onto some illusory picture in the space behind it.

Even while working in hard, industrial materials, Yermilov never divested himself of the human form, of organic nature, as is exemplified in the two portrait constructions of 1923 discussed earlier. Despite the use of wrought copper, wood, paint, and a dry, rough substance sprinkled over the surface of the male portrait (fig. 1-5), a representational form still emerges, the figure protruding almost naturally, as if Yermilov had actually molded the human face. In the other construction (fig. 1-6), the human profile is contained within a sharply angled square frame. In this work, Yermilov employs a dynamic diagonal, and the outer shape of the head is placed outside the narrow vertical background to break with the traditional picture frame. Yermilov was trained in an almost physiological exactness of the human anatomy; the human form, as well as nature in general, underwent a laboratory analysis under his artistic eye. The early drawings and etchings that he did as a Union of Seven artist attest to the fact that he saw all of nature as having an underlying structure. The most complex structure, however, was the "machine of man's body," as acknowledged by an eyewitness of Yermilov's works: "The structure of the body in the recent studies of Yermilov infect us with the underlining of mechanism and architecturalism, as well as the passing from a geometric line to an unbroken integrally curved one which is an unattainably strong and a logically componential basis of all of life."[35]

Yermilov, who evolved out of early Western modernism and heralded Constructivism in the Ukraine, was not a cold and calculating analyst. As summarized by his contemporaries, he followed the path of Picasso, Kandinsky, and other "leftist" artists and shared the same "love of anarchical revolt, creative arbitrariness, together with an urbanistic, disassociative perception of the world."[36] He was avant-garde in that respect; but as a modern artist, Yermilov also concentrated on the intensity and speed of man's

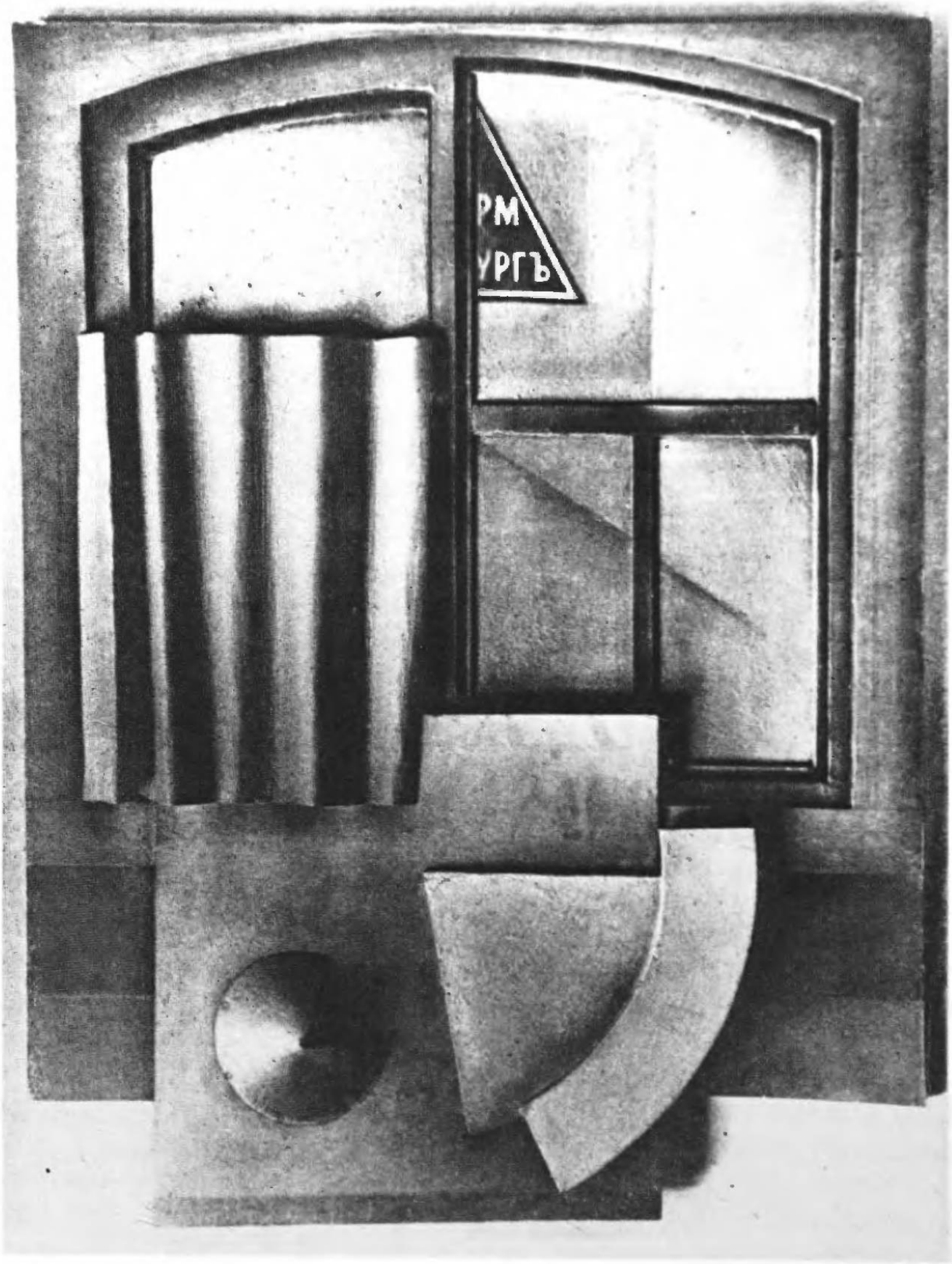


Figure 4-6. Vasyl' Yermilov, *Window*, 1922
Relief, painted wood, and metal.
(Photograph from Zinovii Fogel', Vasilii Ermilov, *Moskva: Sovetskoi khudozhnik, 1975)*

vision, which had undergone a drastic change due to the machine and urban living. He tried to encompass this in his constructions. Submitting to the social optimism of E. Jaques-Dalcroze, Yermilov focused his attention on the inherent rhythmical organization of the human body. Through the visual arts, Vasyl' Yermilov synchronized the organic natural rhythms of the human body and the four basic elements outlined by Dalcroze –man, space, time, and movement[37]—with the regulated rhythm of the machine. Since, as demonstrated by the Futurists, the intensity and speed of artistic vision had changed because of the predominance of the machine in urban living, "it was from the train, the tramcar, or even the plane, that it now became the custom to perceive objects in our view and to become aware of their increasing quantity."[38] Thus the succinct compactness of Yermilov's compositions reflected the economizing of energy which underlay the systems of both Dalcroze (who professed "d'ériger le rythme en système social"),[39] and Frederick Winslow Taylor[40] (the American engineer, inventor, and expert on efficiency in industry, who scrutinized each operation of factory production and labor, and, with the use of a chronometer, broke these down into series of elementary movements—including necessary pauses). The latter's work resulted in the "Taylor system" of time-and-motion study, as he concentrated on the most efficient methods for the exploitation of the workers' tasks for the maximum production of goods. Taylorism went hand in hand with the new social system that was inextricably associated with the new proletarian age; it also blended well with the physiological rhythmicality explored by Dalcroze.

The Dalcrozian method –the epitome of an expedient mass culture– was based on the premise of employing bodily rhythm in order to perceive and analyze the changed tempo of the new urban environment. Exploiting rhythmic gymnastics, or eurythmics, the system was based on a keen analysis of the structure of music and the expression of rhythm through the harmonious movement of the bodily mass. Its applicability to the working force was somewhat utopian,[41] but in the arts it became the springboard for an entire range of aesthetic pursuits. Such motions as the chopping of a woodcutter, the hammering of a blacksmith, the back-and-forth movement of a man with a scythe or a saw, once analyzed, were found to be particularly valuable for implementation into the theatre. It was gestures such as these, albeit stylized, which served as the basis of V. Meierkhol'd's Biomechanics.

Before fully approaching his mature art in Constructivism, Yermilov exercised "rhythm" as an element of his investigative and analytical approach to art. This subsequently earned him the title of "artist of industrial rhythms."[42] Furthermore, Yermilov's preoccupation with the act of working was tinged by of the current favor of Taylor's and Dalcroze's ideas. The act of labor was just as important to Yermilov as were the tools and materials for carrying out that labor. These instruments he actively incorporated into his works. As the son of a tailor-craftsman, physical labor was not only an

observable phenomenon in Yermilov's life, but one in which he fully participated.[43] In his autobiography, Yermilov recorded how he frequently observed the workers going to and from work at the factory in his neighborhood and how his sensitivity to industrial labor was heightened by peering through the windows of the electro-station near his home to observe the work of the machines.[44] As a child, Yermilov dreamed of being a machinist surrounded by various hydraulic pumps, cranes, and implements, which he himself devised from various scraps of metal and wood.[45] In his mature years, Yermilov brought these early impressions to a head in his art, both socially (by the products he made for mass consumption) and economically (by the kinds of materials he used, and by their frugal use for maximum effect). Finally, the eurythmic harmony present in the movement of a laborer's body from whence energy ought to flow, came to be expressed in the lines and structures of Yermilov's constructions and compositions. Yermilov's agit-trains, for example, serve as an almost literal interpretation of Dalcrozian eurythmics: each wagon of the painted agit-train was conceived as if it were undergoing a pulsating, breathing process, reinforced by the rhythmic clamor of a passing train through the countryside. The separations between the individual cars, moreover, can be construed as being the pauses, or in terms of body functions, the exhalations, which help sustain a patterned rhythm. But as Osip Mandel'shtam, part of the circle of Kharkiv Futurists, pointed out: "rhythmics is not yet aesthetics. Yet still more incorrect is to regard it as hygiene, gymnastics. Rhythm demands synthesis, the synthesis of spirit and body, the synthesis of work and play."[46]

This spirit permeated the teaching of the Kharkiv Art Guild and was certainly reflected in the kind of playful character of Yermilov's art. Nonetheless, the Kharkiv Art Guild (which succored the synthetic nature of the Union of Seven, and which, like the Bauhaus, extolled an individual creative approach, emphasizing a personalized, organic development for each of its members) was allied, in principle, to the methods employed at the Dalcroze school at Hellerau near Dresden. (One of the reasons why Dalcroze chose Hellerau as the locale for his Institute was that it stood alongside a large furniture factory, making the school accessible to the children of workers as well as to the workers themselves.) The Dalcroze school involved vigorous physical activity in the manner of dance. This entailed exhausting mental exercise as well, as its adherents were trained in form and rhythm. In addition to this kind of elemental approach, the Dalcroze method was also a means of social education. This was a particularly attractive tenet to the general development of artistic education in Kharkiv in the early decades of the twentieth century, beginning with the Kharkiv Art Guild. The first evidence of the Dalcrozian method, however, was to be noted in the ballet schools, of which there were a number throughout the Empire and especially in Kiev and Kharkiv.

The artists close to the Kharkiv Art Guild (or their friends or family) were actively involved in the dance circles of Kharkiv. Valentyna Ivanovna Tsapok and Levada's sister studied under Dalcroze. The artist Ruban was a dancer.[47] Moreover, the Dalcrozian dance system was a hallmark of the Kharkiv Ballet Studio of E. I. Wulff. Emphasizing an interest in the system of E. Jaques-Dalcroze was important for Kharkiv artists, for it underscored once again the artistic link that they were continuing to establish with the West. To demonstrate this fact the journal of the Kharkiv Art Guild devoted a special article on rhythm and dance,[48] while similar ideas were also expressed in the Union of Seven's miscellany[49] *Shornik novogo iskusstva*. Another publication, similar in spirit and concurrent with the Kharkiv publications was the Kiev miscellany *Germes'* [Hermes],[50] with which Alexandra Exter was most actively involved, busily propagating similar notions on rhythm. *Germes'* featured the poetry of the Liren' members (such as N. Aseev and G. Petnikov) and those associated with Kharkiv Futurism: I. Erenburg, Osip Mandel'shtam, and N. N. Evreinov. In terms of the visual arts, the journal reproduced the work of Exter; and subsequent issues, which never appeared, were to include the work of O. Rozanova, I. Rabinovich, and V. Chekrygin. *Germes'* also introduced the work of the then still-unknown promoters of New Art, Yurii Terapiano, Vladimir Makkaveiskii, and Viktor Shklovsky, and also featured unusual purely formalist works of Exter herself.

Three works by Alexandra Exter were included in the first and only issue of the journal: an untitled oil painting of 1918 in the collection of V. K. Livshits (fig. 4-7); *Motif for a Wall Painting* (1918) in the collection of V. N. Makkaveiskii (fig. 4-8); and *Venice*, a stage maquette of 1918 (fig. 4-9). All of these works demonstrate a verve and vitality in artistic handling which also came to be absorbed by Anatol' Petryts'kyi, Exter's protégé in an abstract construction of ca. 1918 (fig 4-10). Exter's use of fluid line endows her works with harmonious levity. Her large, seemingly flat, broad planes are filled with a textural integrity that make her surfaces as plastic and active as the forms that are depicted on them. The most textured of these pieces, the untitled work (fig. 4-7), gives a sense of granular tactility created by an overall scumbling and catalyzed working-over of the surface. By contrast, in the wall painting motif (fig. 4-8), Exter takes the texture of the wall surface as a given, and here explores the plastic values of color combinations alone. In narrow bands, a virtual rainbow ribbon unfurls through the planes and interlaces itself in the ambiguous space.

The above two works can be regarded as exercises in the creation of volume, movement, space and texture—those aspects inherently connected to stage design. Exter's stage maquette, *Venice* (fig. 4-9), embodies all of these features. Both movement and spatial plasticity are effected by the organization of planes and colors. Light-colored shapes lead into dark recesses: our eye follows the rounded staircase at the base level of the stage set

Figure 4-7. Alexandra Exter, Easel Painting, 1918
Oil.
(Photograph from Germes': ezhegodnik' iskusstva i gumanitarnago znannia, *1919)*

Figure 4-8. Alexandra Exter, Motif for a Wall Painting, ca. 1918-1919 *(Photograph from* Germes': ezhegodnik' iskusstva i gumanitarnago znannia, *1919)*

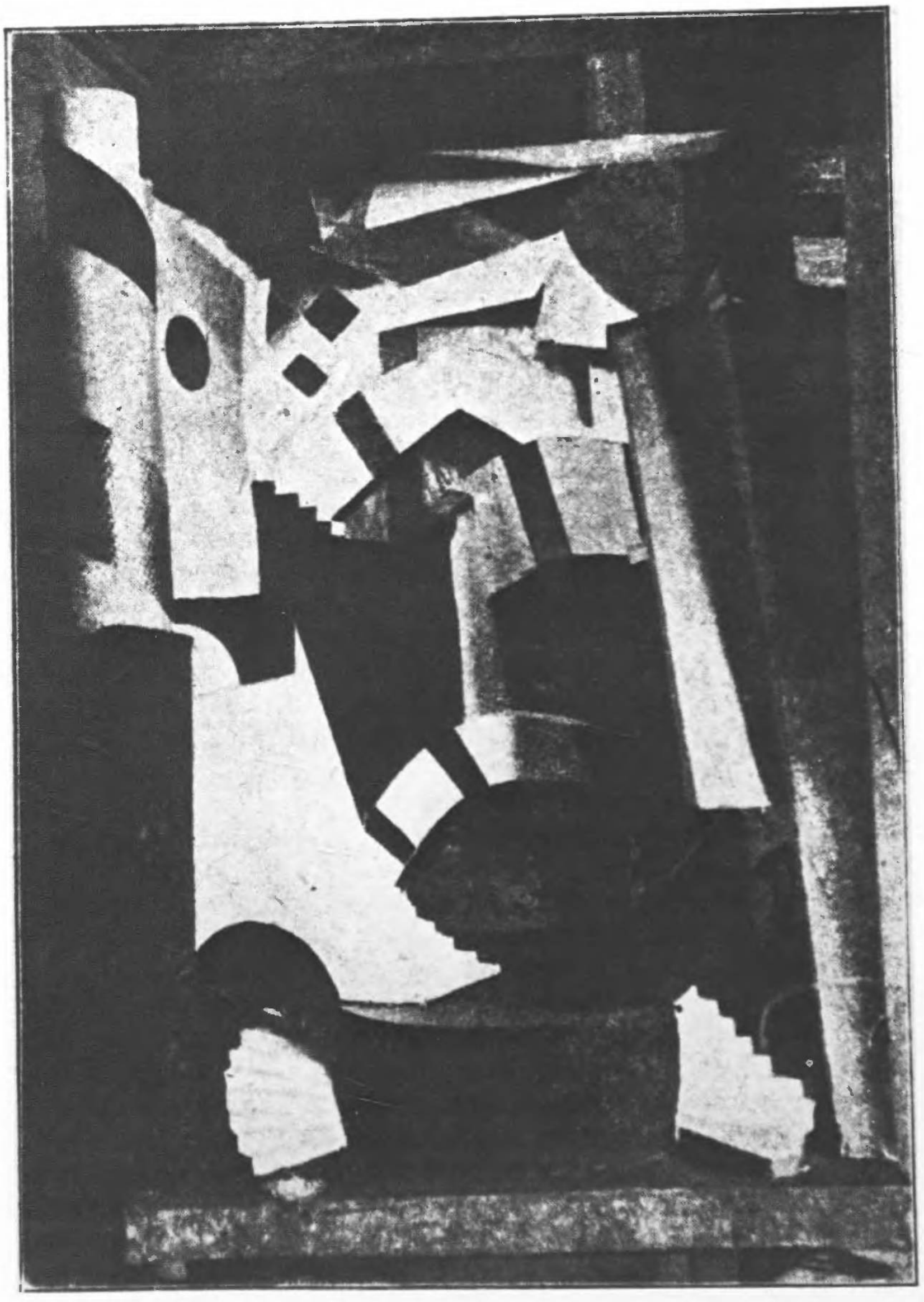


Figure 4-9. Alexandra Exter, *Venice*, ca. 1918
Stage maquette.
(Photograph from Germes': ezhegodnik' iskusstva i gumanitarnago znannia, *1919)*

Figure 4-10. Anatol' Petryts'kyi, Counter Relief, ca. 1919–1922
Oil on canvas.
(Kiev State Museum of Ukrainian Art)

to the arched bridges above and the rooftop and towerlike forms above. Exter's set recalls in large measure her Cubo-Futurist cityscapes of ca. 1914–16. As a result of her travels to the West during these years, Exter rapidly came to adopt a more established and constructive position within the avant-garde.

Her impact was wide-ranging, but it is important to note that she allowed herself to become an emissary of modern art in Kiev, outside the mainstream of more formidable artistic centers. Through the journal *Germes'*, Exter's works established a link between the Futurist circles of Kharkiv and Kiev. Exter's greatest contribution by far to Ukrainian modern art, however, was her influence on an entire generation of Ukrainian avant-garde artists. Her atelier (located on the corner of present-day Lenin and Leontovych Streets) was already a meeting place during the teens for artists such as Arkhipenko, Bohomazov, S. Lissim, I. Nivinsky, and others. Later, she organized a school in Kiev that lasted from ca. 1919–22, and provided basic teaching principles that centered around the aspect of dynamic movement. One of her major maxims, "...the light of painting is the light of music," provided for a synthesis of artistic media, especially the fusion of the visual arts with the dramatic and performing arts. Stage design prospered in Exter's School and was based on a strong foundation of Kineticist interest flowing out of Futurism.

In a sense, Exter's emphasis on stage and costume design can be seen as an extension of the synthetic principles of the Dalcroze system practiced in Bronislava Nijins'ka's Ballet Studio in Kiev. A performance by the St. Petersburg Dalcroze school in Kiev in 1913 influenced the Ballet School in this direction,[51] and soon Taylorism and Dalcrozian eurythmics penetrated the theatrical world as well. The *Molodyi teatr'* [Young Theatre] of Kiev, founded in 1916 by Les' Kurbas and later forming the basis of the Ukrainian avant-garde theatre of the 1920s, took serious account of dance in the training of its actors. Michel Mordkin of the Moscow Bolshoi was called to Kiev to help train actors in movement at the Kiev Theatre,[52] while later, when Berezil' was formed in Kharkiv, Bronislava Nijins'ka's student, Nadia Shuvars'ka, taught ballet and acrobatics at the Berezil' Theatre. In addition, Edwina Kupferova, the Czech dancer, taught ballroom jazz and dance at Berezil', while Pavlo Kudrits'kyi augmented these courses with gymnastics.[53] Exter's method in training her Kiev students nurtured the idea of dance and rhythm in artistic conceptions. Her main focus was the dynamics of the human form as captured in theatrical costume and stage design. Gesture and movement conducive to dynamic design became a motivating artistic force, strongly evidenced in the designs of the artists who were associated with Exter's circle: Paul Tchelitchew, Oleksander Tyshler, Isaak Rabinovich, and others (including those who functioned as artistic luminaries in the Ukrainian

theatre—notably Vadym Meller and Anatol' Petryts'kyi—and those outside of theater, such as the writer Ilya Erenberg).

Exter's own career as a theatre designer flourished at this time. Although she had been initially engaged by the theatre as early as 1916 with Moscow director A. Tairov, it was during the years of conducting the Kiev art school that her particular Futurist-Constructivist style developed. Whether in the designing of costumes or in the designing of an efficient stage space, all of her creations are filled with an expressive, dynamic force. Her conceptions are revolutionary in that they describe neither the character wearing them nor the location where the action takes place, but instead abstract the very spirit represented by that personage or locale. This spirit is invariably the ethos of a futuristic present—an era of efficacious and purposeful rhythm, and of construction. Exter's student and colleague, Anatol' Petryts'kyi, best exemplified the directives on modern, avant-garde art disseminated by his teacher. When in 1922 he executed the costumes for a Moscow Chamber Ballet production of K. Goleizovsky's "Eccentric Dances" (fig. 4-11), it was fortuitous that his art and preparation coincided so well with the current experimental trends in dance and theatre outside the Ukraine. Petryts'kyi's work provides the evidence to show to what degree the Constructivist idiom was developed and nurtured in Exter's Kiev School. Meanwhile, Yermilov embodied the spirit of the epoch which prevailed in Kharkiv, one of the most industrialized cities of the Soviet Union, and translated it—on his own terms—in a formal artistic language for mass consumption.

The avant-garde in the Ukraine certainly did not have a single identifiable profile. The years immediately after the Revolution were an important period for the organization of Ukrainian artistic culture, both in Kharkiv and Kiev. Educational reform in the arts in Kiev took place only after the Revolution, however. During the reign of the National Central Rada, the Ukrainian Academy of Art was formed, independent of the St. Petersburg Academy and beholden only to the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian national government. Long before the Revolution, the idea of establishing the Academy arose among artists who had studied in the West and who congregated at the Kiev Art School (1901–21): O. Arkhipenko, O. Bohomazov, Alexandra Exter, Louis Lozowick, V. Meller, A. Petryts'kyi, I. Rabinovich, A. Tyshler, A. Volkov, the sculptor I. Kavaleridze, and others. After the fall of the tsarist state, however, the ideal of a separate system of artistic education for the Ukraine came not from the government, but from the artists themselves. O. Murashko (1875–1919), trained in Paris and Munich,[54] and head of the local Kiev Art School from 1909, was one of the first to express the "need for a Ukrainian Academy of Art in our beloved city of Kiev where there is so much light and so much beauty."[55] It was on such initiative that the Ukrainian Academy of Art was finally formed in 1917.[56]

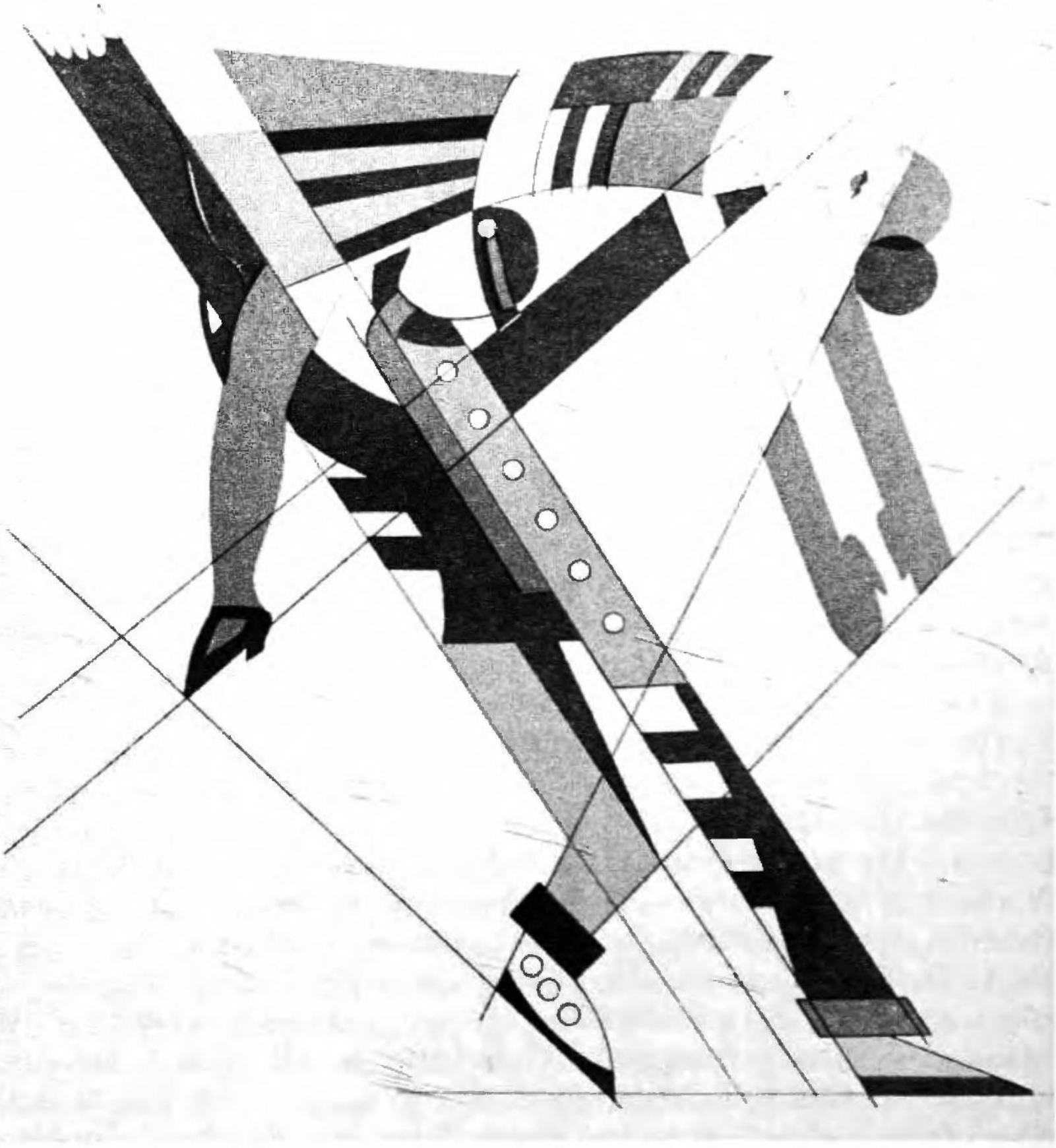


Figure 4-11. Anatol' Petryts'kyi, Costume Design for the *Eccentric Dances* of K. Goleizovsky, Moscow, 1922
(Reproduced in V. Khmurii, Anatol' Petryts'kyi: Teatral'ni stroi, *Kharkiv, 1929)*

The professional teaching staff of the Academy was headed by the painter Fedir Krychevs'kyi (1879–1947), and gathered artists from various areas of the Ukraine—M. Burachek (1871–1942) from Kharkiv, M. Zhuk (1883–1942) from Odessa, Vasyl' Krychevs'kyi (1872–1952) from Poltava, and M. Boichuk (1882–1939) from Western Ukraine. Some artists, such as H. Narbut (1886–1920), who played a considerable role in the evolution of the Russian avant-garde (especially in graphic design) returned to their homeland upon the first proclamation of an independent state to assist in restoring the cultural life in the Ukraine.[57] The Academy was divided into a number of workshops, and Narbut was put in charge of graphics.

Despite its title, the Ukrainian Academy of Art was not an academy in the strict sense of the word. Moreover, it was not another version of the Russian Imperial Academy transplanted onto Ukrainian soil, but was instead an attempt to restructure stale academism in the training of artists. In contrast to the narrow, strictly ordered teaching aims of traditional academic systems, the program of workshops implemented in the Ukrainian Academy allowed for a freer structure. In fact, the creative aims of the directors of these workshops remained so pedagogically distinct that the strong artistic personalities of the masters eventually kindled much internal controversy as to artistic methodology. The greatest strife existed between Boichuk, who sought to resuscitate methods of fresco and tempera painting, and the Krychevs'kyi brothers, Fedir and Vasyl' (mainly the latter), who taught their students how to handle oil and watercolor, and who were ensconced in the study of ornament and architectural drawing.[58]

In addition to the practicum established at the Ukrainian Academy of Art, serious theoretical considerations for the new artistic culture were also undertaken by outside supporters who formed the *Tovarystvo diiachiv ukrains'koho plastychnoho mystetstva* [Association of Contributors to the Plastic Arts of the Ukraine]. On June 9–16, 1918, a conference of the Association was held in Kiev with the hope of resolving some of the burning artistic issues at hand. The concerns represented, however, were as diverse as the group of individuals who belonged to the Association. These were mainly artists (V. Denisov, F. Krasyts'kyi, O. Murashko, A. Sereda, and K. Trokhymenko) and art historians (V. Antonovych and H. Pavluts'kyi), but the Association also included S. Giliarov, a museum coordinator, and S. Kul'zhenko, a publisher who eventually published some of the ideas discussed at the conference in the journal *Mystetstvo*, edited by Mykhailo Semenko. The highlight and positive outcome of the conference were the contributions of O. Bohomazov and V. Meller. In a speech entitled "Osnovni zavdannia rozvytku mystetstva maliarstva na Ukraini" [The Basic Tasks of the Development of the Art of Painting in the Ukraine],[59] Bohomazov underscored the importance of the plasticity of Kiev topography, the living

energy of the city, and the inherent dynamism of the environment that ought to be viewed and studied by the Ukrainian artist (rather than his having to rely on models introduced by Russian artists). Taking into account some aspects of Bohomazov's speech and reiterating them in his own talk, "Shliakhy novoi shkoly v mystetstvi" [The Directions of the New School in Art],[60] Vadym Meller presented ideas which were similar to some of the notions expressed in Semenko's Panfuturism, namely the organization of form and material to effect a synthesis of art and environment.

Meller described the future artistic direction for the Ukraine as a "vertical of art," an uncompromising, direct route which made no distinction between pure and applied art, and advocated the study of spatial design, i.e., the study of the construction of form, the limits of space, the rules of balance, color, and light. According to Meller, the artistic profession needed to extend beyond the limits of the three traditional divisions of art—painting, sculpture, and architecture—and enter more deeply into life. There it must deal with "the organization of the object on the whole, in its most expedient, laconic, and improved state."[61] Consequently, at the Ukrainian Academy of Art (where Meller was subsequently invited to teach) subject—which was stressed so heavily in the traditional academies—was less of a significant factor, whereas the use of artists' materials and a study of the fundamental elements of art was the primary teaching goal.

On the basis of these aims the Academy produced students who went on to disseminate its principles among their peers and protégés during the twenties. Graduating from the Academy, Boichukist artists such as V. Sedliar (1899–1938) and O. Pavlenko (b. 1896) were invited to teach the lessons learned at the Kiev Academy at art schools now burgeoning with ever-increasing rapidity throughout the Ukraine and in Russia. In 1929, Pavlenko taught at the Moscow Vkhutein implementing her Kiev training in the Ceramics Division of the innovative and experimental Moscow institution. Other artists who trained under the auspices of the Kiev Art Academy later taught at the Institutes that were formed in Kiev and Kharkiv. Academy students S. Kolos (1888–1969) and Ye. Sahaidachnyi (1886–1961), for example, taught at the Kiev Art Institute; I. Padalka (1894–1938), a Boichukist, went on to teach at the Kharkiv Art Technicum; Meller's students, V. Shkliaiv and M. Symashkevych (b. 1900), worked in Berezil'; Narbut's students, the graphic artists M. Kyrnars'kyi (1893–1941) and L. Khyzhyns'kyi (b. 1896), went to work in Leningrad, while their colleague, R. Lisovs'kyi, went abroad.

The Ukrainian Academy of Art made monumental cultural strides in the midst of great political upheaval. When Deniken's troops temporarily seized Kiev, the Academy ceased to receive financial assistance from the Central Rada government; and, as a result of the fighting in the streets of Kiev, the

building where the Academy was housed on the Great Pidval'na Street was completely destroyed.[62] But in 1919, after Soviet rule in the Ukraine became a fact of life, the Ukrainian Academy of Art was reorganized into the Kiev Institute of Plastic Arts. After two years, this Institute merged with the Kiev Architecture Institute (est. 1918) to form the Kiev State Institute of Art in 1924. This institution stands to this very day.

The fruits of firmly based artistic directions and diversified goals cultivated by the Academy began to be visible in 1925–26 when the first post-Revolutionary artistic organizations were formed in the Ukraine. In keeping with the independent spirit of the era, and despite divergent aims and mutually discordant activities among the many groups that formed at the time, the mute and deafened provinces were transformed into areas of vibrant artistic activity. There were many varied art groups which formed in the Ukraine immediately after the Revolution that greatly enlivened the exhibition circuit throughout the country. The Jewish Artistic Studio Culture-League, for example, sponsored its own "Jewish Exhibition of Sculpture, Graphics, and Painting" in Kiev in 1920,[63] and brought together artists scattered throughout various parts of Russia and the Ukraine. The catalogue was printed in Ukrainian and Russian, with a long introduction in Hebrew. In addition to local Kievan artists who were represented in the show, such as the sculptors I. Chaikov and M. Epstein, other contributors included N. Shifrin, M. Kaganovich, Yu. Yoffe, I. Pailes, B. Aronson, Jean-Jikh-Shvil Tischler, I. El'man, Rabichev, and A. Tischler. The catalogue also listed the works of El Lissitzky from the provincial White Russian town of Vitebsk.

By 1923, other associations began to form, each with its own outlined goals and direction. By 1925–26, the most noted ones were ARMU (Association of Revolutionary Art of the Ukraine), AKhChU (Association of Artists of Red Ukraine), OSMU (Organization of Contemporary Artists of the Ukraine), and the Kostandi Association of Odessa.[64] The first of these, ARMU *(Asotsiiatsiia Revoliutsiinoho Mystetstva Ukrainy),* was founded in 1925. It was the largest association of Ukrainian artists and was the most diversified. ARMU had branches and studios in many Ukrainian cities. Its basic aim was to raise the level of Ukrainian artistic culture and to place the fine arts and productionist art on an equal footing. Artists of ARMU became very adamant in their stand against naturalism and struggled fiercely against the influence of the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (AKhRR). After 1927, ARMU came under the leadership of Mykhailo Boichuk and began to emphasize monumental art. In 1929, V. I. Kasiian and several young followers of Boichuk left ARMU, seeking to redress monumental art in a more proletarian vein, and founded the association *Zhovten'* [October]. Subsequently, artists from October united with additional members from ARMU in 1930 to form VUAPKh—the All-Ukrainian Association of

Proletarian Artists. Because of the onslaught of Stalinist repression, ARMU was ultimately disbanded in 1932, as were most other artistic organizations.

AKhChU *(Asotsiiatsiia Khudozhnykiv Chervonoi Ukrainy)* was initiated as early as 1923, though the final approval of its charter came in 1926. It expanded its activities to include such peripheral areas as Odessa, Poltava, Chernihiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, and Verkhn'odniprivs'k. It also organized art studios in Kharkiv and Kiev. In its ideological orientation, AKhChU was close to AKhRR, the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia, and thus distant from ARMU. It was composed mainly of artists who cultivated a naturalist trend, and sponsored a series of traveling exhibitions. In 1929 a number of leading artists left the Association; and in 1930, like ARMU it was also transformed into the VUAPKh, now called the VUAPMYT. (The Russianized "kh" standing for *khudozhnik* [artist], was replaced by the Ukrainian "MYT" for *mytets* [the Ukrainian for "artist"] and VUAPKh came to be known as VUAPMYT.)

A third group, OSMU *(Obiednannia Suchasnykh Myttsiv Ukrainy)*, was a relatively young organization which sprang up in 1926. It formed its position on the work of progressive European art and focused on international contributions to the development of artistic craftsmanship. It was characteristic for the members of OSMU to copy the features of the newer European schools—especially French art and post-Futurist trends—and blend these with influences of the local *lubok*, or popular print. In addition, it modeled itself on some of the Russian interpretations of post-Cézanniste formal trends explored by circles like the Moscow Knave of Diamonds.

The only organization to be named after an artist was the Kostandi Association, which lasted until 1929. It was named after the painter and instigator of modern art trends in Odessa at the turn of the century, Kiriak Kostandi. The Kostandi Assocation was not strictly an organization for the practitioners of art—it incorporated art lovers of every kind—but in many ways it continued some of the synthetic trends initiated by the Association of South Rus' [TYuRKh] artists.[65] Both the Kostandi Association and a less familiar group originating in the same region, the Odessa Association of Artists, were often described as not having "a clear direction nor ideological platform."[66] In their joint statute, however, both organizations proclaimed "an artistic expression of revolutionary contemporaneity, its lifestyle, the development of a new culture and the broadening among the population of knowledge and information in the realm of the visual arts, popularizing them, and also, learning about and researching the new path of development in the visual arts."[67]

All of these associations held frequent exhibitions of their individual chapters as well as national shows. The most noteworthy exhibitions included the Kiev Exhibition of AKhChU (1926) and ARMU (1926-27); the All-

Ukrainian Exhibition of ARMU and AKhChU (1927); Odessa and Dnipropetrovs'k exhibitions of ARMU (1927); the Kharkiv Exhibition, "The Artist-Today" (1927); and the Odessa Exhibitions of the Kostandi Association (1925–27), among innumerable others. In addition, there were a series of small exhibitions held in various cities and for various reasons unrelated to the goals of these associations. Some shows were held as fund raisers for war veterans and flood victims, such as the exhibition "Artistic Kiev—For Western Ukraine," sponsored by the Association of Writers, *Zakhidnia Ukraina* [Western Ukraine] with the purpose of aiding those who suffered in the floods of Eastern Galicia.[68]

What at first was fragmentary and erratic exhibition activity eventually evolved into a total effort to present an All-Ukraine Exhibition which would incorporate every visible trend in modern Ukrainian art. So strong was this desire that, in May of 1926, the Section of Arts of the Ministry of Education issued a resolution to organize "the beginning of a broad effort for the development and building of artistic culture in the Ukraine."[69] Previous to this, only one such effort had been undertaken: the unsuccessful First Art Exhibition of the Sector of Arts of the Central Ministry of Political Education of the UkrSSR held in Kharkiv in 1921. This event provided the incentive for several smaller shows of separate artistic associations held in Odessa and Kiev, e.g., the Fall Exhibition of the Ukrainian Academy of Art (Kiev 1921–22); Art Exhibition of the Culture-League (Kiev, April 1922); and the Summary Exhibitions of the Kiev Art Institute (Kiev, 1925–26). The most comprehensive and organized exhibition effort in the decade of the twenties, however, was "Ten Years of October, 1917–1927." As a jubilee celebration of the political opportunity afforded by the Revolution for cultural growth and national identity in the Ukraine, the event was as major a milestone in the history of Ukrainian modern art as was the publication of *Nova generatsiia* in the same year. "Ten Years of October" toured all the major art centers of the Ukraine.[70] It opened in Kharkiv in February, 1927, and remained there through December, then moving on to Kiev, Odessa, Dnipropetrovs'k, and Donbas. It was important for two reasons: first, as a summary of the achievements of all the major art centers of the Ukraine, it included the works of artists from all regions of the territory; secondly, it was the first time that artists of all convictions and representing all extant artistic groups (no matter how divergent) and representatives of the higher schools of art education were assembled for this comprehensive and consolidated artistic moment.

The organizations and institutions represented at "Ten Years of October" were ARMU, AKhChU, OSMU, the Kostandi Association, the Kiev Art Institute (with a special section on the Dniprel'stan dam works—an excursion of the Institute under Professor A. I. Taran),[71] the Mezhyhir Art-Ceramic Technicum, the Myrhorod Art-Ceramic Technicum, the Odessa Polytechni-

cum of the Visual Arts, and VUFKU—the All-Ukrainian Photo-Cinema Administration. The exhibition also included artists who were unaffiliated with any of the above organizations. The cultural prestige of "Ten Years of October" was immense, for it made possible a synthetic and comparative overview of contemporary Ukrainian art. At the time, it was regarded as being an "almost complete picture of the state and achievements of all of our art."[72]

"Ten Years of October" was, therefore, not just a democratic representation of the many kinds of art being produced in the Ukraine; it was also an integrated artistic endeavor which included all the art media: painting, graphics and drawings, sculpture, architecture, theatre design, photography and cinematography, ceramics, textiles, and metalloplastics (productionist art). Moreover, the exhibition served as the link with Ukrainian emigrés abroad such as M. Hlushchenko and I. Babii, who actively participated in the artistic life of Paris, exhibiting in the "Salons d'Automne,"[73] but as stalwart members of ARMU, continued to send their works to Ukrainian national exhibitions.[74] Others who sent their works from Paris were Andriienko-Nechytailo, Bart, Bronshtein, Volovyk, Mané-Katz, Sterling, and Adler.

Because it brought together disparate art groups, while at the same time distinguishing their individual platforms, the exhibition "Ten Years in October" was a landmark event in the Ukrainian artistic vanguard. The catalogue to the exhibition contained the declarations of the major national art associations—ARMU, AKhChU, OSMU, the Kostandi Association, and the Odessa Association of Artists—and recognized their common struggle in mapping out "a socialist path for the arts" described more specifically as taking into account "a submission of artistic creativity to the interests of the proletariat. . . ."[75] Because of this particular orientation in the visual arts, "Ten Years of October" testified to the syncretic precepts of contemporary avant-gardism espoused by Semenko's theory of Panfuturism of 1920–21. Thus, in a relatively short period of time, the Ukrainian artistic avant-garde had seemingly assumed a uniform position, universal in scope, much like the ideological-cum-practical platform advocated by Semenko. Even in the preparatory stages for the installation of "Ten Years of October," this intention had been expressed openly: " . . . we can expect that such an exhibit can be the demonstration of our achievements not only for us, but for all the Soviet republics and abroad as well."[76]

This hope was partially realized when the State Academy of Artistic Sciences in Moscow organized its first "Jubilee Exhibition of the Art of the Nations of the USSR." In the preface to the catalogue, Ya. Tugendkhol'd, director of the Academic Art Section, admitted the failure on the part of Russians to acknowledge the artistic potential in the other republics of the USSR. The jubilee exhibition was meant, therefore, to correct this situation.[77] In a similar exhibition devoted only to the graphic arts, the All-Union Exhibition of Graphics, and at the Exhibition of the Nations of the USSR in

Moscow in 1927, the young graphics Faculty of the Kiev Art Institute received a congratulatory letter from the Committee. Kiev artist, S. [*sic*] Boichuk, executed the cover design of the catalogue.[78] In addition to all the other republics represented, the Ukraine was singled out because of the achievement of its organizations—AKhChU (Kiev-Kharkiv), OSMU (Kiev), and ARMU (Kiev-Kharkiv). Also shown was a sampling of work from the Mezhyhir Ceramic Technicum and the Kiev Art Institute, including architectural projects from the latter (#1288–1324). The most impressive contribution, however, was that made by Vadym Meller, set designer for Berezil' (#1406–#51), and artistic designer of *Nova generatsiia*.[79] Several examples of sculpture (Krants, Dindo, Kratko) were also displayed.

"Ten Years of October" had set a trend for annual all-Ukrainian shows which lasted until 1931. None of the subsequent exhibitions matched the organization and grandeur or professed ideology as did "Ten Years of October." The all-encompassing and synthetic nature of the exhibitions and their widespread representation of artists from all over the Ukraine attested to an attempt at some sort of cohesiveness in the Ukrainian artistic vanguard.[80] Although these contributions represented merely a cross-section of artistic activity in the Ukraine, it was nonetheless significant that an acknowledgment of Ukrainian art on the part of Russia had finally been rendered.

One thing was clear. When "Ten Years of October" was organized by the National Commissariat of Education of the Ukrainian SSR (Narkomos), it was not intended as a retrospective exposition. Such shows had been installed previously by the national art associations,[81] which tried to demonstrate and popularize the achievements in contemporary Ukrainian art. ARMU's retrospectives, for example, purported not only to reflect the "basic lines, directions and patterns" which developed in post-Revolutionary Ukrainian art, but they put forth a dual character in that not only was the internal struggle for quality and the attainment of a high level of artistic culture in the Ukraine emphasized, but secondly, they underscored the cultural-artistic equality of so-called productivist art (artistic industry, material culture). Stressing quality, ARMU reflected the attempts of Ukrainian artists to move away from narrow provincialism. In the catalogue preface to its first exhibition in January 1917, its aims were summarized thus:

> The ARMU exhibit finally shows the extreme complexity in the process of the development of Ukrainian art, in the determination of its essential physiognomy and form. Our art is still totally in a transitional stage in relation to the recent trite provincial forms of village-teacher ethnographism and "little-Russian" life-stylism . . . and must rely on the newest achievements of art . . . (in essence, international ones).[82]

The members of ARMU viewed themselves as being an amalgamation of the most progressive artistic trends existing in the Ukraine at the time, from post-Impressionism to Constructivism. In its objectives, ARMU thus planned a

program of cultural expansionism, hoping to take its all-Ukrainian exhibition to Moscow and then finally abroad.[83] This was a project first planned for 1928, but failed due to financial reasons,[84] and was only ultimately realized in March 1929, when, together with the associations AKhChU and OSMU, over six hundred canvases of artists of Kharkiv, Kiev, and Odessa (including over three hundred graphics and drawings) were sent to the international exhibition in Holland in which the Soviet Union as a whole participated.[85] The Ukraine had represented the USSR strongly and favorably on this occasion and *Nova generatsiia* reported on her contribution with zeal, commenting that it was more complete in "quality and quantity . . . than the arts of other republics of the union."[86]

Ukrainian graphic arts always enjoyed a special popularity in Europe. An isolated example of this reception occurred in April 1927, when the Brussels Musée du Livre held a special exhibition of Ukrainian graphic arts, calling them modern, and issuing a special museum publication to show support of that fact.[87] On a grander scale was the contribution of Ukrainian artists to the International Press Exhibition held in Cologne in May 1928. The official title of the exhibition was Pressa-Köln, and its aim was to focus on the publishing efforts of the nations of the world. The USSR was represented with its own Soviet pavilion, constructed according to the designs of El Lissitzky. The Ukraine occupied a special section within this structure. Vasyl' Yermilov and Vadym Meller were responsible for the artistic design and arrangement of the section, which for the duration of the Pressa-Köln exhibition attracted the attention of international critics. There were three major features of the Ukrainian section, which singled it out from among the others: first, the national features of Ukrainian folk art—a strict geometricity and use of pure color—were combined with the sleek lines of the Constructivist style of the overall design; secondly, all the basic mounting was united in this formal design; and third, all superfluous diagrams and decor were omitted to give the display an air of being organized on an inherent superstructure of only a few basic forms. From the description supplied by one observer, the construction of the Ukrainian section seemed to symbolically embody the ideological premise of Panfuturism: the center of the exhibition contained three dynamic architectural mountings which held a transparent column secured to a special platform of an elliptical shape of highly polished material (fig. 4-12). A large screwlike form was erected in the center of each column and appeared to be pulling upward with a great force of constant motion. The screw was seen as "a living image of the Soviet Ukrainian press as it cuts into ever newer and newer spheres of activity; it drills into and rebuilds everything into a new arrangement in order to lead to a future higher society where Communism would reign."[88] In such a symbolic venture, "the screw of the press drills the Ukraine toward the attainment of Communism."[89] *Nova generatsiia* avidly

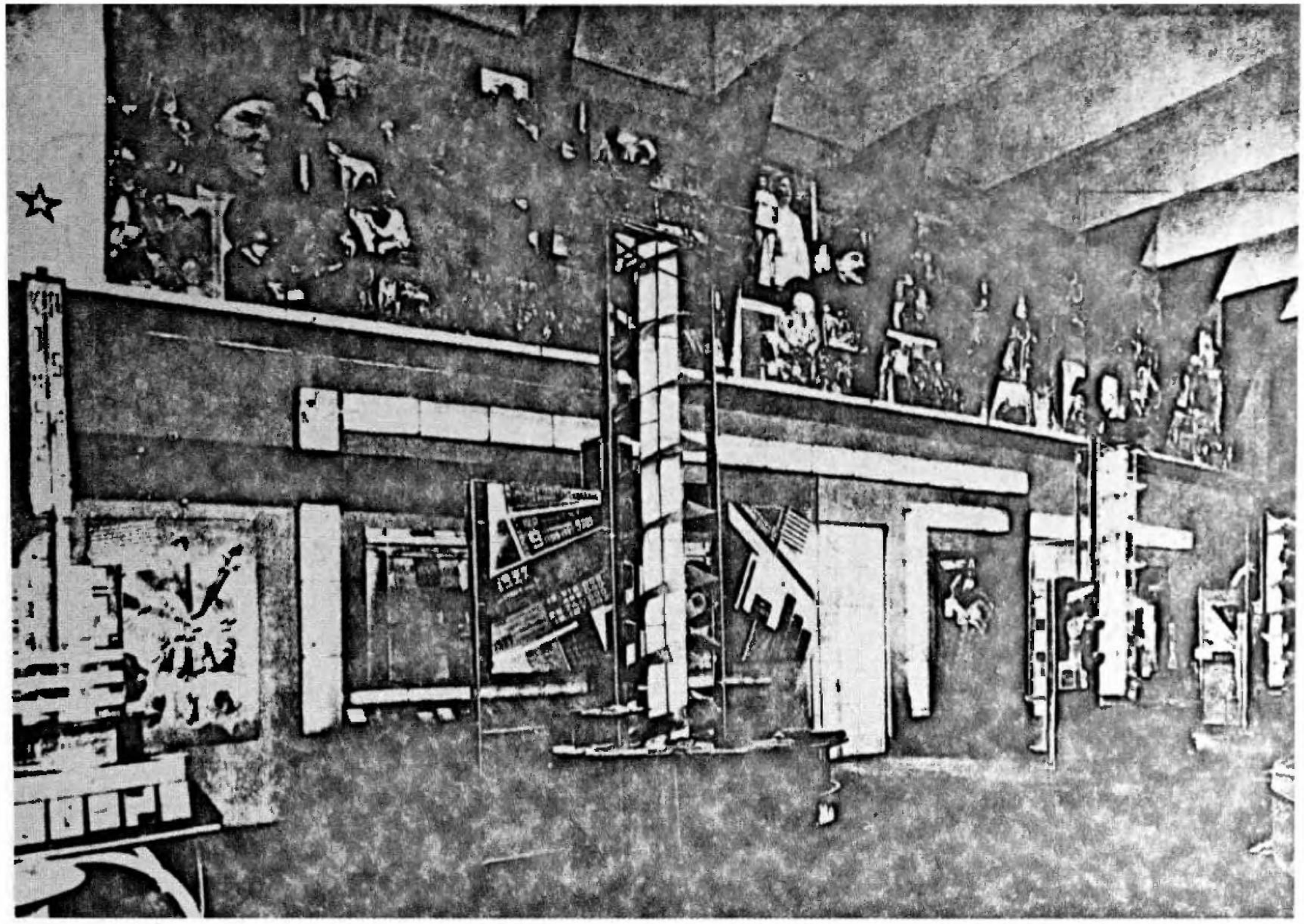


Figure 4-12. General View of the Ukrainian Section of the Soviet Pavilion at the International Exhibition "Pressa-Köln," 1928
Design by Vasyl' Yermilov.
(Photograph from Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu, *1929)*

reported on the exhibition and included numerous photographs of the Ukrainian section along with other displays. Vasyl' Yermilov was given a two-page spread of photographic reportage on the famous exhibition.[90] The photographs in *Nova generatsiia* included Yermilov's title page for an album cover; the design for the cover of VUFKU; a page from the album of the *Visti VUTsVK* newspaper; and a photograph of his wall newspaper, *Generator* (fig. 4-1).

Pressa-Köln was a significant landmark for the international recognition of Ukrainian art and was the first organized opportunity for the display of Ukrainian publishing production. Amidst a varied display of publications, Yermilov's twenty albums in a Constructivist style became the focus of much recognition. Employing the laconic simplicity of Constructivism, he also used the material of Ukrainian folk art and designed book covers in wood, skins, metals, and in *plakhta* fabric (a woven material in severely geometric ornamental design with sharply contrasting colors, which is worn as a skirt as part of the native costume of Ukrainian women from the Poltava region). In his book covers as in his wall newspapers Yermilov was able to combine an acute decorative and illustrative sensibility with the idea of construction.

Although the Pressa-Köln exhibition represented the heyday of Ukraine's official participation in the international artistic arena, Ukrainian artists continued to take active part in international competitions of all kinds. In their move toward internationalism Ukrainian architects did not hesitate, for instance, to take part in universal projects such as the competition announced in the United States for building a monument to Christopher Columbus. For this occasion, two groups of Ukrainian architects were formed: one in Kharkiv, the other in Kiev. *Nova generatsiia* took it upon itself to inform the public when the projects of both groups would be ready to be sent to Washington for evaluation.[91] Although neither group ultimately won the commission, the mere enthusiasm and willingness to take part in such an event was revelatory of the state of affairs in Ukrainian art of the 1920s.

By the end of the decade, the Ukraine had participated in many foreign shows. She was, however, almost always officially entered under the conglomerate of the Soviet Union and usually remained unacknowledged as a separate national entity. Some of these all-embracing Soviet shows included more exhibitions of graphics and book design in Zürich, Bern, Tours, Augsburg, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Riga, and Gdansk. There was also an exhibition of Soviet poster design in New Castle and exhibitions of Soviet art in Stockholm, Oslo, and Berlin, in which only Ukrainian graphic artists participated.[92] In the final years of the decade, Ukrainian artists took part twice in the Venice Biennale. Fedir Krychevs'kyi (1879–1947) received special recognition for his triptych *Life* (1925–27) at the sixteenth Venice Biennale in 1928; and at the following Biennale, in 1930, Ukrainian artists

were organized in a separate section for the first time. The best of Ukrainian painting and graphics was displayed at this exhibition. Bohomazov sent his painting *Sawyers;* Sedliar was represented by *Execution,* and Mizyn by *The Defense of Luhans'k.* Other artists included the Boichukist painters Hvozdyk and Shekhtman, and the graphic artists Padalka, Nalepins'ka-Boichuk, Kasiian, and Tolkachov. Petryts'kyi won a medal for his painting *Invalids* of 1924, while Dovhal's graphics won him a warm spot among the Italian audiences, who changed his name to the more Italian-sounding "Dovhali."[93]

As the Ukraine intensified her participation in international exhibitions, other nations began to recognize her artistic aims and intentions as being similar to their own. As foreign interest in Ukrainian art grew, more and more reports on Ukrainian artists began to appear in foreign periodicals and newspapers. *Il Popolo di Roma, Gazetta di Venezia, Il giornale d'Italia, La tribuna di Roma,* and *Il giornale Genova* gave much recognition to contemporary Ukrainian art. This fact was proudly reported by the editors of *Nova generatsiia*[94] who came to realize with some satisfaction that the transitional phase of Panfuturism had finally peaked. Most gratifying to the Panfuturists was the kind of public recognition and complimentary remarks foreign critics bestowed upon Ukrainian artists. Viktor Pal'miv (1888–1929) was singled out as an outstanding Ukrainian artist, not so much for the content of his work *(The First of May),* as for his particular forte as a colorist. Petryts'kyi's *Invalids,* though a moving work filled with compassion, sympathy, and quiet rumination, was also acknowledged for its formal qualities. Petryts'kyi's cycle of portraits of contemporary Ukrainian cultural activists, including a portrait of Semenko himself, also merited praise from these critics.

Participation in the Venice Biennales, as in other international exhibitions, also drew considerable attention in the homeland. Events such as these were regarded with much pride. Many felt that, for Ukrainian art, inclusion as a separate entity on such a universal scale was the first international test in the realm of artistic achievement and not only in the realm of formal pursuits in art. Through an examination of formal pursuits, the Ukraine had successfully proven how artistically modern she really was. She exploited her accomplishments in the domain of that political role which, for her, only art could play abroad under the circumstances of the day and era.

Part Three: The Printed Page

5

Typography and the Visual Arts

The materialization of art as proposed by Panfuturist facture allowed for the mechanical splintering of the arts into separate components like the parts of a machine. The constructive-destructive polarities of Panfuturism were also inspired by this sensibility, as is evidenced by their support of the machine aesthetic practiced at the Bauhaus, Vkhutemas, and the Kharkiv Art Guild, which stressed Taylorism and the Dalcrozian eurythmics. Since the machine and technological progress also signified movement, synthetic as well as functional innovations such as "mechanized graphic art," promoted by Paul Renner,[1] or Archipentura, which emerged out of the sculpto-paintings of O. Arkhipenko dating back to 1912, can be considered to be some of the "first attempts to introduce 'real' movement into a work of art—a cross between man and machine," as observed in 1914 in *Der Sturm* by the critic and champion of all things modern, Guillaume Apollinaire.[2] By 1923, Archipentura was recognized as the first product in a purely visual form of Constructivism, an artistic style based on the integration of all the arts.[3] The machine marked a significant contribution toward this end, such that, in European art in general, the restructuring of the elemental sections of individual and independent artistic media into a holistic and reintegrated organization helped to produce such synthetic artistic combinations as Henryk Berlewi's *Mechano-Faktur*, Fernand Léger's *Ballet mécanique*, and Marcel Duchamp's *Optical Machines*.

Given the industrialization of nations, the effect of the war changing the map and—in many countries—revolution restructuring the existing social order, the introduction of the machine into the visual arts was not an unexpected novelty. Louis Blériot flew the continents, and Robert Delaunay paid homage to him by incorporating the airplane amidst disks of pure color in his painting. Because of machines, the distance between countries was also being diminished, and the communication between them quickened. The machine therefore not only offered a new context for art, but assisted in effecting a synthesis of artistic media and functional inventions of the modern day. As regards the Panfuturists, the telegraph, the cable, and the radio

particularly influenced the form of their art and channeled their communication along new artistic means. Panfuturist Cable-greetings and Radio-greetings were a direct offshoot of the machine aesthetic and the concept of the artist as engineer. Moreover, the ethos of a collective global spirit and communication by means of telegraphic cables or radio transmissions aided in further underscoring Panfuturist maxims. Mykhailo Semenko's "Cablepoem Abroad" of 1920–21[4] is a work exemplary of this mood.

As deliberately invoked by its title, "Cablepoem Abroad" reflects modern technology and progress by overtly suggesting the use of a telegraphic mode of communication to spread the message of revolution. Employing the panegyrics of Panfuturist expression in the poem, Semenko also exposed the mechanistic means by which the message could be transmitted:

> We need to embody freed titanic thought into required form—a thought which operates in masses with synthesized understandings and not with primordial understandings; a thought which formulates its own grammar and its own rules in uniting sentences—because cities, tunnels, glaciers, mountains, hilltops, oceans will be the elements of sentences, the expressions of titanic tasks of the grandiose human collective of nature.[5]

Indeed, "Cablepoem Abroad," in its rigid, architectonic appearance and hard-lined dispatch, imparts a sense of invincible strength and durability. The language of the poetry itself is tough. The words selected are firm, often eliciting rough, tactile, industrial qualities. Furthermore, the visual impact of the typographic layout of "Cablepoem Abroad" reinforces the technological constitution of the poem which is arranged according to a network of bridges and scaffolding. In general, the visual impression is one of utmost simplicity—it is a work absolved of all decoration, and which emphasizes (literally and symbolically) a galvanized integration of content and form.

In conception, "Cablepoem Abroad" was created in the same spirit as El Lissitzky's "Tale of Two Squares," constructed in 1920 in Vitebsk and published in Berlin in 1922. In his book, Lissitzky carefully leads his reader through the narrative and, in the process, a sequential accumulation of ideological awareness and growth also takes place. This successive building up of revolutionary spirit is performed rather more subtly by Lissitzky than it is in Semenko's "Cablepoem Abroad." In Semenko's work, the message is fustian, direct, and unambiguous. Yet in both, the revolutionary impact could only be acquired after the work has been read in an ordered, chainlike fashion. Hence, "Cablepoem Abroad" was conceived as a collective unit, both aesthetically and contextually, consisting of eight separate cards. Each card could be appreciated individually, but only as a totality did the "Cablepoem" acquire and deliver the significant Panfuturist message inherent within. The formal compositional links between each of the eight separate cards further

served to emphasize their contextual homogeneity. The staccatolike typography enhanced the telegraphic ideas, as did the inclusion of geographic references. In essence, "Cablepoem Abroad" functioned as a revolutionary travelogue.

Card One (fig. 5-1) was meant to heighten Panfuturist global communication by indicating the four directions of the world; it listed the continents that were to be transformed by revolution, progress, and technology. The protagonists of "Cablepoem Abroad," therefore, were AMERICA, AUSTRALIA, AFRICA, EURASIA, and OCEANIA, while REVOLUTION was in their midst. Each of the next seven cards indicated their capitals or major world centers of communication: Moscow, Kiev, London, Berlin, New York, Melbourne, and Buenos Aires. The names of these cities were placed in the bottom left or right corners on opposite cards, as if harkening back and forth between each other. For visual effect, the four directions of the world were arranged, and cleverly at that, in terms of descending length according to the number of letters they contained in Ukrainian:

SOUTH (translated into Ukrainian) = південь
NORTH (translated into Ukrainian) = північ
WEST (translated into Ukrainian) = захід
EAST (translated into Ukrainian) = схід

"Cablepoem Abroad" was thus a composite work which could not be fully understood if one were to ignore its interrelated parts. Each section of the work was to be deciphered as would be a painting or poster. Some areas were arranged along a schema which forced the eye to jump from one end to another, a device of the advertising medium that calls out to the reader or the viewer. At the same time, a strict organizing principle was also put into effect as Semenko arranged his cards into blocks to be read both horizontally and vertically. Card One was a kind of frontispiece to "Cablepoem Abroad" and served as an introduction to the consecutive cards all divided into two major vertical sections. The column at the edge of each card contained a free verse poem expounding on the philosophical message transmitted by the artist-poet. Meanwhile, words were formed in a playful arrangement of letters. The final effect was a composition highly geometric in design, but both dynamically Futurist and architectonically Constructivist in character.

Dynamic movement was thus demonstrated graphically by Semenko's imposing a circuitous and cyclical route which the trans-global message was to follow: KIEV–MOSCOW–VLADIVOSTOK–SAN FRANCISCO–CHICAGO–NEW YORK–LONDON–PARIS–BERLIN–WARSAW, and then again, KIEV, at which point the circuit began all over again. Major

Figure 5-1. Mykhailo Semenko, "Cablepoem Abroad," Card One, Begun in Kiev in 1920; Completed in Kharkiv in 1921
Poezo-Painting.
(Photograph from Kobzar, *1924)*

centers of the world were included and connected to each other by their geographical consecutiveness (e.g., the closest stop to Moscow was Vladivostok; Vladivostok, in turn, offered a direct route to Honolulu, and Honolulu to San Francisco, and so on, all forming a chain or cable, as it were, around the globe). Significantly, everything began and reverted back to Kiev, as if to focus on the origin of the cable message as well as to pay heed simultaneously to universal ambitions expressed by Ukrainian artists who joined with others, like the Italian Futurists, who expressed similar concerns.

> The earth shrunk by speed. New sense of the world. To be precise: one after the other, man will gain the sense of his home, of the quarter where he lives, of his region, and finally of the continent. Today he is aware of the whole world. He little needs to know what his ancestors did, but he must assiduously discover what his contemporaries are doing all over the world. The single man, therefore, must communicate with every people on earth. He must feel himself to be the axis, judge, and motor of the explored and unexplored infinite. Vast increase of a sense of humanity and a momentary urgent need to establish relations with all mankind.[6]

In many respects, like Italian Futurism, Panfuturism encouraged its countrymen to both manifest a cultural solidarity, and lift the shackles of insular thought patterns which prevent the local artists and literati in joining with global pursuits. Card One of "Cablepoem Abroad," therefore, was merely the first stop on a vicarious and metaphorical voyage that the viewer/reader and artist were encouraged to take. It served as an invitation, the ticket of passage which tantalized the partaker. The actual message that the poet transmitted began on Card Two and continued through the rest of the eight Cards of the poem, sounding out with the resonance of revolution. Fiery words called for spontaneity and immediate activity beckoned by the words: ATTENTION! LISTEN!

Semenko's call to action abounded with energy and spread beyond the oceans, engulfing the entire globe. It was a message which was purposely noisy as it passed through time and space. Conjuring up images of sparks, fiery atoms, and the need to arise, the aura of Semenko's call was volant, tropospheric, and concerned with rapid, surging motion. It was a soaring freedom of action which Semenko incited: "If you say it is flight, then I will bore you into the earth, where a vast revolution is circling." This expression coincides with the symbol of Yermilov's "spiral of communism" which he put on international display at the Pressa-Köln exhibition in 1928. As with Yermilov's drilling screw, Semenko's Panfuturist call was concrete and textural, reflecting the economic and industrial achievements of the contemporary age: as the "steel bird casts a glance upon the horizons of cities . . . the call will travel from continent to continent . . . and from city to

city the wave will flow." Meanwhile, this flight around the world was to be constructed "via an electric thread of the spirit of steel" or by "smoke," Semenko announced.

In addition to the geographic orientation of "Cablepoem Abroad," Semenko's Panfuturist ideas were not only to pass over the continents, but were to touch them physically. As if he were a geologist, Semenko envisioned that "the tensed dream will cut through Asia; it will shake up the valleys and the backbone of the Himalayas; the equatorial circles will tighten the surface of events, and the continents will be united" by means of this outlined interconnected global route. He called out to to the oceans to flow through the nations from continent to continent, and to "crush the melon of the past." The oceans—"PACIFIC!—ATLANTIC!—INDIAN!—ARCTIC!—ANTARCTIC!"—were to extend over new buildings, new cities, and were to be joined by rails and electric radio. What Semenko was espousing, therefore, was a network of communication which would echo the modern era:

> We will change the map of the globe
> We will replace the rivers
> by straight lines on the continents and oceans,
> we will write a new content
> all the meridians
> will be covered by a sky of smokestacks smoke!
> Let live
> the southern equator!

Some of these expressions hark back in a most striking way to the vociferous calls of Marinetti and the Italian Futurists, particularly as regards the national core of the ideas at hand. Before the emergence of the avant-garde, the Ukraine, located south of Russia and considered a southern province, was regarded as a mere extension of Russian culture. The artists of the Ukrainian avant-garde struggled against such artistic chauvinism. Motivated by similar concerns against the cultural hegemony of France, the Italians attacked the hallowed artistic self-righteousness of Parisian artists, and strategically declared their scorn in *Le Figaro*. With the "Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" in 1909, they then proceeded to rebuild Italian culture and art along contemporary lines in their native land. Geographically, Italy was pressed into subordination by the major artistic centers of the north, not only by Paris but by Munich as well. Therefore, when Semenko announced—"Vive the southern equator!"—the content of his message resounded with the same national enthusiasm professed by Marinetti. Semenko's "Cablepoem Abroad" was an example in point of Marinetti's assessment that "communicative exuberance and epidermic geniality . . . is one of the characteristics of the southern races."[7] Of course, Marinetti was referring only

to Italy, while Semenko, who identified wholeheartedly with the patriotic and national spirit of Marinetti's statement, exploited it not just for the purposes of a national identity, but as vivid testimony to his alignment with universal concerns in the arts.

Semenko's enthusiastic acceptance of technology to change the means of artistic expression also embraced the basic tenets of Italian Futurism. It did not have to take a Futurist to perceive that "the earth is shrunk by speed," as Marinetti said in 1913, but Futurism helped to mark that transition in artistic expression. Marinetti wrote:

> Futurism is grounded in the complete renewal of human sensibility brought about by the discoveries of science. Those people who today make use of the telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph, the train, the bicycle, the motorcycle, the automobile, the ocean liner, the dirigible, the aeroplane, the cinema, the great newspaper (synthesis of a day in the world's life) do not realize that these various means of communication, transportation, and information have a decisive influence on their psyches.[8]

As an example of this, Marinetti recounted the story of the contemporary man who just experienced an intense, emotional occurrence. Capturing the immediacy of the moment, he relates the incident to his friend as quickly as possible in order not to lose the impact of the impression and without sacrificing any of the attached emotional content. In telling the story with "telegraphic speed," the narrator abstracts his vocabulary, and the listener thus relives with the greatest immediacy those very same powerful moments experienced by the narrator. In such a case, the syntax of the narrator's speech defies any set norms or standards, a notion which inspired Marinetti to introduce a concept in poetry which he called "words-in-freedom" *(parole in libertà).*

"Words-in-freedom" was Marinetti's means of expressing himself in a twentieth century manner, that is to say that, much like the information passed along via telegraph, he maintained that speech and communication also ought to occur in the most laconic and economical manner possible. This method prevents the "dread of slowness, pettiness, analysis and detailed explanation," while fostering a "love of speed, abbreviation, and the summary, 'Quick, give me the whole thing in two words!'"[9] The similarity between Marinetti's ideas and those expressed by the Panfuturists is striking. "The size of our thinking has changed," said Semenko. "We generalize. We fling onto valleys, we think in integrals. Did this not have to make an impression on the means of materialization in art?"[10] Marinetti's "words-in-freedom" gave impetus to this statement by Semenko.

Other resonances of links with Italian Futurism in "Cablepoem Abroad" have to do with the machine as a moving force of contemporary society:

the machine is a titan.
our brother
brave and talented.
. . . . . .
quicker—together
CONTINENTS
quicker—together
WORKERS
the machine
waits.[11]

The vital core of contemporary progress in Semenko's poem was therefore the machine. From the human vantage point, Semenko regarded mineworkers to be the closest to the kind of production a machine could elicit. Mineworkers were the living force of the newly emergent industrial world filled with energy and Futurist drilling mobility. They constituted a symbol that Semenko could combine with the strong geological sensibility of his own poetry:

we, the conquerors,
are the earth to man
we, are the workers
we measure the dry valleys
we place one continent
on another
. . . . . .
tomorrow:
we will be at home
in the system
of the planets
today:
we will squeeze oil from the earth
the target of labor's
bullets
is the earth
we will deepen the mines! . . .[12]

Thus the Futurist vision was intensified by the geological changes that had already occurred in nature:

The epoch
has moved niagara
. . . . . .
and pasted the surface
of the earth
position yourself on new soil
new plants will grow on the earth.[13]

Semenko's Futurist vision was enthusiastically infested with the optimism of a global awakening in which the natural, organic world would mingle with the mechanical, objectified world of machine technology:

listen!
I pressed the button
50 parallel 50
Moscow-Himalaya-Kyoto
Our language
Cities and mountains and seas and a field of snow
Words will be forgotten
It is constricting to think in details!
We will return to a collective thought
. . . . . .
Learn the language of the Future![14]

In many ways, "Cablepoem Abroad" contained various motifs from previous works of Semenko: the expansion of the revolutionary movement to all the continents; the new possibilities opened to liberated nations and the transformation of the globe by them; and especially the high level of technical progress. But the language of the Future also had a specific connotation for Semenko. In cultivating the Panfuturist vein of internationalism and universal communication, Semenko propagated the language of Esperanto so that his universal message would be communicable and understood by all. As the initial step toward this end, he merged Cyrillic and Latin script so that both East and West could recognize familiar "leftist" slogans. The curious program of transliteration which Semenko first employed in *Semafor u maibutnie* (see chapter 1) not only offered an opportunity in the exercise of phonetics and linguistic play, but also lent itself easily to a telegraphic mode of communication. The volatile energy of the contemporary world, printed according to the transcriptory code of the Panfuturists, is carried through in the following telegraphic message from "Cablepoem Abroad":

Na monblan!
Na kordillery!
Barykady na andaq!
Tytanyk revol'uciji
Golfstromyt'
Atlantyky zemnyq okeaniv!
Teqnykam
Imperatyvnyj dekret:
1925
! RADIO—TRAM!
ZEML'A— - -
— MARS[15]

Translation:

On Mont Blanc!
On Cordillera!
Barricades on Andes!
The Titanic of revolution
Gulfstreams!
The Atlantics of earth's oceans!
To the technicians
An imperative decree:
1925
! RADIO—tram !
Earth———
— MARS.

Practically speaking, the message is intended for the Ukrainian reader, for although some words can be made out by an audience of any nationality, the fullest impact of the idea presented is really intended to agitate a specific local readership and bring it to universal thinking. Poetry thus had to undergo a major change as the Panfuturists had anticipated: "It had to, and it happens. We've found another means of writing poems—to write not by means of a primordial understanding, but by an understanding which is integrated, generalized. And this means that we should discard that which is called a 'poem,' while an already superfluous item—'poetry'—can be put in the archives."[16] On a strictly formal level and as a consequence to the experimentation with linguistic syntax as practiced by the Futurists, the Panfuturist formula was now actually implemented in a literary-artistic product such as "Cablepoem Abroad." "Material" for the Panfuturists was one of the three elements comprising Facture (Facture = Material + Form + Content). Panfuturist Facture, therefore, did not merely signify texture, in the physical sense, or tectonic materiality, but the very fibre of the thought and the most efficacious means of presenting its essence. Facture had so changed the physiognomy of poetry that it brought about an entire annihilation of poetic structure and liquidated academic form which, in the view of the Panfuturists, could no longer capture the rhythm and pace of a modern world.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, both in Western Europe as well as in the Ukraine and Russia, "faktura" described all kinds of artistic as well as literary experimentation. The term itself was used widely to refer to surface orientation, although the means by which to achieve that surface variability, or texture, differed widely. A nascent awareness of the quality of the surface which plotted the course of radical advances in modern art, could already be seen in the methods of Courbet, Manet, and the Impressionists. Further along in this direction, Picasso, too, became dissatisfied with the uniformity of pigment on the canvas, considering it inadequate for determining the integrity of the surface, and added sawdust to his painting. In

a similar venture, the Burliuks themselves were known to drag their newly painted and still wet canvases into the muddy, fertile soil of Chernianka, the estate near Odessa in the southern Ukraine, and then to cover over the particles of rich earth which had attached to the surface with thick strokes of heavy paint.[17] Burliuk's conception of surface texture relates to the early beginnings of Futurism in Ukrainian painting, an example of which is Vasyl' Semenko's painting from the cycle *City* (fig. 1-3), where Facture is interpreted to mean a heavily impastoed painted surface. With the same intent, Kazimir Malevich and Ivan Puni applied actual objects such as spoons and plates to the surfaces of their works, and Yermilov included carpenter's tools in his art.

While in the visual arts, "faktura" had to do with the materiality of the paint medium, in literature it had to do with creating textures through words. To achieve this effect, a profusive use of onomatopoeics, shifted, broken images *(sdvig)*, and the splitting-up of words to create a new vocabulary *(zaum)* were employed. The result of all of this was the creation of visual poetry. Guillaume Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* of 1913–16, which integrated both the visual and literary art media by composing visual imagery consisting of words, is a vivid illustration of the way in which a new surface orientation is introduced into poetic creation. The varied use of typography and layout, including a content, which, in most instances, also has to do with texture, demonstrates these devices. In one of Apollinaire's *Calligrammes*, for instance, the typography of the poem *Il pluit* is altered to such an extent that it forms outlines of specific rained-upon images described in the poem.

The Futurists, who attempted to destroy traditional literary syntax and grasp the nerve of contemporary society were particularly adept at creating works which would look and sound like what they stood for: "anarchy," "patriotism," "noise," "aggression." Carlo Carrà's *Patriotic Celebration* of 1914 makes successful use of faktura in both word and image, educing the barrel of a machine gun and the rat-a-tat of bulletlike syllables issuing throughout and supposedly mobilizing the perceiver into action. Among the Russian literary Futurists, Vasily Kamensky's *Ferro-Concrete Poetry* of 1914 was also built on the premise of symbolically incorporating into poetry aspects of modern technological innovations like reinforced concrete in the construction process. As if by imitation of the new technology and by a special awareness of new materials, Kamensky selected words for his poetry which had a strong "technological essence," and ordered them through typography and layout in the same way that supporting rods should penetrate through, and give support to, solid blocks of poured concrete.

The concern with faktura and the materalization of the word had marshalled the synoptic synthesis of literature and the visual arts; and—in the case of Semenko—led to the creation of the poet's own artistic hybrid which he called "poezo-painting." Semenko began experimenting with the medium

in 1920 and by 1921–22, a group of poezo-painters in Kiev planned several exhibitions of poezo-painting, attempting even to merge poetry with the film industry to create poezo-films.[18]

As a direct outgrowth of Panfuturist theory, poezo-painting helped to bridge the gap between literature and the visual arts. By splintering the arts into basic rudimentary units, into elements, the Panfuturists proposed a common basis for the study and cohesiveness of all the arts, thus submitting a synthesis of the arts as a framework for constructing the future of Ukrainian art and literature. Facture obviously assisted in this process, for the possibilities and combinations of deconstructed Factures—a breakdown of art into basic formulae adapted to all the media—offered much variety, especially since they touched upon all the artistic media including theatre, music, architecture, and the plastic arts. Semenko favored such an integration and union of the arts, for it went hand-in-hand with the universality of the Panfuturist system. Through his poezo-painting, the word began to undergo "energizing experimentation" in keeping with the spirit of contemporaneity which pervaded Ukraine on the threshold of modernism. The hallmark of poezo-painting, therefore, was that it grappled with the modern world, with contemporary life. By prevailing on Futurist iconoclastic measures, the Panfuturist poezo-painters thus became very conscious of both the visual and auditory reception of their work as they dealt with the changes in twentieth century thinking.

In 1921–22, Semenko created a cycle of poezo-paintings which he entitled *My Mosaic*.[19] Unlike "Cablepoem Abroad," which was also a poezo-painting, the individual works of *My Mosaic* were as separate and distinct as indeed the tesserae of a mosaic. In each of these page-poems, Semenko segmented and fractured words into their component syllabic parts and then recombined them into a "visual" mosaic of Futurist puns. Perhaps the simplest yet most poignant of all of the poezo-paintings of *My Mosaic* was the one entitled *Sil's'kyi peizazh* [Village Landscape] (fig. 5-2). Not only was the poem constructed to create a broad expansive horizon, but Semenko also played with artistic perspective in creating the semblance of distance into the landscape through the expansion of the lengths of the words:

O
AO
AOO
AOOO
PAVLO
POPASY
KOROOVU

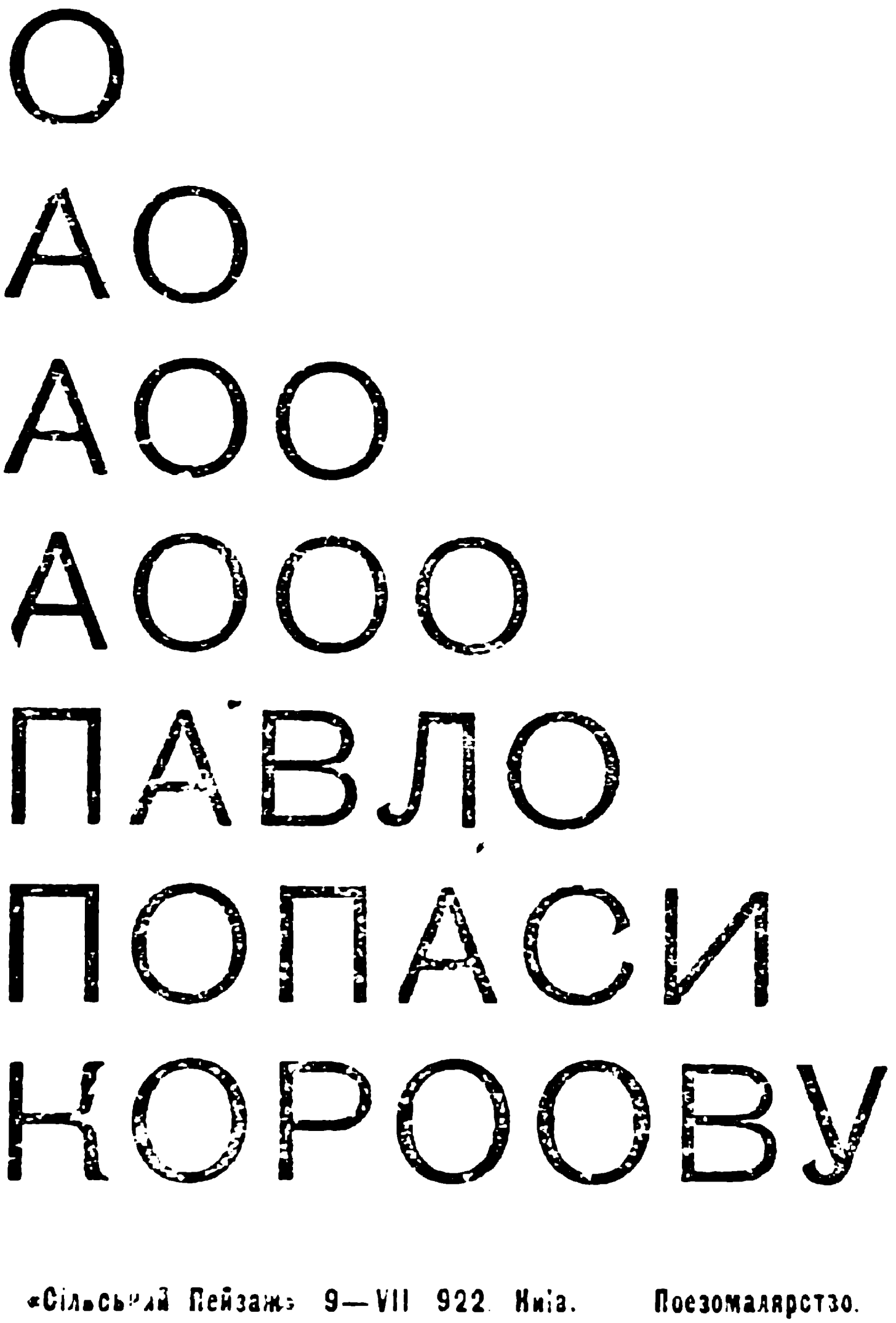


Figure 5-2. Mykhailo Semenko, "Village Landscape," Kiev, 1922 Poezo-Painting.
(Photograph from Kobzar, *1924)*

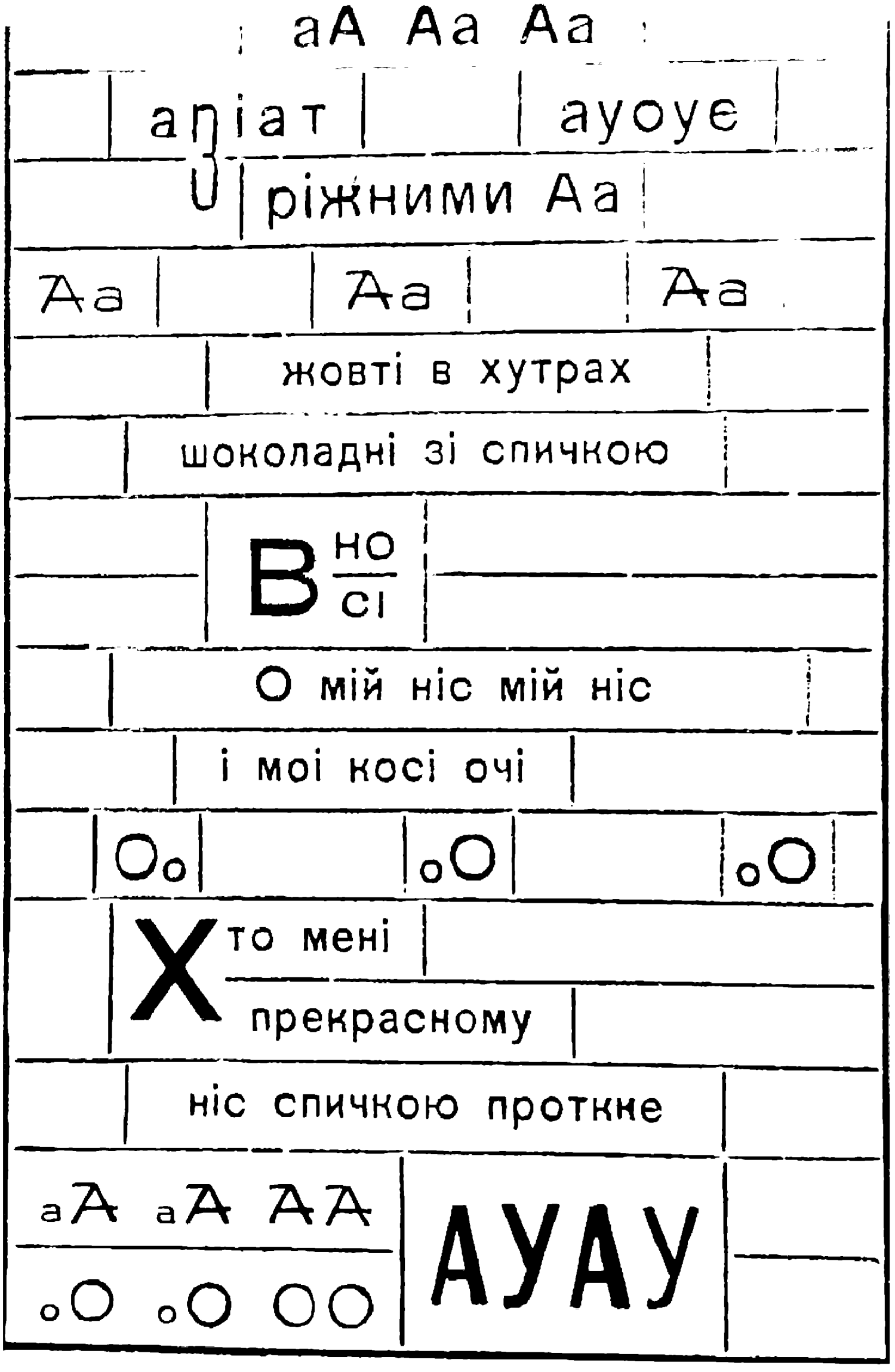


Figure 5-3. Mykhailo Semenko, "Longing for the Animal," Kiev, 1922 Poezo-Painting.
(Photograph from Kobzar, *1924)*

In order to maintain the visual balance, Semenko added another vowel, "o," to the Ukrainian spelling of the word "cow" *(korova)*—"koro-o-va." Translated, the poem reads:

O, AO, AOO, AOOO, PAVLO, TEND THE C-O-W.

The phonetic structure of the poem encouraged the viewer to read it aloud, thus fulfilling its auditory potential. If one were to nasalize the vowels "A" and "O" in reading "Village Landscape" out loud in Ukrainian, the mooing of a cow would be sounded out. At the same time, because of the special arrangement of these vowels, one's mouth would also mimic the chewing of cud. With usual Futurist aplomb, Semenko forces the viewer-cum-reader to act like a cow. A digressive comparison of Semenko's "Village Landscape" with the poem "Paysage," by Apollinaire from his *Calligrammes* is most revealing: Semenko's poezo-painting is both topically and topographically an expression of crude, wholesome, and integrated associations; Apollinaire's "Paysage," by contrast, is intellectualized as it is fragmented into four separate and unrelated sections with disjointed thematic images ranging from "the mansion where stars and divinities are born" to a "lighted cigar that smokes." Apollinaire's visual poem, therefore, is abstract and episodic; the images he evokes have to do with landscape only by a leap of imagination. Semenko by comparison introduces a rugged landscape, like the soil which comprises it, and represents this landscape pictorially.

There are other poezo-paintings in which Semenko subdivided his elongated rectangular surface into horizontal stages, and further cut these passages with vertical lines which created the effect of building-blocks in a brick wall—again, the idea of fragmentation and recombination. At the same time, he employed a variety of typesets. In *"Tuha za zvirom"* [Longing for the Animal] (fig. 5-3), for example, Semenko placed the lower case letters next to bold capitals in a wave-like motion. As one reads the letters and words aloud, an almost wailing effect is created in keeping with the sense of grieving and nostalgia which underlies the spirit of the poem. The content generates an organic sense as it travels over the features of a human and/or animal face. Here again, there is a play on the vowels "A" and "O" which, when combined together, sound out a numbed expression of pain. The poem, however, is more akin to the kinds of jumbled and thematically unrelated images incorporated in Apollinaire's *Calligrammes*. If Semenko's poem were read backwards, the sense of the poem itself would not be destroyed even though the words might be jumbled:

aA Aa Aa
a Asian Auoue
with various Aa
Aa Aa Aa
yellow in furs
chocolatey with a match
IN the $\frac{no}{se}$
O my nose my nose and my slanted eyes[20]
Oo oO oO
Who for my
beautiful self will
pierce the nose with a male fish
aA aA AA
AUAU
oO oO OO

The Russian Futurist poet Vladimir Maiakovsky did a similar experiment in his 1913 poem, "*Iz ulitsy v ulitsu*" [From Street to Street], in which he fractured semantic units and arranged his phrases vertically so that, whether read backwards or forwards, the contextual unity of the poem would not be dislodged. But Maiakovsky's work was not a visual poem as were the poezo-paintings. Typeset and layout were not of major consequence, at least not in the case of this particular poem by Maiakovsky. Thus, aside from being a fusion of the visual and literary mediums, Semenko's poezo-paintings are, in essence, also declamatory works which, in order for the full impact of the creation to come across, require an oral reading which coincides with the visual variations created by the typography. In this, they antedate, to some extent, the kind of experimentation which Maiakovsky was engaged in later when creating his anthology of verse, "*Dlia Golossa*" [For Reading Out Loud], published in 1923. This was a work which was aimed purely at auditory reception. El Lissitzky's typographic images for the verses imprinted themselves optically and tendentiously on the reader's consciousness.

There is no doubt as to the degree that faktura as texture in art and literature was important in the context of Futurism. After the Revolution, the word took on an even more potent meaning filled with ideological intent, and the resultant mechanics of creating materiality or texture in post-Revolutionary art and literature had major import on literary-artistic procedures and agitational goals. In 1922, Aleksei Gan, in his writing on "Tectonics, Faktura and Construction," defined faktura as "the search for constructional laws as a form of surface resolution."[21] By issuing this statement, Gan implied that the destructive, annihilating, ruthless qualities of

early Futurism had now to be tempered to take on a constructive building and consolidation. Gan's Constructivist zeal paralleled in large measure the new ideational factor, which became part and parcel of post-Revolutionary activity in the Soviet Union. This was the key feature to mark the quality of faktura for Panfuturism. As Semenko himself boastfully stated:

> Futurists, analysts, and destructors carry out their callings. They came to ruin age-old traditions and in their realm transform the work of dismemberment in a parallel way to the dismemberment of society. And only the undertaking of that, for which purpose the ruination takes place, was already the next stage in the development of all art. This is Panfuturism. Practically, it becomes apparent in a conscious ruination, because it has distinct tasks and is organized by a clear line of amelioration.[22]

Many of Semenko's poezo-paintings gave voice to a fiery revolutionary spirit, confluent with the demands echoed by Marinetti over a decade earlier. Adamant about destroying museums as a paradigm for destroying the past and all that came before, Marinetti had long proclaimed: "... Oh, the joy of seeing the glorious old canvases bobbing adrift on those waters, discolored and shredded! ... Take up your pickaxes, your axes and hammers, and wreck the venerable cities, pitilessly!"[23] Semenko's poezo-painting, *"Parykmakher"* [Barber] (fig. 5-4), illustrates the same idea:

THE QUATTROCENTISTI great specialists

were

THE ITALIANS have

died

out

Oil

is cracking

then

DUST

Pfff

and nothing remains

Mikhail Semenko SHAVED his beard

Leonar $\frac{\text{do}}{\text{da}}$ VINCI

Many other poezo-paintings were imbued with the ideological and spiritual fire of the modern era without trickery but with a strong, direct and straightforward message, delivered in no uncertain terms:

> the colossal chain is unraveling
> Be afraid you maggot-eaters at the bottom of slime
> the colossal chain is falling downward and will capture you by its million steel claws
> Zelektromagnets and will push out from the caves and puddles the mud will dry in the sun
> AND YOU? the colossal chain rises upward and here at the apparatus with buttons, are we,
> the Panfuturists. (fig. 5-5)

On a more tender note, Semenko renders a poezo-painting for his child. In the poem "*Ya ne maty*"[I am not mother] Semenko's relationship with his daughter, Iryna, is sympathetically portrayed, but at the same time, the reader/ viewer becomes keenly aware of the egocentric character of Semenko, the Futurist (fig. 5-6).

I am not mother

M

Y I S

R L

O E

C F

H P

K S

A

:

And I shoo away the flies
a-Ka a-Ka a-Ka
listens father
the great rogue and master
F U T U R I S T
IROCHKA
———— KAKA HA-HA
IRONEZ

In summary, the basic nature and genesis of poezo-painting was the emergence of a new art reflective of the forces of the modern day. Just as Marinetti was preoccupied with syntax and form, dismembering the material of poetry into primary elements, so, too, the materialization process inherent

КВАТРОЧЕНТИСТИ

ВЕЛИКІ

СПЕЦИ

БУЛИ

ІТАЛІЙЦІ ПЕ РЕ МЕ РЛИ

ОЛІЯ —РЕ ПАЄТЬСЯ

ПОТІМ

ПОРОХ

ПХУ

Й НЕМАЄ НІЧОГО

МИХАЙЛЬ СЕМЕНКО ПОГОЛИВ БО РО ДУ

ЛЕОНАР ДО ДА ВІНЧІ

Figure 5-4. Mykhailo Semenko, "Barber," Kiev, 1922 Poezo-Painting.
(Photograph from Kobzar, *1924)*

РОСКРУЧУЄТЬСЯ
ВЕЛЕТЕНСЬКИЙ ЛАНЦЮГ
ВІЙТЕСЬ червоіди В МУЛІ НА ДНІ ПАВИ ПАС НИЗ ВЕЛЕТЕНСЬКИЙ ЛАНЦЮГ
ЗАХОПИТЬ ВАС МІЛІОНАМИ
СВОІХ
СТАЛЕВИХ
ПАЗУРІВ
ЗЕЛЕКТРОМАГНІТАМИ
Й ВИПХНЕ
З ПЕЧЕР І КОВБАНЬ
ВИСХНЕ БАГОВІННЯ НА СОНЦІ
А ВИ?
ПІДНІМАЄТЬСЯ В ГОРУ
ВЕЛЕТЕНСЬКИЙ ЛАНЦЮГ
А ТУТ З КНОПКАМИ
ЗА АПАРАТОМ МИ
ПАНФУТУРИСТИ

Figure 5-5. Mykhailo Semenko, "Panfuturists," Kiev, 1922
Poezo-Painting.
(Photograph from Kobzar, *1924)*

Figure 5-6. Mykhailo Semenko, "I Am Not Mother," Kiev, 1922
Poezo-Painting.
(Photograph from Kobzar, *1924)*

in Facture also played a significant role for the Panfuturist. Contextually, it had an impact on the creation of a Panfuturist work such as "Cablepoem Abroad"; pragmatically, it led to technical achievements in the realm of typography, eventually even influencing the artistic layout and typset of the pages of *Nova generatsiia*.

But it is worthwhile to make a digression here and consider that, although Ukrainian modernism indeed patterned itself on the call, dicta, and forms of Western modern art, there is evidence of an inherent core for this kind of activity within the tradition of Ukrainian poetry and art in general. Here too, however, a parallelism can be drawn between the Italian Futurists and the Ukrainian Panfuturists. In both cases, the issue has to do with the spirit of the Baroque. Whereas even Italian Futurism had its precedents in the Baroque period, so too Semenko's poezo-paintings can be said to be rooted in the visual poetry of two eighteenth-century Ukrainian literary sages, Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii and Paisii Velychkivs'kii. Dovhalevs'kii and Velychkivs'kii were both distinguished scholars at the Kievan Mohyla Academy, first founded as a college by Metropolitan Petro Mohyla in 1632. In 1701, under the reign of Hetman Ivan Mazepa, it became an Academy for general education and rapidly gained in reputation. The Academy was regarded as the first institution of higher education in the eastern Slavic world, one on a par with the oldest universities of Western Europe. The Mohyla Academy maintained close relationships with scholarly centers in central Europe, where many of the Academy's professors had acquired their training. At the Mohyla Academy, both Dovhalevs'kii and Velychkivs'kii taught courses on poetics. Their teaching centered on the art of writing poetry, on questions of poetic technique and how to construct a poem. Dovhalevs'kii, in particular, approached his teaching in a poetic, but very pragmatic way. He introduced a course on writing poems for every required occasion, both religious and secular. His course was based on the precepts outlined in his book *Hortus poeticus* [The Poetic Garden], "cultivated for the gathering of flowers and fruits of the word in verse and prose in the Kiev Mohylo-Zaborowsky Academy for the widespread use of the Ukrainian gardener and his Orthodox fatherland . . . in the year in which the particularly beautiful city gave the order to conquer the Azovs with arms, 1 September 1736."[24]

Although difficult to substantiate, Dovhalevs'kii's book offers innumerable parallels with Semenko's poezo-paintings. Dovhalevs'kii's poems and poetic paradigms were indeed reflective of the contemporary spirit of religious struggle in the Ukraine, stemming from the Orthodoxy which was inseparably bound to the kozak state. Semenko's "Cablepoem Abroad" similarly mirrored contemporary socio-political and cultural concerns. Perhaps it would be artificial and strained to suggest a direct correlation between the two. Nonetheless, on a more abstract, theoretical level, it is

intriguing how interrelated was the work of these two individuals, and, moreover, how close in spirit were the two epochs. On a purely pedestrian level, Semenko's use of a Panfuturist language which includes Latin letters, in addition to his increased support of Esperanto, parallels in some ways the use of both Latin and Old Slavonic in Dovhalevs'kii's *Hortus poeticus*. The presence of multi-lingualism, and particularly of Western language, is only one link worthy of note between the works and aims of Semenko and those of Dovhalevs'kii. Thus, despite major distinctions, the reference back to the Baroque should not be ignored. As with the Baroque period, so too with the 1920s: mass education, along with a rise in national consciousness and nationhood, coupled with a fertile cultural resurgence and experimentation and innovations in all forms of art, became the hallmarks of the epoch.

The consequence of all of this is that while Semenko vaunted total disengagement from the past, it was impossible not to take past culture into account. The spirit here was much the same as that manifested by the Italian Futurists who brandished destroying the Nike of Samothrace housed in the Louvre: this group was attempting to regain for Italy the position of cultural primacy that she had experienced during the Baroque period. Bastardizing the classics, making them more vernacular, was typical for the Baroque; just as the flourish and the fervor with which the Italian Futurists and the Ukrainian Panfuturists abandoned themselves to their new goals can be described adjectivally as being also truly baroque in nature. A message to the masses delivered in a style full of impact, contemporary in feeling, and immediate in reception—these are the qualities nurtured by the new generation. The ease with which both the Latin and Cyrillic were fused together in the Baroque period again found its rebirth in the blend of both in Panfuturist transcription, in the use of Esperanto in *Nova generatsiia*, and certainly in the internationalizing of the Ukrainian language by introducing foreign words into the common vocabulary.

Aside from these philosophical links with the Baroque, a real direct parallel can be drawn between Semenko's poezo-paintings and Dovhalevs'kii's *Hortus poeticus*. One of the many "flowers" in Dovhalevs'kii's poetic garden was used as a paradigm for constructing visual poetry through the use of "comparison, juxtaposition, alienation, and allusion."[25] In one of his own poezo-paintings, Semenko drew on similar precepts, emphasizing analogy, association, and detail. Furthermore, Dovhalevs'kii's *Poetic Garden* introduced such untraditional poetic inventions as Onogrammatic poems, in which the last letters of the words of one verse are omitted, but then completed with the last letters of another verse; Prometheus poems, which are created by mixing all the words so that, in the end, the content remains unchanged; and Rectangular or Square poems, in which the words are so arranged that they can be read from each of the four corners, but the length of the lines does not

change. There were also Coordinated poems, an example of which is the poem about the pauper and the rich man, which incorporates syllables or letters of words which can mutually serve two lines of verse:

Papr cael temn papr
ue amat um con it ue honores.
Dis lux luir di s

Another type of visual poetry which Dovhalevs'kii titled "Poem-transformation," is created by taking one word and deleting, adding, or changing certain syllables, thus also creating a new word(s). For example, from the word "corpus" one can form the following:

Orcus, opus, porcus, rus, crus, pus, cor, procus, os, cos,
Ros, porus, o cur, uro, spuo, spurco, ruo, caro, curo.[26]

Each of these relied heavily on the fracturing and disintegration of words, including the recombination of these elements in order to formulate new words, and in turn, new visual images.

Other paradigms introduced by Dovhalevs'kii took optics into account as well as innovative typographic design. A Cefalonomastic poem emphasizes the beginning capital letters of separate words to express some thought or precept, in this case, EUCHARISTIA:

Eximus Vivit Caeli Hac Albedine Rector,
Inclusum Sacro Tegmine Iugis Ama.

But perhaps the most interesting in terms of the development of Semenko's poezo-painting were Dovhalevs'kii's paradigms, called "Poem-Labyrinths" or "From-the-Center-Poems." This type of poem was constructed in a gridlike composition. The poem began in the center and was read into all the corners. It could be written in any meter, but was basically created in two ways: first, its beginning letter could be introduced in the very center of the grid from which the poem was read up or down, to the right or left (fig. 5-7); or secondly, the poem could begin in the top left corner and then could be read to the right and downwards (fig. 5-8).

What had occurred with poetry was that it was an artistic medium which was no longer meant to be perceived only aurally: optical effects and visual playfulness assumed an increasingly significant role in its creation. Even though traditional meters could remain the same, the very shape of the poem changed drastically. In many instances, the shape of the poem reflected its content. Dovhalevs'kii's poem, "Hoc signo Christi vinces omnes inimicos," for instance, formed the silhouette of a cross, a pictorial reinforcement of the

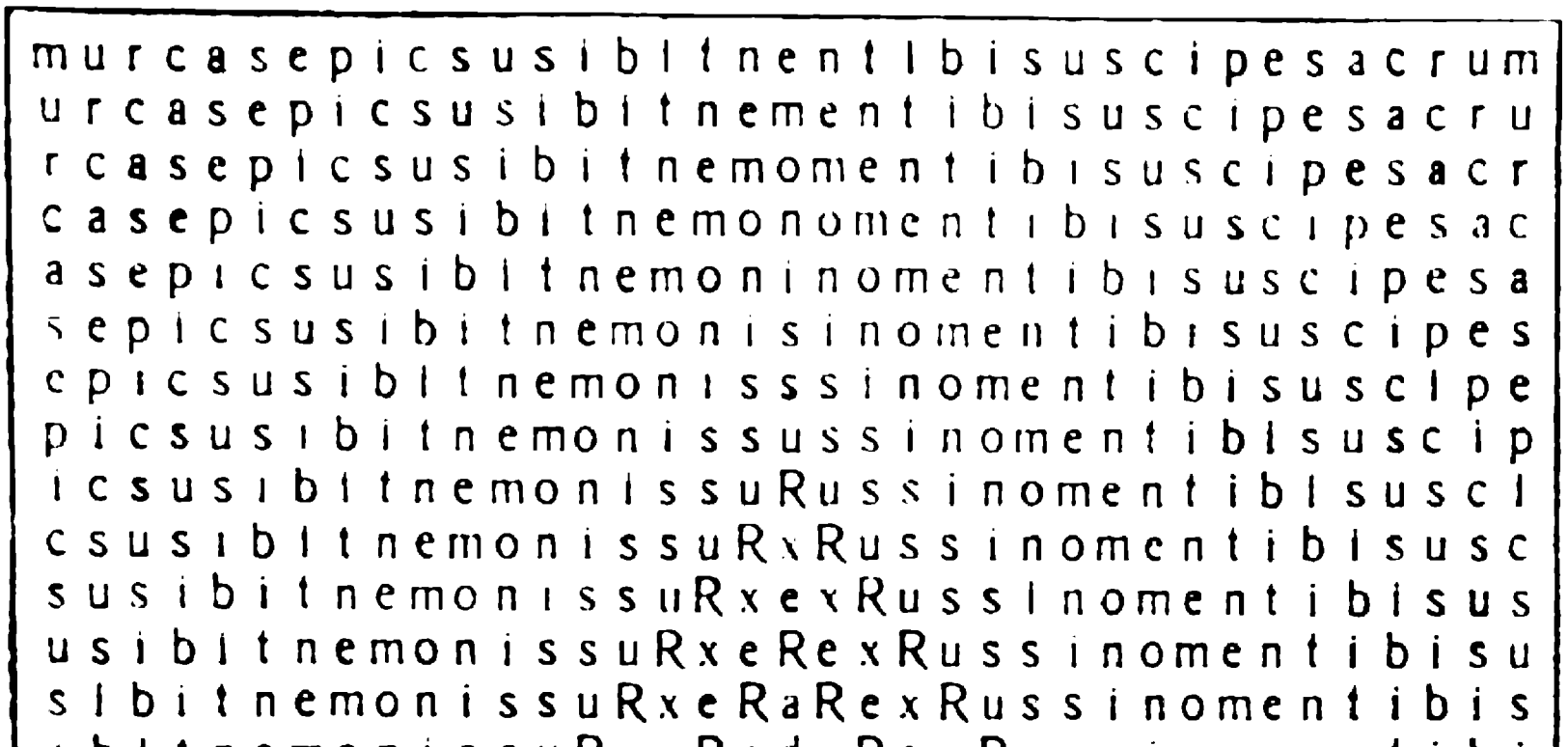


Figure 5-7. Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii, *Candida Rex Russi, Nomen Tibi Suscipe Sacrum*, ca. 1736
(Photograph from Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii, Poetyka: Sad poetychnii, *1972)*

A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p	e	t	a	s
n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p	e	t	a
n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p	e	t
a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p	e
p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p
o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a
t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g
e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o	n
n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l	o
s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a	l
m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l	a
u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u	l
n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c	u
d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ	c
l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	s	æ
s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı	c
æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	ı
c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d
u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n
l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u
a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m
l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s
o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n
n	o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e
g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t
a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o
p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p
e	p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a
t	e	p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n
a	t	e	p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n
s	a	t	e	p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	æ	s	l	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A

Figure 5-8. Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii, *Anna, Potens Mundi, Saecula Longa Petas*, ca. 1736
(Photograph from Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii, Poetyka: Sad poetychnii, *1972)*

idea presented in the poem. Even though the time period and purpose of Dovhalevs'kii's visual poetry is irrefutably distinct from Semenko's works, three of Semenko's poezo-paintings from *Moia mozaika* specifically echoed some of the paradigms from Dovhalevs'kii's Rectangular or Square poems of the *Hortus poeticus*. These included "*Tuha za zvirom*" [Longing for the animal], "*Ya ne maty*" [I am not mother], and "*Parykmakher*" [Barber]. All three were completed on 7 July 1922. The telegraphic mode of "Cablepoem Abroad" and the explorative, yet innovative visual qualities of the poezo-paintings were a steppingstone to the more mature character of the form and content of *Nova generatsiia*. In *Nova generatsiia*, typography, experimentation with different typesets, as well as new visual artistic media such as photography, fused together to create a journal in the forefront of artistic achievement in the early twentieth century.

6

Nova generatsiia

During the twenties, Kiev was perhaps the most notable of the polygraphic centers in the Ukraine, thanks, in part, to its long tradition of incunabula developed by such institutions as the Kievan Mohyla Academy. Toward the end of the decade, however, Kharkiv also became a center of typography. After seizing power from the Ukrainian National Government in the Eastern Ukraine, the publishing bureau of the National Commissariat of Education of the UkrSSR in Kharkiv (founded on 18 January 1919, and later transformed into the largest Ukrainian publishing establishment—*Vseukryydav* [All-Ukrainian Publishing Firm]),—engaged in a most active publishing program. Vseukryydav became the central publishing organ of VUTsVK [All-Ukrainian Central Executive Publishing Committee], but by the end of 1921, it relinquished its monopoly in the field, and with the implementation of the New Economic Policy, a number of private publishing firms were created in addition to the state publishing houses.[1]

There were two major publishing firms existing in the Ukraine at this time: DVU, The State Publishing House of the Ukraine, and RUKh [Movement]. RUKh was founded in Kharkiv in 1921 and lasted until 1933. It specialized in printing, in Ukrainian, the works of pre-Revolutionary Ukrainian writers, and also produced an entire series of monographs on practicing artists in 1929–30. DVU was a strong centralized apparatus for the production and dissemination of Ukrainian books and journals. Its major role in the Ukraine in the realm of cultural revolution was outstanding, as it provided the Ukrainian population with diverse publications. Conscious of the physical and aesthetic appearance of its products, DVU was the only one among the numerous publishing establishments formed in the Ukraine at the time to employ an "artistic director of design" on its staff.

One of the products of DVU was *Nova generatsiia*. The format of *Nova generatsiia* was 6 13/16 × 9 7/8 inches and remained as such from its inception in 1927 until the beginning of 1930, at which time the journal underwent complete typographic reorganization and redesign. Overall, the textual material in *Nova generatsiia* was printed in a typeface which was simple and

clear. Articles appeared in the highly varied sans serif, which, according to the father of modern typographic design, Jan Tschichold (1902-1974), in "its wide range of weights (light, medium, bold, extra bold, italic) gives every color in the black and white scale and contributes most easily to the abstract image aimed at by the new typography."[2] Tschichold, who was German by birth,[3] had an overwhelming effect on the teaching of typography at the Bauhaus. He was a calligrapher, printmaker, and independent book designer, who regarded sans serif as a modern typeface.

The mention of Tschichold and the effect of his influence on the German Bauhaus in the same breath as Semenko's constructive venture with *Nova generatsiia* is not superfluous. Tschichold's influence on the Bauhaus artists was immense. When Herbert Bayer, as a student and later teacher at the Bauhaus, introduced unadorned simplicity and absolute directness for the modern German alphabet, he was essentially casting off the antiquated decorum of dated German printing and culture. Bayer's thinking was premised on the fact that, if the mores of a German society were to be abandoned in creating a new, modern man, then certainly any association with the products of that culture also had to be severed. These were the very ideas that the Panfuturists propagated. Semenko's poezo-paintings, begun in 1920, were a prelude to the conscious use of modern typographic design which he ultimately let flower in *Nova generatsiia*. "Cablepoem Abroad," moreover, not only fulfilled the aesthetic aims set forth by Tschichold, but shared in his political views as well. Tschichold aligned his worldview according to the axioms of Soviet politics and for many years even signed his name, Ivan (Iwan). He never officially became a member of the Communist Party, but saw the proletariat and indeed all forms of industrial and technological progress as making possible a new era of human happiness and productivity: "... the works of today, untainted by the past, primary shapes which identify the aspect of our time: Car, Aeroplane, Telephone, Radio, Neon, New York! These objects, designed without reference to the aesthetics of the past, have been created by a new kind of man: the ENGINEER!"[4]

Although it is difficult to pinpoint actual links between the typographers of *Nova generatsiia* and their counterparts in Western Europe, one suspects that these contacts developed in an indirect way. Tschichold was actively engaged in proclaiming the principles of the new typography; and given the global antennae of Semenko—especially his fascination with the materialization of the word and the faktura of the printed page—it would not be surprising to expect an awareness of Tschichold's writings. In the years leading up to and during the publication of *Nova generatsiia*, moreover, the artistic training in the Ukraine had been oriented in much the same spirit as typified in the Bauhaus program. It was perhaps through this orientation that Tschichold's ideas would have filtered down as design precepts for *Nova*

generatsiia. By 1924, the future editors of *Nova generatsiia* were already familiar with typographic developments in many places in Europe—not least of which were the designs of Kurt Schwitters in Hanover, Walter Dexel in Jena, Joost Schmidt and Herbert Bayer in Weimar, Henryk Berlewi in Warsaw, Tschichold in Leipzig and Pavlo Kovzhun in L'viv. In addition, given the widespread interest in the graphic arts in the Ukrainian avant-garde and its international exposure at exhibitions, it is likely that Tschichold's publications would have been known to Ukrainian artists, especially his first published article, "Elementare Typographie," which appeared in the October 1925 issue of the Leipzig journal *Typographische Mitteilungen*. This manifesto had an immediate effect and was the topic of wide discussion not only by compositors and editors all over Europe, but by artists as well.

A curiosity for the work of Tschichold was demonstrated early on in *Nova generatsiia* when two of his film posters for the Phoebus Palast of 1927 were reproduced in the November issue of 1928. Tschichold's typography and its influence on poster art increased so steadily that the entire May 1929 issue of *Nova generatsiia* was devoted largely to the work of Berlin artists whom he influenced: Kurt Schwitters, Piet Zwart, and Otto Goedecker. Tschichold's ideas were similar to those pronounced by László Moholy-Nagy in the first Bauhaus book of 1923. In fact, the expression "Neue Typographie" was first introduced in 1923 by Moholy-Nagy to reflect the changes in and transformation of typography taking place all over Europe in the early twenties. Because of its physical appearance, *Nova generatsiia* represents the quintessence of those practical, economic, and efficient aims of modern typographic design. By the third issue, *Nova generatsiia* had fulfilled the very maxims endorsed by Moholy-Nagy at the Bauhaus: "Modern typography must make full use of photomechanical processes.... Photographs will be integrated with the text in the place of verbal expressions that are subject to individual interpretation."[5]

In the layout of articles in *Nova generatsiia*, a variety of means was employed: an article would frequently begin in the lower quarter of the page, sometimes not even separated from other articles by the bold display line usually incorporated on the page. In general, an even margin was maintained throughout, such that even the page number—located in the bottom corner—was contained in the large block layout. Page illustrations were given separate sequential numbering within the body. The varied underlining, the diversity of typescript, and the occult balances helped to create an interesting visual panoply. In addition (and reflective of the Panfuturist aim to communicate universally), French synopses were included at the end of longer articles and were set apart by a fluid, italic typeface. When summaries were given in Esperanto, a frequent practice (see end of appendix C), the editors utilized creative spacing along with wide, blocklike letters. This, together with italics,

was used as a means of underscoring key passages in the text, and was in keeping with Tschichold's suggestion that, "In body matter, emphasis is made according to the sense of the words, by using italic (slight emphasis), semi-bold (for key words and prominent emphasis), or occasionally, by using both together."[6]

From 1930, noticeable changes that were extremely parsimonious in nature occurred in *Nova generatsiia*'s typography and layout. These resulted in an extreme narrowing of the margins and dissolution of empty spaces. The printed page began to flow harmoniously without any interferences. Only the heavy underlining of separate sections subdivided the page and set apart one article from the next. These were generally thick, dark lines which ran horizontally. Large dots were used to close paragraphs and to indicate footnotes. Picture captions were inserted vertically into the text but were singled out by a heavy blocking of line. The layout was tight and the paper was not wasted; a double column was incorporated, separated by a heavy line straight down the center. Without a doubt, the effect recalled Tschichold, who stated: "Do not hesitate to use double columns; they are often much easier to read."[7] Sometimes the symmetry of two columns was broken by the intrusion of an artwork or serial title like "biuleten" or "bloknoty," or by the introduction of yet another double-columned article. A clean and undecorated, architectonic, Constructivist look marked each page of *Nova generatsiia*. The contents page most clearly exemplified this very linear, serializing quality, i.e., there was no breaking up of the sections and just one single line was seen to be flowing into the next with only the slightest increase in size to balance the degree of boldness in the lettering. Initially, a larger typography *(karina)* was introduced with the new changes in order to facilitate the reading of pages. The print took on a very stark, pronounced character, but eventually became smaller and more compact.

Most striking was the fact that from 1930, *Nova generatsiia* was printed without the use of capital letters. The basis for this was described as a "functional exigency regarding the construction of the journal," with the expressed aim of rendering it considerably clearer for the reader.[8] The editors of *Nova generatsiia* maintained that "capital letters violate the range of the field of a vertical column perceived by the eye and cause a useless expense of energy, hastening fatigue. . . ."[9] Moreover, it was believed that capital letters, to a large extent, impeded the learning process among the illiterate. The use of an upper case required that they learn two sets of characters rather than one. Capital letters, therefore, were regarded as nothing more than inexcusable archaisms especially as related to punctuation. "There is no need for two means [i.e., a capital letter and a period] to serve one function," they said, especially since the period could easily fulfill both requisites.

Nova generatsiia's abandonment of the upper case extended an

important argument presented by Herbert Bayer in the Bauhaus. Bayer argued: "Why have two symbols for the same sound such as 'a' and 'A'? Why two alphabets for one word; why twice the number of symbols if half the number accomplishes the same thing?"[10] Once Bayer's aesthetic and economic reasons for abandoning upper case letters were accepted at the Bauhaus, only one alphabet was used in Bauhaus publications and correspondence. Although first suggested by Bayer in 1925, many (including Tschichold himself) had already experimented with a single, lower-case alphabet as a functional instrument of communication. In 1929, Tschichold printed what is considered to be one of the earliest anthologies of new photography, *foto-auge*, entirely without capitals, maintaining that, "words should rarely be set in capitals. In the new typography, display lines are set in bold, rather than capitals. Capitals are too pretentious and uncontemporary in general character and also more difficult to read than the lower case. In addition, they are decidedly more difficult to set."[11] Tschichold, however, abandoned the practice about 1930. Bayer, on the other hand, remained uncompromisingly principled in his omission of capitals and was faithful to his determination to foster a single typographic alphabet for German printing.

Bayer's enthusiasm for the creation of a German alphabet completely in the lower case can well be understood considering the fact that traditional Germany orthography generously employs the use of capital letters, and, if modern typography was to mark a break with tradition, for German publications the omission of upper case letters was the peak of antitraditionalism. For the Ukrainian alphabet, however, which is sparse in capitalization, the breaking with an orthographic tradition was simply a manifestation of symbolic alignment with Western avant-garde practices.

It is worthy of mention, however, that in 1917–20, when the graphic artist Heorhii Narbut took charge of the graphics workshop at the Ukrainian Academy of Art, he had already been in the process of creating a Ukrainian alphabet, but mainly based on capital letters.[12] Even though Narbut's designs were not created with typographic intent, they were certainly an impetus in revitalizing the use of the Ukrainian alphabet in print in the 1920s. Narbut's efforts were an attempt to create a Ukrainian alphabet for the modern era, a need which became ever greater with the increase of Ukrainian language publications in a period of national self-determination. The hallmark of Narbut's graphic design was that he looked to old Cyrillic manuscripts of the Baroque period and invented a modern-day Ukrainian alphabet which curiously fused the abbreviated motifs of Cyrillic calligraphy with the inclusion of Latin letters, as if anticipating the code of transliteration or the use of Esperanto among the Panfuturists. That both Narbut and Semenko were joined in their labors early on during the publication of the literary-artistic journal *Mystetstvo* already indicates a singleness of purpose. Narbut's

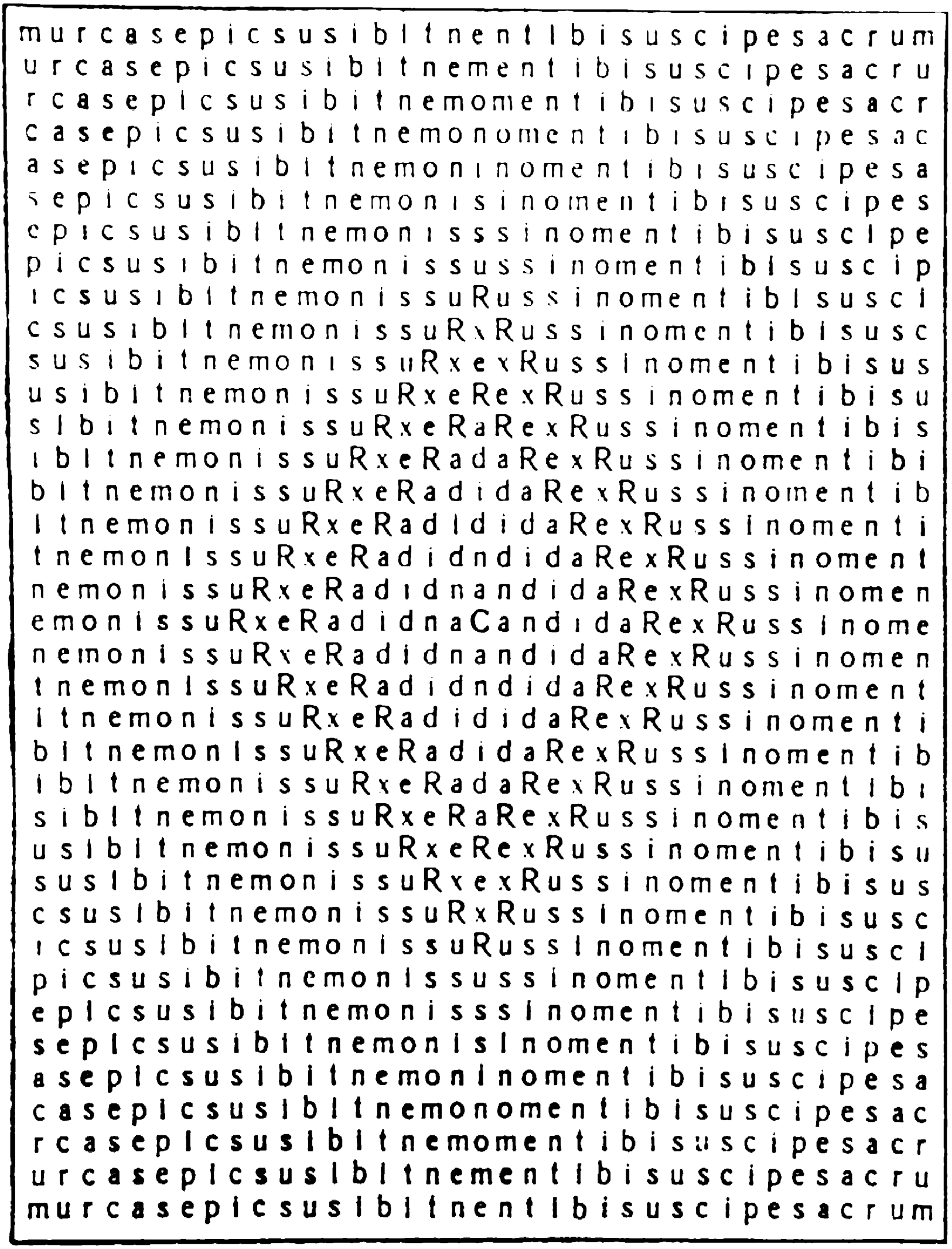


Figure 5-7. Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii, *Candida Rex Russi, Nomen Tibi Suscipe Sacrum*, ca. 1736
(Photograph from Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii, Poetyka: Sad poetychnii, *1972)*

A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p	e	t	a	s
n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p	e	t	a
n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p	e	t
a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p	e
p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a	p
o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g	a
t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o	n	g
e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o	n
n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l	o
s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a	l
m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l	a
u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u	l
n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c	u
d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae	c
i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	s	ae
s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i	c
ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d	i
c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n	d
u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u	n
l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m	u
a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s	m
l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n	s
o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e	n
n	o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t	e
g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o	t
a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p	o
p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a	p
e	p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n	a
t	e	p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n	n
a	t	e	p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A	n
s	a	t	e	p	a	g	n	o	l	a	l	u	c	ae	s	i	d	n	u	m	s	n	e	t	o	p	a	n	n	A

Figure 5-8. Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii, *Anna, Potens Mundi, Saecula Longa Petas*, ca. 1736
(Photograph from Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii, Poetyka: Sad poetychnii, *1972)*

Figure 6-2. Heorhii Narbut, Cover to the Journal *Mystetstvo*, 1920, No. 1

Moholy-Nagy's, and Bayer's principles on printing design. The blueprint of universal typographic design with only one alphabet was adopted for their publication. Consequently, beginning in 1930, *Nova generatsiia* was printed entirely in the lower case. Even the titles and the names of serials were indicated by small letters, singled out by heavy leading and a bolder typeface. Because of the lack of capitals, punctuation marks were made larger and more prominent, as was the first letter of each new paragraph. Moreover, charging themselves with a leadership role in the vanguard of contemporary publishing concerns, the editors of *Nova generatsiia* hoped to discourage the use of capital letters in other contemporary journals. They wished to promote a greater uniformity and a united front in the change of direction from old printing methods in order to "introduce great savings to our polygraphy which is now in a different position [needing, but] unable to meet the gigantic cultural growth of the land."[13]

In a period of economic frugality, there was necessarily a monetary consideration to be taken into account as related to the costs of printing and the long-range benefits of printer's machines containing only lower case letters. Simply stated, the use of the upper case required the efforts of both a type-cutter or type-designer, as well as the dresser in the foundry. Chronometric research had proven that this would cost considerably more, and that "the productivity of the work on a printer's machine without capital letters [would be] increased by 7%."[14] Hence, without capital letters, the printer's machine cost anywhere from 40-50% less. In addition, there was a considerable savings in time to be gained in the printer's work who had to put together linotypes, monotypes, etc. by hand. Thus, not only was the use of the lower case cheaper in terms of the machinery needed and its construction, but it also sped up the actual process of the work.

The preoccupation of *Nova generatsiia* with the issue of upper and lower case typography indicated the urgency and full abandon with which the Ukrainian avant-garde completely immersed itself in contemporary artistic trends. The discussion of these practicalities is not without import, as it points to the pragmatic aspects of Constructivist thought. Both *Nova generatsiia*'s choice of revolutionary ideals that effect changes in society and determine in some part an aesthetic basis, and the journal's acknowledgment of the financial realities required to achieve these goals made *Nova generatsiia* truly avant-garde in both its purpose and physical appearance. But soon it became necessary to make modifications similar to those already implemented in the typographic centers of Western Europe, especially Berlin, and thus to tame the earnestness with which the new typography was adapted to the printing of *Nova generatsiia*. In Western Europe the enthusiasts of a single alphabet (like Tschichold) soon disavowed the trend when they realized that capital letters, like punctuation marks, could not be ignored because of the function they had

acquired in the written language. In the final analysis, the complete omission of capital letters was thought to make printed matter more difficult to read because beginnings of sentences could not be signaled effectively, and proper names and different meanings of words could not be indicated. Finally, one of the concretely vexing issues stemming out of these difficulties was that in the existing new typography, there was very little (if any) differentiation between the comma and the period. This distinction was especially critical if capital letters were to be eliminated. In a short time, most supporters of a total lower case vocabulary, such as Tschichold and the editors of *Nova generatsiia,* decided to return to the more traditional means until better technology could be found. Bayer, however, continued to design typography in primary, elementary shapes entirely without capitals.

This short-lived foray into the use of lower case type points to two very important aspects of *Nova generatsiia:* first of all, the eagerness and willingness on the part of the Panfuturists to deal with the extremes of Facture and all the ramifications of visual experimentation; and secondly, the Constructivist regard for practical limitations placed on the artistic product. Notwithstanding these considerations, modern typography—a reflection of technological progress—was used as a major tool for exploiting the surface texture of the printed page. Inasmuch as Tschichold (the spiritual model for the modernization of typography in the Ukraine) considered the picture to be "like a machine, all parts of which are in particular and necessary relationship to each other and therefore function in a certain way,"[15] the total dispensation of ornamentation and meticulous attention given to careful setting and good proportional relations in *Nova generatsiia* revealed a Constructivist aesthetic and lucid functionalism which formed the emblem of new typography, and furthered the cause of the artist as engineer.

Semenko's initial commitment to Panfuturist faktura in his poezo-paintings, as well as the machine aesthetic which pervaded his "Cablepoem Abroad," formed the solid ground upon which his interest in typography grew, giving some indication of how the artist presented himself as an engineer-constructor. The telegraphic style and technological content of his poetry reinforced the concept of a modern-day poet being both artist and engineer. This was made evident by the technico-artistic medium developed by David Burliuk after his emigration to the United States. First introduced in 1926, the "radio-style"[16] was similar to the telegraphic air of Semenko's "Cablepoem Abroad," especially since it was a medium for the expression of modern social themes. In emigration, however, Burliuk's themes no longer dealt with revolution or with utopian, agitational, nor politicizing rhetoric, as was clearly the case in Semenko's contemporary work. However, what was common to both was that the instrument of artistic communication took into

account physical, technological reality, such as the presence of radio-waves. In a lecture delivered at the Morton Galleries in New York in March 1929, Burliuk explained: "Supernatural metaphysical constructions, creations of pure reason, are projected in imagination by prolonging the lines and surfaces of actually existing objects. . . . That is how I see life. That is how I paint—I—inventor and explorer of Radio-Style in art."[17]

Back in the homeland, the poet Edvard Strikha, the alter-ego and pseudonym of Kost' Burevii (1888–1934), who associated himself closely with the editors of *Nova generatsiia*, conducted a vital eight-month correspondence with Semenko during 1927–28, which Strikha undersigned with "radio-greetings," and Semenko responded to with "cable-greetings." Strikha introduced himself thus: "I, Edvard Strikha,—poet, painter, and composer—introduce new examples of leftist production, acute paradigms, daring ones, universal ones!"[18] Strikha's poetry had inherent technological themes if not titles suggesting such. One example is "Build radio stations," which he published in *Nova generatsiia*. He also created works which he called radio-poems, composed radio-theses, and even wrote a radio-article entitled "Maksymum vymahaiemo-bezlich damo!" [We Demand the Maximum—We Will Give Lots!][19] For their technological form, typographic variety, and ideological content, Strikha's radio-creations were enthusiastically accepted by Semenko for publication in *Nova generatsiia*. By the same token, the Panfuturist journal provided the perfect opportunity for Strikha, a parodist, to fashion his mockery via radio-art. But in 1928, Edvard Strikha's radio-poem "Zozendrópiia" became the object of considerable embarrasment to Semenko.

Written between Paris and Moscow in 1927, the plot of "Zozendrópiia" was subdivided into two radio transmissions, the first representing the bourgeois *beau-monde* of Paris, and the second, the revolutionary struggle for proletarian liberation in the Soviet Union. In "Zozendrópiia," Strikha gave the reader an autobiographical account of his personal life in these two contrasting worlds, and then (on a more global scale, and according to ideological premises) he juxtaposed the lethargic salon life of the West with the active, blood-letting vibrancy of the East—that is, the Soviet struggle. The characters of "Zozendrópiia" are Edvard Strikha, mlle Josephine Pkhutiurier (Zoze), Count Pkhutiurier, Prince Podletsiv, Baron von der Bryk, Baron von der Fain, and Princess Gral'. The story is an account of Strikha's provincial beginnings, his exile to Siberia, and his ultimate escape to Paris. There he becomes a self-taught musician, invited to entertain the salon guests at the Pkhutiurier residence. Zoze and Strikha fall in love and marry; under Strikha's influence, Zoze becomes a political activist involved in the "r-r-revolution" and ultimately undergoes a transfusion in which her delicate,

blue bourgeois blood is replaced with the vital and virile, gushing red blood of the proletariat. For Strikha, his fictional wife Zoze symbolized the purity of revolutionary ideals.

What Semenko was unaware of at the time he accepted "Zozendrópiia" for publication in *Nova generatsiia* was that Strikha was employing the destructive-constructive dialectical basis of Panfuturism to attack the very movement that had initially inspired the poet. "Zozendrópiia," in fact, was intended to make fun of the ringleaders of the Ukrainian artistic front, namely, the Futurists. This was made clear when Strikha subtitled the work: "A constructive-experimental parody on the entire Ukrainian Futurist hackneyed style, on their rotten canons and neo-provincial manner."[20] To achieve his aim, Strikha availed himself of the very same nihilistic and ridiculing manner of the Futurists. He invented a fictitious biography to match his fictitious name and mercilessly lambasted his victims with the same devices of experimentation in form and content so lauded by the Panfuturists. Strikha called "Zozendrópiia" a "Ukrainian lifiopiia," claiming that "the period of Constructivism only gave our 'lif' [leftist movement] my fantastic radio-poem. After . . . Constructivism—there should emerge . . . Zozendrópism. And it has already arrived."[21] By the time Semenko discovered Strikha's joke on the Panfuturists, the travesty had been successfully carried out. Initially duped by Strikha's tomfoolery, Semenko at first lauded "Zozendrópiia" for its display of a "marvelous European school"[22] with elements of a true chef d'œuvre. After the realization that "Zozendrópiia" was actually a mockery of the Panfuturists, Strikha was ostracized from any further association with Semenko and *Nova generatsiia*.

One of the important issues surrounding Strikha's radio-poem was that Strikha insisted on particular typographical quirks in the printing of "Zozendrópiia." The accent mark was imperative in this context, as it indicated a particular emphasis in pronunciation. After the falling out with Strikha, Semenko, in order to save his image, took "Zozendrópiia" and in turn parodied Strikha's poem by publishing his own version in his journal but under a new typography, and excluding the accent. In Semenko's bastardized version, Strikha's radio-poem was printed as "Zozendroplia," emphasizing the letter "l" in the second to the last syllable. This introduced a new reading completely: "Zozendrop"-"l" [and]-"ia" [I] (i.e., translated as Zozendrop and I). Semenko's version of "Zozendroplia" made Zoze appear to be loose in her morals. This undermined Strikha's idealistic image of Zoze and exposed the insincerity of her revolutionary principles. Thus Strikha's joke was played back on him. Not relinquishing his stance, Strikha admonished Semenko for having "insulted my golden Zoze," and he warned: "Lucky for you, Semenko, that duels are forbidden in the USSR. . . . A disrespectful attitude toward women is the display of true provincialism. . . ."[23]

Obviously, Strikha was still playing his parody game, for it will be remembered that even in the original Italian "Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," Marinetti vehemently proclaimed his scorn for women. As vindication, Strikha demanded that *Nova generatsiia*

> . . . must print my "ZozendrOpiia" (stress on O – this letter is of colossal size and [must have] the necessary stress, the apostrophe, over it). The word ZOZE shall be printed in large letters. In this, the honor of my golden Zoze will be spared. Semenko, you have never seen how golden is the hair of my golden Zoze! It is golden to the very ez-ez! [*Zolote azh do ez-ez*]. In the winter in the forest; in the summer in the green greenery—throughout and always – my golden Zoze goldens and will continue to turn golden [*zolotiie i zolotityme zolota Zoze*]![24]

As an afterthought, and once more insulting his victims, Strikha also demanded that the title of his work be changed since the original, with its enlarged O's would not be understood by Ukrainian critics. "Let it be 'Zozedvardopiia'," he wrote. "I absolutely object to its being shortened and want the item published in No. 7 of *Nova generatsiia*."[25] Semenko never published Strikha's work in his journal despite all the typographical instructions from the author. Consequently, the false "Zozendroplia," appearing in No. 4 (1928) of *Nova generatsiia*, remained unaltered. Disencumbering himself of Strikha, Semenko wrote an obituary to this audacious trickster and even created a fictitious widow, Olena Weber, a mythical figure to whom all materials on Edvard Strikha were to be sent.[26]

Alive and well, Strikha took the original "Zozendrópiia" and published it in *Nova generatsiia*'s rival Futurist journal, Polishchuk's *Avangard*. In issue No. 3 (1928) of *Avangard*, Strikha finally succeeded in his game. The editors of *Avangard* introduced Strikha to their readers as the "dipcourier" who "always flies between Paris and Moscow with dipmail, armed with a *joie-de-vivre*, [and who] mystified the journal *Nova generatsiia* for six months before his colleagues exposed him. . . ."[27] Not only did he mystify *Nova generatsiia*, but Strikha himself was baffled by the fact that he succeeded in fooling even *Avangard*, which for some reason did not realize that "Zozendrópiia" was also a parody on them, the Constructive-Dynamists.

What Strikha had achieved in his own, rather obscure and convoluted way, was the ultimate blend of Futurist nihilism and cynical wit with the Constructivist's careful concern for ordering the appearance of the art product. Added to this was the enthusiastic verve for a new epoch which shows direction, progress, and growth. Strikha's radio-art was an expression of the union of art and technology for mass global communication of revolutionary ideas. It is for that reason that he saw himself as a kind of messenger, but he was not in earnest, nor did he have the zeal of his Panfuturist confrères. His was more self-adulatory rhetoric than action; but

nonetheless, Strikha—like his Italian counterparts—revealed an ultimate concern for the position of his nation:

> I am not only a poet, not only an artist-painter, not only a musician-composer, but I am also a dipcourier. I circulate: Kharkiv— Moscow— Paris, and I see that one must hasten with this matter. We need to issue a Universal Bazaar of Ukrainian literature and issue it at least once a year in English, French, German, and Esperanto. I assure you that they will buy, read, and . . . will celebrate our youthful, tender, sweet winged, and powerful republic.[28]

The Panfuturists subscribed to this notion long before Strikha came upon the scene. For one of their collections of poetry, *Zustrich na perekhresti* [Meeting at the Crossroads], published in Kiev in 1927,[29] Vladimir Tatlin executed a cover which in typography and design image captured the telegraphic spirit of the era (fig. 6-3).[30]

While Strikha's "Zozendrópiia" serves to demonstrate how much special typographic attention poetry was to receive in *Nova generatsiia*, the artistic arrangement itself of poetic works was interspersed with much illustrative material, the reproduction of various art media, projects, and architecture. Photography became the focus of growing interest, especially in terms of its union with typographic design. As already mentioned, Jan Tschichold was one of the first to initiate a marriage between typography and photography. His *foto-auge*, which he published in collaboration with Franz Roh in 1929, clearly shows how inevitable it was that poets and artists, in active exploitation of the surface texture of their separate media, submit to a vast array of new synthetic art forms. In a very short time, the strict divisions between one artistic form and another was camouflaged, if not erased altogether.

Panfuturism is "the whole of art," proclaimed Semenko, and this was indeed the premise upon which *Nova generatsiia* was built and continued to grow. This was immediately made evident in Semenko's initial choice of Vadym Meller (1884–1962) for the position of artistic designer on the staff of *Nova generatsiia*. As we have seen, Meller was a painter, graphic artist, exhibitions space designer, and master of the most creative forms of Constructivist stage design in the Ukraine. He began his theatrical career by designing costumes for Bronislava Nijins'ka Ballet Studio in Kiev (1919–21), and became a designer in 1922 for the Ukrainian avant-garde theatre, Berezil', directed by Les' Kurbas. Meller's artistic worldview was largely formed in the West.[31] During 1905–6, Meller studied in Switzerland at the Geneva Art School, after which he returned to Kiev to complete his law degree begun earlier at Kiev University. While studying law, he continued his art training at the Kiev Art School. Similar to the path traversed by Meller's colleague, Kandinsky, who also completed a law degree and then turned to being a full-time artist, Meller left for Munich in 1908 and enrolled in the Academy of Art,

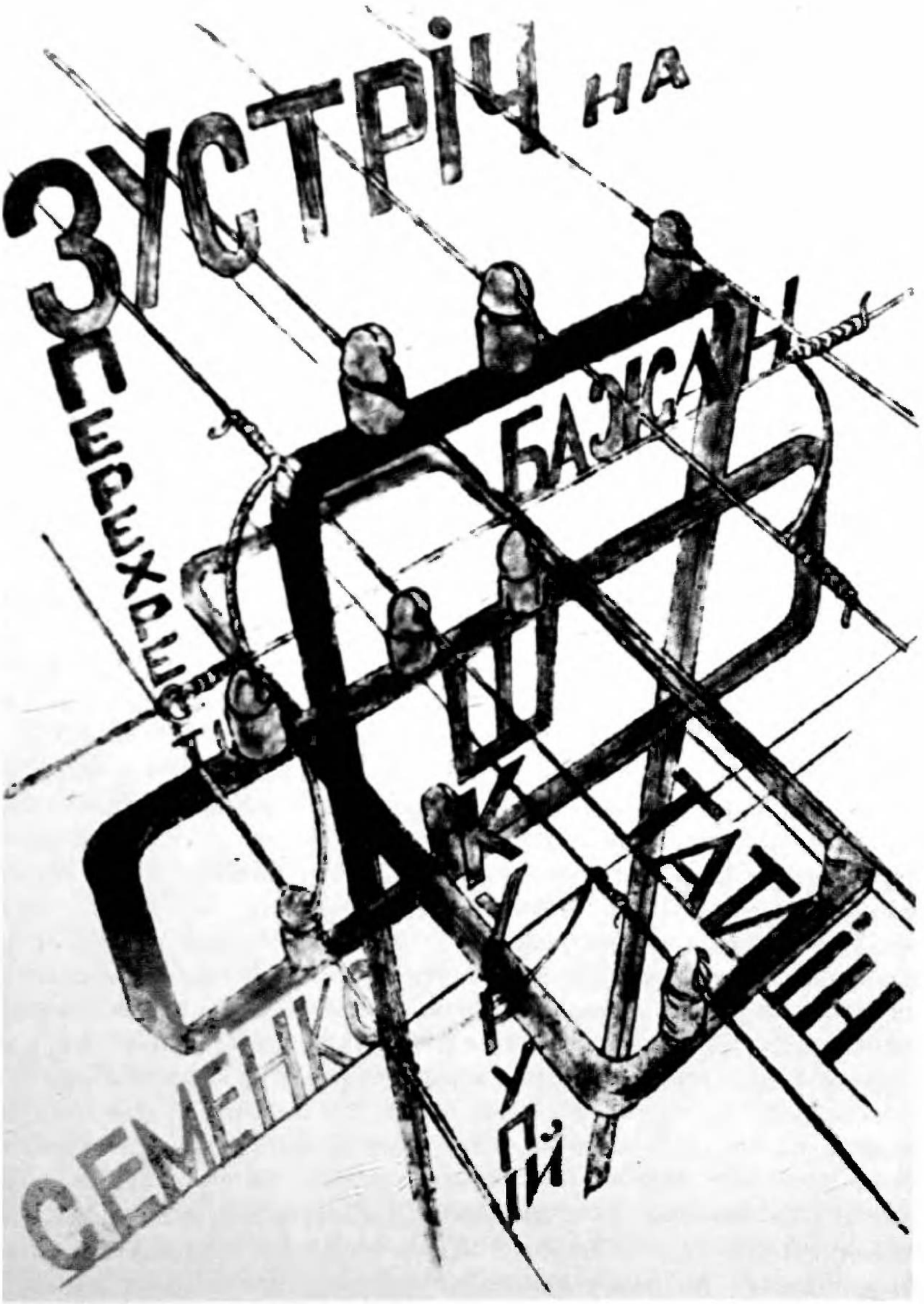


Figure 6-3. Vladimir Tatlin, Cover to the Collection of Poems by M. Semenko, G. Shkurupii, and M. Bazhan: *Zustrich na perekhresti* [Meeting at the Crossroads], Kiev, 1927

and signed up at the *Zeichenschule* conducted by Professor Jank. While in Munich, Meller observed the work of his compatriots in the Neue Künstlervereinigung, and his own works of these years bear some echo of the expressionism of *Der Blaue Reiter*. Meller completed his Munich studies in 1912 and left for Paris, where, it is speculated, that he studied in the private academy of Antoine Bourdelle.[32]

Meller spent nearly five years in Paris and, like many other artists during this time, returned to his homeland after the Revolution. He soon became an important figure in the artistic life of Kiev. Like Narbut, he was made professor at the newly established Ukrainian Academy of Art, and taught at both the Kiev Industrial Art School and the Theatrical Technicum. He was especially active in decorating the city streets and squares with revolutionary slogans which marked the era, but after 1922 (when he joined Kurbas's theatre, Berezil') he directed all of his talent and energy into stage design. Berezil' was divided into several workshops, and Meller took charge of the section on stage decor and models. Meller's design principles were based on a curious blend of grotesque expressivity and stark refinement. Crystallized, encapsulated emotion characterized the performances of Berezil', and Meller caught this spirit by stage and costume design which was rigid, mechanical, and controlled, while at the same time incorporating a gestural flourish in highly contrasted bands of color in the costume or sloped scaffolding of the actual stage set.[33] He was singled out for his decor, as was Berezil' for its avant-gardism, at the International Theatre Exposition in New York in 1926.[34]

Meller was regarded as a coryphaeus of artistic modernism in Ukraine, and the theatre provided the most opportune environment for the most daring expression of a modernist viewpoint. This, in addition to the stature which Meller had already acquired as a graphics and layout designer on an international level, is no doubt what appealed most to Semenko when selecting Meller as artistic designer for *Nova generatsiia*. When Kurbas moved his theatre to Kharkiv in 1926, Meller continued as set designer while assuming the post of artistic director of *Nova generatsiia*. Meller's usually restrained palette then tended toward striking, graphic contrasts of light and dark and highly saturated hues. His designs were angular and were frequently dominated by a diagonal which accented the dynamism of the subject. In essence, as artistic designer of *Nova generatsiia*, Meller's Constructivist aesthetics became stronger. In his design principles, therefore, Meller aimed "not for rhythmicality . . . but for balance."[35] Even as early as 1920, when he was invited to teach at the newly formed Ukrainian Academy of Art, he based his pedagogical system on what he called the "vertical of art" which "reveals an organizational principle and an organizational regularity."[36] Under the powerful influence of Constructivism in theatre design, Meller's journal graphics also became logical and rational.

It was propitious for the Panfuturists that Meller's own personal interests, which after 1928 were channeled into architectural design, also coincided with the Constructivist ethos of *Nova generatsiia*, and especially with its emphasis on new building. However, within a year's time, Semenko's journal began to encompass with ever-increasing rapidity the new types of art forms developed out of Constructivism: film and photography, and the blending of the two with visually exciting typographic unity. By that time, photographs played a major role in the composition of *Nova generatsiia*, and Meller's services in that realm suddenly became limited. During Meller's term as "director of design and reproduction" for *Nova generatsiia*, a position that lasted only through the fourth number (April 1928), Meller made less and less use of graphic detail. Even though he became more interested in the montage of photography and typography, he had not been able to make headway in this area. Beginning with the fifth number (May 1928) of *Nova generatsiia*, Meller was replaced by the photographer and artist Dan Sotnyk.

Meller's termination on the staff of *Nova generatsiia* was sudden. The harsh tone of the announcement of the fact gives some indication of the abruptness of the affair. It was printed at the end of the contents page of No. 4 (1928): "With No. 5 (1928) of *Nova generatsiia*, V. Meller will no longer take part in the journal." The mystery surrounding Meller's departure from *Nova generatsiia* gives reason to suspect that it might have been more than his artistic abilities that had served him this blow. It is surmised that Meller was probably dismissed not because of his artistic leaning, but because of a personality conflict with Semenko. His dismissal also may have stemmed from Meller's affiliation with the Kharkiv journal *Chervonyi shliakh* [Red Way], which was attacked by the Panfuturists but to which Meller contributed even while at his post at *Nova generatsiia*.[37] Another reason may have been that his successor, Dan Sotnyk, was a professed Panfuturist, while Meller was not. Despite all, with the increased attention being paid to new art forms such as photography, it is possible that a drastic shift in personnel was also required to fit the new demands.

As a newly emergent Kharkiv photographer, Sotnyk first began to publish his works in *Nova generatsiia* with the third number of 1928. The works reproduced in that issue had a somewhat expressionist flavor, while the subjects which he depicted were steeped in wartime themes: "On Guard," "Gasmasks," "From the Wing of an Airplane," "Abroad: Military Air-gliding," and "Red Army on Manœuvres." In a very short period of time, however, Sotnyk's photographs acquired a Constructivist character, not only in their urban, industrial content, but also in their laconic, simple form. Photographs such as "A Building in Kiev"[38] were composed along strict diagonals and acute angles. Other photographs, such as "Skyscraper in Kiev"[39] or "The Light Switch is On,"[40] and "A Telephone in Artemivs'k,"[41] all

indicate his enthusiasm for technological progress. Sotnyk was pleased to document in a photographic medium not so much the machine itself, but man's (i.e., the proletariat's) happy response to it. In this approach, some of Sotnyk's photographs, such as "The 60-ton Crane in Murmans'k,"[42] can be regarded as harbingers of the kind of optimism soon to be found in Socialist Realism. Generally, there was a sense of pride in urban progress to be sensed in Sotnyk's photographs. This was demonstrated by his serial photography, or photoreportages, such as "In and Around Kharkiv," which was published in contiguous issues (no. 11 and 12, 1928) of *Nova generatsiia*. Still other works were strictly documentary in nature, such as Sotnyk's photographic illustrations which were meant to accompany a collaborative article by Sotnyk and O. Poltorats'kyi on the Donbas region. This series of photographs, published through a spread of fourteen pages in the No. 6 (1929) issue of *Nova generatsiia*, had to do with the mineral resources of the Donbas area, the life of the miners, and the physical acquisition of light and power through coal and water energy—namely the utilization of Ukraine's natural resources in order to bring her to the level of progress and quality of life already experienced in the West.

Sotnyk had been active as a photographer since at least 1925. At that time, he did a series of what he called "*druzhni foto-sharzhy*"[friendly photo-caricatures], or creative portrait shots of leading figures active in the cultural vanguard. Some were very subtle and poetic interpretations with equally harmless, anonymous titles: "My Muse,"[43] for instance, depicted the face of a woman through softened lighting. On the other hand, Sotnyk also used photography to caricature specific figures, for example "Ol. Vlyz'ko Returning from Abroad Having Acquired a Full Head of Brains."[44] Some of Sotnyk's portraits in this caricatural series had a witty character, coupled with somewhat of a documentary tone and blended with photographic artistry. In 1929 he completed a series entitled: "Gallery of Portraits of Participants of the II Conference of VUSPP [The All-Ukrainian Union of Proletarian Writers] during the Reading of the Declaration of VUARKK [The All-Ukrainian Association of Workers of Communist Culture]—New Generation: 'Friendly Photo-Caricatures.' " VUARKK was the organization that, after 1930, absorbed all of the Panfuturists along more strict Party lines. Many of Sotnyk's works were reproduced as cover designs for the journal, such as the friendly photo-caricature of I. Mykytenko which graced the cover of the No. 7 (1929) issue of *Nova generatsiia*.

Beginning in 1929, the contents page of *Nova generatsiia* was divided into two basic sections: TEXT and FOTO. Until then, only a brief inconsequential list of illustrations was included at the end of the article summaries. Yet, amidst the articles and printed poetry (and, of course, the correspondence with readers), there were separate pages of photography which obviously

served as a clear acknowledgment of the new art. The photographs of Dan Sotnyk were juxtaposed with "cine-camera" shots by Eli Lotar of Belgium[45] and Eugene Deslav of Paris.[46] The works of these photographers, and especially those of Deslav—"Composition of Rails," "Contemporary Cranes," "Detail of a Machine," and "Mechanical Hands of a Machine"—forged a solid contextual union with Sotnyk's images of dam-building in the Don Basin and hydro-electric power stations in the lower Dnipro River. Moholy-Nagy's pioneering efforts in photography were also acknowledged: a number of his photograms and photomontages were made available to readers of *Nova generatsiia.*[47]

Other photography in *Nova generatsiia* included stills from current films made by VUFKU—the All-Ukrainian Factory of Cinematography—which produced the Constructivist film "Man with a Movie Camera" (photography by Dziga Vertov, M. Kaufman, E. Stil, and V. A.), and almost all of Oleksander Dovzhenko's films. In addition to examples of contemporary photography and film stills from current movies, photographic experiments of the students of the Cinema-Photo Section of the Kiev Art Institute were also included in the journal. This most likely was the Panfuturist way of acknowledging the emergent new generation of Ukrainian artists already trained and versed in the language of new artistic media.[48] Some photographs were even meant to serve as pedagogical models, since the editors of *Nova generatsiia* chose to insert an evaluation of them alongside the works. Such was the case with the critical assessment of film posters created by M. Brodsky and A. Nikolaiev of Leningrad. In a note to the works, the editors of the journal stated: "There is still no kino-poster. Everything that has been done in this realm is the result of painting, its rules. The artist had not understood the cinema. The atavistic feeling of statics has eclipsed cinema-dynamics. Here we include the first attempts which express the dynamics of film in its thematic growth."[49] The fact that Soviet film had contributed to the development of new artistic genres, incorporating not only typography and photography but also the integrated medium of poster art, was reason enough to include developments in all of these new media in *Nova generatsiia.*

Inasmuch as Panfuturism lay at the base of *Nova generatsiia,* the artistic direction of the journal was a synthesis of both Futurism and Constructivism. To the degree that it promoted an art of the future which took into account the dynamism and speed of technological advancement and a break with convention, it expressed an alignment with Futurism; insofar as it served a proletarian society with specific workaday needs and tried to represent this order through strict geometric design, it shared affinities with Constructivism. By combining these two currents into one, *Nova generatsiia* established an essential link between the earlier generation of the Ukrainian avant-garde—steeped in the traditions of Cubism and Futurism—and the second, post-

Revolutionary generation, which perpetuated the basic precepts of the previous movements and made them confluent with such movements as Constructivism and the International Style while taking into account the new emergent art forms. As artistic director, Sotnyk soon favored the style of international Constructivism which had made itself known through the Bauhaus and De Stijl. In essence, Sotnyk was to *Nova generatsiia* what Rodchenko was to *LEF* and *Novyi Lef*, what Van Doesburg was to *De Stijl*, and Moholy-Nagy to the Bauhaus publications. He belonged to that generation of artists who welcomed the novel technical possibilities of both photography and typography as a vital element of their art.

The title of Semenko's journal, *Nova generatsiia*, was appropriate for encapsulating the spirit of a nation whose youth found hope and optimism in a widespread cultural and political renaissance. Not only did *Nova generatsiia* summarize the spirit of artistic achievement in the two generational phases of modern Ukrainian art before and after the Revolution, but it also characterized the entire production of the teens and twenties as the work of a new generation of Ukrainian artists. The fall of the Russian Empire in 1917 marked a turning point in the artistic exploration initiated in the Ukraine almost a decade earlier. The issue of national separateness, made possible for the first time after the Revolution, was of paramount importance and underlay all aspects of cultural reawakening and artistic achievement. *Nova generatsiia* represents the most avant-garde aspect of that renaissance and of that generation, for it brings together expressions of artistic practice and experiment that clearly were not traditional, nor of the mainstream; nor were they the most enduring. Formed on the socialist-communist principles put forth by Panfuturism, *Nova generatsiia* carried out its activities on the most radical of political and artistic platforms, an ideology which, it should be pointed out, was not widespread among the populace, nor pervasive in all realms of cultural activity in the Ukraine during this time. With the constant pressure of the Russian regime to regain control of the Ukraine, socialist organizations continued to burgeon and upon their ideological programs cultural activity was able to prosper. But in many instances, this ideology served as a mere front to sustain a national cultural identity, even if it had to be socialist in content. With the early 1930s, the political climate became unwieldy for Panfuturist principles and artistically unyielding. Those who helped to form the literary-artistic avant-garde were not rewarded for their contribution to Ukrainian culture, but instead met with a fate that either compromised or destroyed them. Thus, the vociferous pronouncement and support of communism on the part of *Nova generatsiia* was the sole reason why the Panfuturists were able to survive as long as they did. However, despite this outward exhortation of leftist ideology *Nova generatsiia* was still deemed not to be communist enough, and thus, under the threat of liquidation, the

organization and the journal were dissolved by their own adherents. In essence, the Panfuturists tightened their own death-nooses by not aligning themselves with Russian communism. Rather than commit to any connection whatsoever with Russia, they espoused a Ukrainian national culture instead. Thus, for all of their cosmopolitan, communist, and international outlook, the coryphaei of Ukrainian modern art and literature were attacked for the very thing they tried to eliminate from Ukrainian culture: narrowness and regionalism. Whether abrogated by Stalinist pressures, or disillusioned in their artistic choices, the new generation was essentially forced to die out. The expiration of *Nova generatsiia* in December 1930 was a prelude to the impending demise of the entire Ukrainian artistic avant-garde.

Conclusion

During the latter part of the 1920s, poets, writers, and artists in the Ukraine sought, in many different ways, to embody the modernist spirit in their work. This cultural fermentation was attested to by the rapid rise of various publications. *Nova generatsiia* was distinguished from the rest by its particular emphasis on the avant-garde and its fervent desire to align Ukrainian art with universal artistic pursuits. In addition to opening purely aesthetic avenues, *Nova generatsiia* tried to reflect the changing social and economic climate in the Ukraine by accentuating proletarian themes in artistic expression and by incorporating the effects of technology and industrialization into the new art.

As the decade progressed, a greater cohesiveness could be sensed, reflecting a noticeable confidence by Ukrainian artists for having achieved world recognition and for having changed the essence of Ukrainian art. The sentimentality, nostalgia, and emphasis on indigenous and regional themes so prevalent in Ukrainian art (and so vehemently lambasted by Semenko in his Futurist days), was replaced by a mood and subject with more universal significance and appeal. That the very soul and spirit of the Ukraine may have been lost in the process was of no concern to Semenko or the Panfuturists. As the Panfuturists observed when commenting on the campaign to baptize the era, the term "nationalism" had no place. In their move away from provinciality, they attacked that which was held dear by the Ukrainian nation. However, in their struggle against regionalism and narrow viewpoints, the New Generation did not neglect patriotism. After all, their very goals were centered on raising Ukrainian culture to new heights and bringing it into unison with the contemporary world. Hence, their method of chastizing those who still clung to vestiges of old Ukrainian culture and those who tried to recreate an ancient (or other) spirit in their work was merciless, unrelenting, and oftentimes crass.

Even for his time, Semenko's literary, artistic, and cultural politics were extreme, largely due to his effusive personality and unrequited belligerence (especially as a young, aspiring poet). Futurism was abated by Semenko's

behavior. After the Revolution, Semenko's worldview was formed mostly by his total abandon to socialist-communist causes and by a heated temperament that was intolerant of any direction other than his own. The journal *Nova generatsiia* reflects his attitude. On the other hand, the journal reveals a degree of maturity and mellowing—possibly because of its rather tardy appearance on the avant-garde scene—that had certainly become part of Semenko's character by the late 1920s. Historically, no single visual artist fully embodied the principles that Semenko so vehemently espoused through Panfuturism. As Semenko himself stated, there is no Panfuturist art, for it is not another "ism" in the train of artistic directions. Semenko's extremist attitude—the leftist formation of the arts, as he called it—was perceived in varying degrees by those artists who allowed themselves to be associated with Panfuturism. Therefore, the term "leftist art," while encompassing a very tidy meaning for the Panfuturists and especially for Semenko, takes on a more generic and multi-leveled significance when the artistic products of the epoch as a whole are considered. Not everyone shared the communist views espoused by Semenko, just as a socialist-communist content should also not be regarded as the hallmark or sole identifying feature of Ukrainian artistic modernism as a whole. This book has tried to give a sense of the climate that produced modernism, and of the changes experienced in the visual arts. The term "leftist," in this context, is nothing more than the artistic vanguard, and does not necessarily reflect the artists' political views. Leftist art is modern art in Ukraine; it is the New Art that represents new strivings and new achievements, both in form and in content. Through *Nova generatsiia*, Ukrainian artists were able to cultivate links with the best of European culture on both a theoretical and a practical level. Being basically a journal aimed at visual appeal, *Nova generatsiia* has thus become not only a symbol of the strivings of the era, but a product of the epoch as well.

Nova generatsiia provides a clarification of some of the basic points of Panfuturism that characterize artistic modernism in the Ukraine: first, a powerful, magnetic identification with the tenets of modernism and what it stands for in other parts of the world, especially Western Europe; second, an eagerness not to copy but to adapt those premises to the unique environment in which Ukrainian artists found themselves; third, an artistic climate with plenty of room for experimentation, competition, controversy, and, especially, involvement; and finally, a national culture as a vital contributor in the world arena of modern art. Amorphism and eclecticism—those regressive foibles of modern society against which Panfuturists cautioned—never appeared in the artistic output of the Ukrainian avant-garde. Because the context of Ukrainian modernism was unique to its territory, those endemic problems clearly made a difference in the very essence and nature of that art.

In the Ukraine, the terms "New Generation" and "artistic modernism" thus refer to a generation and an aesthetic period born in the last two decades of the nineteenth century that came to maturity at the time of the Revolution, and which, fired by the prospects of change and energized by the era of the new, became immersed in ideas of progress. This generation was determined to effect a better socio-political life for the nation. It was spirited by a high-powered creative flow and a willingness to be belligerent, to attack, and to be uncompromising—it was typical of youth inspired by ideals, whether utopian or practical. Scorning lethargy, melancholy, nostalgia, and the passive, the New Generation aimed for active, exuberant, and vital participation in contemporary life.

Hence, the use of the term "New Generation" has a dual purpose. In its most specific meaning, the term refers to the journal *Nova generatsiia*, and to the organization of Panfuturists that produced it. But "New Generation" not only defines precisely the premises of the Panfuturists, but it also describes a new era of vigour, courage, determination, and most importantly, a cultural apogee and renewed hope in a nation's future.

The New Generation was motivated by an air of cultural self-determination. The Panfuturists were successful for a longer period of time than any other group, perhaps because of their ultra-acquiescence to communist ideology. And yet, despite their goals, the Panfuturists met the same fate as their more conservative, and tradition-oriented artistic colleagues. Under the Stalinist regime, Boichuk, who propagated a Neo-Byzantine style of painting, and Semenko, the ultra-leftist who discarded all vestiges of ancient Ukrainian culture, met a similar fate for inciting patriotic feeling and for their life-long desire to enhance Ukrainian art by contributing to world culture. Ironically, these mavericks of a modern renaissance in Ukrainian art came to be condemned for the same crime—"nationalism"—and both were liquidated with the Stalinist purges.

Mykhailo Semenko, the Panfuturists, and the entire New Generation of Ukrainian artists and literati were doomed by their own era. The journal *Nova generatsiia* remains a reminder of this period of self-abandon, passion, and the willfulness and boldness of individuals who were definitely not provincial in spite of their being distant, though not detached, from the art capitols of the world.

Appendix A

Manifest Panfuturyzmu

Myqail Semenko. RESOLUTION ON THE QUESTION OF THE THEORY OF ART IN THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION (PAN-FUTURIST MANIFESTO)[1]

1. Why, in the period of transition, do we need to make a resolution on the question of art? We need one in order to learn about the direction of the artistic process; to learn where it is going in the future on a general, global scale. This will be a corrective moment in the problem of synthesis—an issue the destructive process of the West has approached in the last years; it is also the revolutionary ideological process of art as concerns the proletarian federation of the East. The problem of synthesis requires scientific knowledge of the conditions for that synthesis to take place; one or another resolution on the question will be some kind of response to it, and will indicate the kind of synthesis it will be. Aside from that, the knowledge of these conditions will play a great role in explaining further perspectives and practical creative problems.

2. We are interested in knowing what route the basic waterway[2] of art has taken up to the very moment until we became its inheritors.

It has evolved under the mark of a great destructive upheaval, mainly on French soil, which began in the middle of the last century. The destructive character of this artistic process occurred in stages which arose primarily on the corpses of Impressionist and Neo-Impressionist painting and Parnassian and Symbolist poetry. In addition, the strict borders between individual branches of art began to be shaken, just as the mingling of borders between art and life took place. With the explosion of the Futurist revolution, this process came to be actively expressed along with an exhaustive formula for categorical denial of the past. The Futurist revolution occurred at a time of extreme tension in capitalist conditions of everyday life, the very moment which leads directly to social revolution. What is characteristic of the Futurist movement in art? Futurism brought with it a revolutionary-destructive action, manifest through numerous "isms" continuing to this very day. As the

subsequent stage in the artistic process (and as a revolutionary action) Futurism was, in its early period, associated directly with the past—a feature of its opposite and reciprocal relationships. The artistic process has not yet gone beyond Futurism, but through Futurism, the next step of art has been posited.

3. Futurism was not a scientific theory of art, just as it was not even "art" itself. Futurism manifested a revolutionary action in the sphere of correlative relationships. Futurism became the point of departure from which the single aims of content, form, and material in art have diverged. That is how all the "isms" characteristic of the second decade of our century came about. All of them were separate problems of the artistic organism. In their development they permanently closed the basic waterway of art. The continuum of the artistic process was disrupted. This moment introduced the epoch of transition, and we are a contemporaneous part of it. Here arises the basic problem: to find that generalizing principle which will allow for the discovery of the lost waterway of the artistic process. Obviously, this can only be accomplished by introducing a constructive moment into the matter, i.e., it is possible to do this on the basis of a scientific theory of art which follows the stage of destruction.

4. The constructive process begins on the foundations of Communist life; achievement of construction is possible in the atmosphere of Communist living. Hence, the period of transition is, on the one hand, the culmination of destruction, while on the other, it creates the foundation for future construction and experimentation. So why isn't destruction complete? Because, first of all, the social revolution is still taking place locally at present. In the West, a tempestuous destruction is continuing simultaneous to the extreme intensification of capitalism. Secondly, because the process of destruction is not finished for us, the result is a faltering in the conditions of everyday life. This is characteristic for the development of our revlutionary struggle (e.g., the peripeteias of class struggle in Russia and the Ukraine; the changeability of economo-politics). Both can be discerned in relation to the scope of the social revolution if one understands the degree to which they have been introduced on a local or global scale. Thus the process of destruction is also transpiring here, but without final destruction. It is practically impossible to effect the construction of a future; one can only draught the first outlines of this construction, but, unfortunately, only in theory.

5. The first constructive moment—the possibility of finding the generalizing theoretical principle—will result in the continuation of a factual waterway of the artistic process. This is the primary premise of the scientific system of art introduced by me, which I propose to call "Pan-futurist." The entire process of destruction as one movement, the development of a single solid organism, is envisioned in it. On the one hand, the variablity of "isms" characteristic of the

end of the capitalist epoch responded critically to ideological situations of one or another period that frequently built the system; however, on the other hand, the system was still dependent on the problems peculiar to each "ism." In reality, there was only one process of gross differentiation: each element of art became an isolated aim, [and] in such a way each separate "ism" arose. They are segments of the entire development; the whole process is the last destructive-constructive revolutionary-building stage of art. Pan-futurism is the "art" of the transition period.

We approach the Panfuturist system along the lines of theoretical construction, introducing a universalizing inductive remedy. Therefore, Pan-futurism cannot be a new "ism," otherwise it would be an "independent problem" of the destructive process and not a synthetic system. No longer can there be other "isms." Incomplete development of destruction will create still more individual problems, but Panfuturism encompasses the entire process of destruction up to its culmination and thus neutralizes all former and future "isms." Hence, Pan-futurism is the theoretical core of the entire destructive process from its beginning to its end; each separate "ism"—in the past and the future—is only an "independent problem" of Pan-futurism.

6. But Pan-futurism is not a system which incorporates only the process of destruction of the arts. On the contrary, the premises of the destructive process is the means for laying the first foundations of construction. By studying destruction and giving it scientific formulae, and by anticipating the facts for culmination in the process of differentiation, Pan-futurism also projects a strict scientific scheme for further constructive development. The task of destruction is to decompose art to an absolute eradication of its borders. Liquidation of bourgeois art is destruction, the liquidation of "art "in general. Pulverizing art into atoms is the very foundation for synthesis which builds an entirely different "art" (skill, an object, meta-art) relevant to new forms of everyday life.

7. Thus, active destruction begins with Futurism—the purpose of which is the liquidation of bourgeois art. Pan-futurism is a system of art which resulted from the desire to find the lost waterway of the artistic process. Panfuturism joins destructive action, leads destruction to its end (the deepening of revolution), and as it becomes a constructive system, it determines another turn in the history of art. Pan-futurism is the lost waterway of art and connects all streams and currents into one river. Where will art go from here?

The development of art within the borders of Soviet building already provides vast material for this end. On the one hand, when its source is the ideological corrective, it evolves along the path of abstraction; and, on the other hand, when the source of creativity is the moment at hand, it evolves along the path of concretization. The reason for both of these kinds of creativity is the same: the real conditions of the epoch are transitions:

abstraction, i.e., to separate from the intersecting dominants of the epoch, to overstep the period of transition and to be frozen in inter-planetary space; concretization, i.e., to depend on life means to capture the modicum of an epoch, to tag on to life wherever it may lead, to rid oneself of the influences of an impulsive corrective. The situation [prescribes] not to stick one leg into new earth without having pulled [the other] away from the old. That is the picture of contemporaneity. . . .

8. Prior to the Pan-futurist system of the theory of art, everyone thought that, in its essence, art operated in only two all-inclusive phases—form and content. The reciprocal relationship between these elements created advantages relative to the given point of view (form > content, form = content, form < content). The mastery of one of these formulas was dependent on the viewpoint taken. However, these formulas are unsuitable for scientific operation. They create an impassable magic circle: they become a rule of thumb, a matter of faith or taste.

In order to emerge out of this confused situation, it is necessary to think about the true resolution to the question. We need to try to find a way out. In order to do that, it is necessary to place the focus of our thinking on another area. We need to remove ourselves from the usual, unscientific, philistine patterns of thinking which prevail in art.

Contemporary art has outgrown some of the aged canons of aesthetics and theoretical resolutions. The same kind of division in the very nature of art, such as form and content, relates to them. Form and content are academic and classical attributes, while the contemporary problem of art is Futurist and revolutionary, with an obligatory ideological preeminence.

We will attempt to divide art, a kinetic and dynamic concept, into its component parts. Naturally, form and content will be among them. But will these two determinants exhaust the general nature, the contextuality of art, as an organism? If this is so, then there would be no impasse—the point at which theoretical art is stranded at present. That means that this is not enough. Content is not something constant, therefore, one cannot rely on it. Form is also not a staid concept which would be suitable as a foundation for theoretical building. Obviously, one cannot rely on these two concepts as functional ones for a scientific resolution to the question. One needs to find something permanent and utilize it as a foundation for a scientific theory of art.

The artistic process, the process of creativity, has a dualistic character: it is composed of an exterior essence (let's simply define it as "facture") and of an internal essence (this will be ideology). Ideology is the corrective and volitional moment in art identical with the philosophy of an epoch put forth by the theoreticians of our days; [it is] in contrast to content, on which the theory of proletarian art rests. What ideology corrects the period of transition into Communism? The proletarian one. That means that the art of the period

of transition must be proletarian. The concept of facture is thus synthesized: facture is material plus form plus content. Each of the elements of facture is a transposed concept, relative but not absolute. Content, and material, and form are relative attributes. The synthesized concept of facture is absolute, and facture, together with ideology, form that which we call art. For the period of transition, this can even be proletarian Futurism—Pan-futurism.

9. For theoretical purposes, Panfuturism established a double-sided essence for art—ideology and facture. Ideology is a given element in art. The reigning class in society creates ideology. Art operates with facture, i.e., by the sum of the instruments of production (the means of materialization).

What is the nature of this dual essence in art? Both elements—ideology and facture—have strict and appropriate rules of development. Both of these processes are dependent on each other and go together with the history of mankind both in a parallel way as well as being identical internally. Each separate phase of the process identifies with both elements. Hence, by opposing development in the facture of the arts, further perspectives in the art process can be foreseen, and vice versa, one can [also] trace its ideological development. Here again the efficacy of the rule which governs consciousness can be evidenced: actuality conditions consciousness.

10. It has been said that the ideological moment in art is a given element. Yet, it is an element which is corrective and willfully creative. Therefore, the question of facture in art is a special question. Ideology materializes in facture, and we have art. But how does it materialize? What is the history of materialization? That is the history of art. The decomposition of the facture of the arts is the contemporary destructive process in art. Each branch of art has its inherent and special facture. To decompose the factures of all the arts is the task of destruction. To create new combinations of elements of a general facture is the task of construction. The task of artists is to complete destruction, because without it, in practical terms, synthesis is unattainable. That means that history will not move matters forward until each transpired stage is recorded realistically by the masters. The study of facture and the process of its development proves to us that all branches of art which we have had until now have ceased their continued development. The feature of one branch extends into another; a regrouping of the elements of facture is taking place. Ultimately, this leads to several new arts of a different chemical make-up. It is impossible to circumvent this (re: those who feel that ceasing it saves the situation). The more revolutionary destruction becomes ("the deepening of the revolution"), then the purer will construction be (or "synthesis," although by the frequent and varied use of this term, it has lost its clear meaning). Otherwise, we are not insured from faulty or chance examples and conditions (for example, in the nature of those same "syntheses," Dadaism is a "synthesis" of Cubism and Futurism), and the issue of liquidating old art becomes postponed.

11. Ideology and facture form the system of coordinates for Pan-futurism. The entire process of destruction passes between the orders of this mobile system, outlining its first constructive traits. At the very last moment, the elements of the organizational approach to creativity intertwine for the first time, but the organizational principle is not yet equal to the degree of the contemporary state of facture. An incomplete destruction of facture, the result of an incomplete revolutionizing of everyday living, prevents this from happening. Knowing the economic harbingers of the period of transition and the Pan-futurist system of coordinates appropriate to them, one can summarize the picture of art of the period of transition for oneself. There is much talk about what art should be like.* For us, it is more interesting to know what it is like for our time. It is here that one forgets that art for the given period is that which it is and it can't be anything else. The rest will only be theory and good intentions, but neither theory nor intentions is art. Furthermore, they demand an organizational role from art. This means that they demand organization from poetry, theatre, music, etc.† Only those who view the entire destructive movement as some masquerade or joke can think that way. This is nothing more than a confusion of concepts. It is spoken by people who have lost perception of time and space.... Obviously, such conditions have existed which now make art the least organizational. Yet organizational art cannot even be. Here one thing contradicts the other. A conscientiously organized analysis gives not a new "art" but a lifeless scheme of it. Thus again destruction is reaffirmed and justified. There is no "art" now. There is Pan-futurism. There is only so much organization in it as there is material for construction. Pan-futurist destruction is analogous to the childhood of mankind. It liquidates art and the organizational moment begins to dominate. In the place of "art" stands the object, skill, the flowering of which will take place with organizational-Communist living. The development of these ideas already touches the foundation of Pan-futurism.

The generalizing line of the Futurist process (destruction), ideologically decomposed in the prism of the proletarian world view (construction), is Pan-futurism—the "art" of the transitional stage to Communism.

1920–21

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*Most frequently this means that in reality it will never really become that because art is an organism dependent on the rules of development, and not absolute in its nature.

†But first of all, it is necessary to prove that these concepts are also absolute, that is, once given, that they develop permanently and are not limited in their existence.

Appendix B

Platform and Environment of Leftists[1]

NEW GENERATION The organ of the left formation of Ukrainian culture.

– *Your image?*

— *Your task?*

— *Your platform?*

We say: we have

an absolutely certain physiognomy. You will not confuse us with anyone else. Our journal of UKRLIF[2] is not the beginning: it is the

continuation of:

Semaphor Into the Future
Catafalque of the Arts
Gong of the Komunkul't
Bumerang and others

The position of a left formation in the total process is probably not clear, considered contradictory, for some (in our complex circumstances + the low cultural level of a backward land) –but it is

the most crystallized artistic position of our time in its profoundly and logically outlined content,

beginning with naive kvero-futurism, through brainlessly mocked and then utilized and vulgarized panfuturism and Kommunkul't and on to NEW GENERATION.

By means of a deep trench in the field of battle for

communist culture

we advanced our work forward. We led it through the illiteracy and the provincial slur of jokes or indignation, through the silence and cowardice of our "friends"—

we advanced our armed caravan of *cannons, cavalry* and *airplanes*—up until today, when we, with our regular journal, NEW GENERATION, unite the partisan forces of the left front in the Ukraine with the army of workers

of socialist building.

We regard the struggles for territory, for the place d'armes, for *de jure* recognition as having come to a conclusion.

We will stop being deliberately misunderstood. Our leftist front of young Ukrainian culture is there where the class struggle continues, a struggle

for communism

We were there
We are there
We will be there

Our base:

INDUSTRIALIZATION
RATIONALIZATION

from it transpires, and in it lives our creative, constructive, propagational work, ideologically tied to the political tasks of the COMMUNIST PARTY.

Our environment—the PROLETARIAT.

Ten years of the October revolution—many decades of a slow process. New strata of mankind are extracting life from their bosoms.

A new international race

lines up its ranks from the volcano of unlimited strata
of the USSR
The transitional period continues further—and all
toward communism!

But there are many of those who were scorned for going into the victorious trek of the Revolution. Now they look for that dark alley where they could hide inconspicuously.

We speak of those who once "accepted" the revolution, who digested the new hastily—of the

DECADENTS

who lost faith in it, because they "accepted" its mottos, its gusto and its romance, and stumbled against its system.

Old transgressions are crawling out—but how many revolutionary phrases and "universals"[3] to the proletariat there were! The Revolution now produces its accounts and demands

A RETURN OF ADVANCES!

The transitional epoch toward communism, through socialist building in culture and life continues.

We want

to equalize sound cultural processes

along the path of a decisive dismissal of decadent moods.

When the forfeit of positions in socialist building signifies *a political capitulation*, then the surrender of the positions of socialist culture leads to a conflict with *national limitations*.

When great-nation[4] chauvinism is an absolute chauvinism, while "colonial" chauvinism is only a functional chauvinism, then great-nation

chauvinism, in terms of the Soviet resolution of the national problem, can be conquered by Soviet means; "colonial" chauvinism

inevitably falls out of the Soviet system,

transferring it into another political system, an

anti-Soviet system.

That is why we struggle with khvyl'ovizm,[5] which, by virtue of *inertia*, still breathes even now in an organization such as VAPLITE.[6]

Khvyl'ovizm passed under the mark of an abstract bond between the Ukraine with "europes,"[7] with the medium of "neoclassics"[8] and the theory of "asiatic renaissance,"[9] which, first of all, represents a great dilettantism and provincial eclecticism.

When VAPLITE resigned from this, its "superstructure" as such, then obviously, it is because a segment of academics understood where such "europes" lean. And even if they didn't understand, then we will tell them:

BEGONE WITH KAMIANETS-PODIL'SK EUROPES![10]

That is why the left front of Ukrainian culture, which stands on the premises and perspective of communism, can only be *international*, because otherwise, its road is toward "leftist art for the sake of leftist art," toward a "school of leftist artists," into studio-artistry, into a *new degeneration*, while politically—

INTO FASCISM

That is our stand in regard to VAPLITE.

Our times are characterized by a great confusion of traditions, customs and tastes. Many of these have outlived their era, but, in regard to artistic directions in our unsettled times, quite frequently, under a general simplification and low cultural level, this entangled process *becomes generalized* by political considerations, preventing the process from finding those interstices of *differentiation* which would discard the decayed and synthesize the wholesome.

Thus,

it is necessary to *uncover unprincipled-ness* and *illiteracy* in order not to pull the wool over someone's eyes; in order that there be no misunderstandings on the revolutionary front; in order to limit the counter-revolutionary "proletarian" and to decipher what is leftist under rightism and what is rightist under leftism.

It is necessary *to strip bare processes* which camouflage their *objects*. It is necessary to direct *processes* into definite directions.

That is why we are—

for VUSPP,[11] for MOLODNIAK,[12] for BEREZIL'[13]

in principle, as our allies in struggle. But we are also

for the differentiation

of processes,

because only in differentiation will it be evident which processes lead *forward*, and which, *ultimately*, will lead *backward*, no matter what mottos and trademarks they respond to now.

We desire that our journal, NEW GENERATION, be a *directional* one; that is, a journal *of principle* which, with a clear line, would aid the *differentiation* of the contemporary process of culture in the Ukraine within the scope of the ideological exigencies of an *international setting for communism*.

We are *against* amorphism and eclecticism because they are a great *impediment* to an *economic* advancement toward communist culture.

NEW GENERATION just as the entire process of the development of the leftist movement has to, and will defend its artistic conception which relies on a

UNIVERSAL SETTING

in the matter of the organization and mutual outpouring of *culture*, *art* and *custom* (life).

Such a universal setting always prevented us from dissolving and vanishing in the environment—it joined our mottos with our practice and with our struggle.

That is why we always have our *image* by virtue of which we will never lose *perspective*.

NEW GENERATION must unite those leftist forces in the Ukraine which appeared and were qualified in this plane, and must further *crystallize* the leftist movement of proletarian lands.

But it will shed those "leftists," who are, in their way, vulgarizers of leftist idea and practice; leftist provincials who have settled in their leftist homesteads with leftist mottos already abandoned until a wave hurls them against that center, toward which they gravitate objectively—to fascism.

The leftist tendency has entered deeply into the constructive process of socialist culture, but, not having its regular organ, it has not concentrated its strengths and this pulverization serves a blow to the leftist movement.

Thus,

the concentration of leftist forces on the bases of communist ideology under the political leadership of the Communist Party

is our task.

Leftist formation, standing on the border between art and life, creativity and construction, must designate its decisive influence on all aspects of culture, directing it into the culture of the union of struggle and the building of an international proletariat.

As it is throughout, after the inevitable airplane attacks on destruction and experimental laboratory work of technical intervention, the realization of mottos of the leftist movement in the Ukraine, requires a peaceful application of them in all the practices of socialist culture.

Poetry, Painting, Theatre –that is the avant-garde, powerful scientific and military laboratories which formed an assortment of ideal factors of new socialist education and new socialist examples.

From this emerged the contemporary methods of factory design and the rationalization of a new psyche, custom, and the construction of cities.

A *leftist* cinema, a *leftist* short story, a *leftist* novel are still newer forms of the left front which, after an inevitable experimental and inventive stage, will enter into a new life and new construction.

A last word *to our readers.*

When, for qualified artists and for our own selves, we are scientific workers of art with our laboratories, experiments, and methodology, then for our readers, we must be

organizers

of a *new* psyche, a *new* growing person, a *new* race.

Our readers, instructors of a universal cultural institution, must, together with us, advance new premises and principles and be condensers of that

cultural revolution

which is taking place before our eyes.

FOR STRUGGLE AND CONSTRUCTION

our journal.

Appendix C

M. Matyushin: "An Attempt at a New Sensation of Space"*

The contemporary artist, poet, musician, architect, engineer ought to be developed thoroughly in order to express opportunely—with maximum energy and strength –every kind of complex demand that contemporary life has placed before him.

The Task of Contemporary Consciousness

We are all present and take part (whether willingly or not) in the awakened consciousness of a new measure of space which has already sprouted wonderful original shoots in arts, science, building, and even in civic life.

Contemporary scientists—Minkowsky, Planck, Nernst, Einstein, Pavlov launch courageous ideas which dissolve limited assurance in the perfection of our organs and centers which perceive space. They all point to new possibilities connected with the environment which surrounds us, about which we still know so little.

The space sciences, art in paintings, in music, in sculpture, architecture, in poetry—they search throughout and find the means for a new character of space and new means for revealing it.

The Fourth Dimension

Not too long ago, the question of dimensions profoundly disturbed everyone and especially us, the artists. An entire literature was created on the fourth dimension. Everything new in art (and even the science of dimensions itself) was accepted as something that had emerged from the very bosom of the fourth measure and was bound up with the secrets of occultism successfully trundling over to Germany from the beginning of our revolution. In those times, it seemed that everything that was not understood, came out of the fourth measure or occultism.

**Nova generatsiia,* No. 11 (1928): 311 22. The article was written especially for *N.G. (Nova generatsiia).*

For myself, as a knowledgeable artist, this was simply the end of the contemplation of surface and a departure from the peripheral-simplistic copying of nature. The photographic exactness of the eye's transmission of the visible has reached an absolutely legitimate end; there has appeared a free overpowering of form and color begun by the Impressionists, the spokesmen for the new spatial realism.

I understand the peculiarity of our surface retina, the need to estimate volume, color and form in excercises. I also understood that until now, formerly true perception worked exactly at the half-mark within the limits of an optical expanse of 140 degrees; from this I understood, how the perception of space is still poorly developed in us and in mirroring it, how shallow and narrowly our eye looks.

Scientifico-Spatial Fictions

Pondering over the rudimentariness and construction of space in man's consciousness (which slowly discharged one ray at a time from itself, first touching space and then those pompously named three coordinates), stubbornly, I worked a great deal and learned to break this ready-made concept in myself; step by step, according to the living example of everything which is developing—the living path that does not converge at one point, but only cuts through it and goes in all directions simultaneously with every instant of time—was beginning to be renewed in me.

In what, if not in space, lies the deepest understanding of the world?

The Genesis of Spatial Conceptions

Man defines space by touch, sight, hearing and thought. Our attitude toward this [space] passes through these four degrees which the fleeting energy of varied rhythms slowly shuts off. We have, therefore, four forms of perception which gradually become thinner.

I can feel, touch, hear, see, think.

Let us briefly trace the interesting path of development of these abilities and, going back in time to the history of man, we will see how his four main lines of sensory perception of space—these four leading beacons, slowly flaring—unite in one vigorous flow of the [perception of the] world.

The Snail—Half-Plasm, The Monkey—Half-Man

The oldest form of sensing space is by touch. We cannot forget our forefathers who walked on their hands; their appendages were accommodated for creeping to crawling, and only slowly, beginning to stand on his legs and

freeing his arms, man transferred a delicate sensitivity to the ends of his fingers, freeing them from coarse touching, and these tender freed organs produced the wonderfully vast culture of objects of the entire world. Already here, the darkness withdraws from man and provides a new beginning of [perceiving] space.

Freeing his appendages, working on stone, bone, wood, piercing holes, sharpening bones, man discovered music in the sound-noise rhythm of work. Perhaps in this very rhythm of noise and motion the mastery of rendering was discovered.

Leonardo da Vinci

Later, all of these peculiarities of sensing and imagining space were broken up into separate groups—nuclei (specialities)—learned without any association, only occasionally pointing to the precursor of the future man.

And already the world shows that, what was not connected historically in a person is the development and the beginning of a collective.

In the first drawings there is man, animal, object; less frequently a plant, but not space. Man did not yet understand space in which objects exist. Just as he could not at first unite the drawing and the object into one, so now he cannot connect the subject of observation with space.

There Is No Conception of Space

Beginning with primitive man, the ancient Egyptians, the Assyrians, Greeks, Byzantines and up to the contemporary *lubok* or icon, the artist paints [series of] many people in an entire line of similar-looking persons and in an equally exact distance of such figures one from another. And only a weak feeling for an overall connection forced [him] to cover over this insignificant tympanic detail with one broad rich sound of the central figure.

The Arithmetic of Representations

Here, the eye allows itself a higher measure of freedom, succumbing unconsciously to the brain and embodying the visible in a picture; it describes that which the brain knows and not that which it had itself observed.

A point, moving, creates line.

The ancient cultures of Egypt and Assyria indicate how narrowly people/artists looked at a single point of the visible when transmitting nature, unable to capture a wide angle of vision with a glance.

Single-Measure Motion

The Carnacian land in Egypt is compressed, even; motion is along a single measure. The entire height of its 10-sagene columns is even more constraining and directs movement into a narrow interstice, still more even.

The First Directional Ray

Their depiction of the world according to an ideal evenness has almost no kind of depth as if it were a microscopic specimen meant to be viewed flatly.

One senses that, in the concept of the artist's translation, all images incorporated on the [picture] surface with a single motion, with a single line, are turned in passing from one width to the very width [of the picture surface] but not into depth.

Even during the greatest flowering of culture, the artist transmitted everything in only a single lateral motion along the axis of the head and leg of people in absolute profile; while the torso, strangely enough, was turned unnaturally *en face*.

Egyptian sculpture is a feeble conjecture about the second measure. The beautifully sensed movement of sitting pharaohs is always incomparably stronger in profile; *en face* the tension of the torso, the lifelessness of the positioned legs or the hands placed on the knees, is immediately apparent.

The "path of progressive thrust"—only forward, to the side, by a narrow passage—is evident.

Such a conception limited figuration considerably; it was necessary to avoid frontality, so that it [figuration] wouldn't exist there.

The Beginning of the Second Ray

The beginning of a new concept of the world and of motion happened in Egypt under the reign of pharaoh Akhenaton (1375 B.C.), who bravely brought to life the idea developed by Darwin about the origin of everything that exists from the simplest of forms; who was able to liberate art in Egypt from the ancient dragon, thus creating a new religion. The torso of his daughter (turned, finally, with the front facing the viewer), was made before him from stone. Here, for the first time, one senses the sweet feeling of the spring of art, of eyes youthfully and expansively sunken in reverie which retreated from the narrowly sensed and created the unexperienced, and all during the best years of the creativity of the Greeks.

The Environment Organizes Our "I"

Unknown space, under the conditions of enlargement, begins to intensively step into the field of vision in form and in color; awakening attention, it corrects consciousness; it teaches to perceive in a new way, indicating unfailingly the fact that, environment creates the visible, always retaining its influence and an association with itself; moreover, the object is always subordinated to surrounding space and inevitably changes with every change of the spatial environment.

From the very beginning, by virtue of the simple planning and measuring of the earth, by the building of dwellings (later creating huge masses of mounds, pyramids, temples, palaces, fortresses), people came to an organized understanding of the spatial environment; disregarding the extreme abstractness of the thought—the idea of the construction itself—they created an absolutely real concrete spatial setting which taught all people to see, hear and sense by touch; in such a way, a culture of their perceptual organs was formed in stages.

The Knot of Space Is Unraveling

People gradually made their conceptions greater by acquiring culture and by wandering; by sponsoring grand, aggressive crusades; by looking for markets. The Phoenicians, who circumnavigated the Mediterranean Sea, had already markedly extended the thread of measure. The fabulous Greek labyrinth—one endless ribbon of a continuous, entangled corridor—is the last indication of man's movement in a single measure.

The movement of the eye, which unconsciously scurried into one direction, finally, having seen the breadth of the frontal plane in a creative rapture, smashed it into two parts against its endlessness. It was as if here, one-dimensional consciousness had come to an end and an enduring beginning of the concept of breadth came to the fore.

Hence, line, moving, creates surface.

Greek architecture and sculpture present the very energetic turn of art into a new measure.

This is already a more active observation, yet still not made deep.

The Apollo Teneas is still within the creative light rays of Egypt, but with his smile, he already rocks the canonic air and shakes off the Egyptian deadliness from himself. His feet and hands want to sever themselves from ancient adhesions and to displace them.

The Thread Develops into a Tapestry

Greek sculpture is already an absolutely belated two-dimensionality.

It is possible that, in reflecting the body in sculpture, they thought along the lines of a rounded-out movement—to the right and to the left—and learned to commit to memory what had passed without going any deeper; the result could have been a very feeble notion among them, just as is our unclear sense of the fourth dimension. Their study of space puts forth a foundation of broadly arranged way-marks of three dimensions and creates a series of bizarre premises, postulates of space.

But a well-founded width obligates a new discovery of depth, which appears considerably later.

The Unconsciousness of a Living Projection on One's Own Screen. Good, But Nonsensical, Cinema

The act of seeing is photography. What is important is not that our retina accepts everything visible onto itself, but what is significant, is how, what and how much of all of this is taken over by the machine of our consciousness, beginning with the oldest living being and up to contemporaneity.

We see that children, peasants, savages cannot at all be left in urban movement, in the bustling buildings, taxicabs. In the noise and clamor of the active stream of unseen and unheard human life, they often die from unfortunate accidents—carelessness. Why? Their retina also makes room for all images. But therein lies the issue: their consciousness does not choose and cannot choose the safest point from the entire mass of moving points on the retina. The eye knows and continuously captures movement only in a certain calm field. Their eye and their attention are continuously shackled to separate moving actors—points, the rest being only flat and familiar decorations that hang calmly.

It is different with urban dwellers; they walk freely in the movement of the anthill-city, no matter how large it may be. Their consciousness had been broadened from the century-to-century extension of movement over the entire periphery of the retina with a greater or lesser intensity.

For them, the periphery of the retina is no longer inert, but engages in itself the movement of points which scrapes its surface.

A similar stage in the development of the eye and consciousness occurred among the Greeks but with less change and quickness of movement than in our culture.

The Romans Who Became Greeks

The Italo-Graecian art of Rome achieved the pace of its development by having deciphered the movement and the life of the head-face and completing a unified canon by virtue of a beautiful portrait technique.

It can be said that research and investigation into the human body in motion is divided into three periods:

1) Egyptian—the appendages (arms and legs),
2) Assyro-Graecian —the torso,
3) Italo-Graecian— the head (portrait)

The art of building has those very same characteristic three stages of development in light of the concept of space: Egyptian temples—palaces - columns. All of them seem to be preparing the foundation for future structures. Disregarding the great height and colossal measurements, this is only the pedestal for future building.

Egypt—the Legs, Greeks—the Torso, Rome—the Head. The Solution to Volume on a Surface

The Greeks resign from colossality and are developing their idea of volume further, without a top, without a face. This is also a beautiful torso with an impersonal expression of the head.

A well-developed upper portion appears only during the period of the late Renaissance, when palaces and temples often almost totally define only the top, the expression of the head.

Our contact shift of both eyes lies at the furthest point of space.

The science of space—geometry- arose from the contact measurement of the earth. It can be said that the sense of touch lay strongly at the basis of our comprehended sight. It happened thus:

Our skin, as the periphery of the body, sensed upon itself, first of all, the act of distance from food, love, animosity, heat, cold, sharpness, bluntness, heaviness, a slight jump, falling, etc.

People of culture, and particularly artists, ought to remember steadfastly that only by investigation and learning from the space of nature, can they master all the wealth of form and color.

Man—a Holy Icon

Painting came into existence only several centuries ago. Nature in its entirety had not yet been absorbed by a new observation and quest for the earth and air; painting had only one outlet through the portrait and the icon, and having

become strengthened, casting its seed upon an immutable canon, it shattered it to smithereens. This difficult path began in about the XIII century, mainly in Italy.

Distinguished persons, wishing to decorate their church, invited artists to paint icons.

The Pope of Rome was painted in the guise of St. Peter, while a wealthy and notable person of the time in the appearance of saints, with wives and children, with glowing halos, and in a very stylized landscape.

Thus, the portrait predominated without any association to objects, to air. It was, as is the art of delivery, a psychological conjecture. Either crudely or subtly, the eye recorded the real, taken from a narrow support in nature, striving to justify the deficient association with divine or heroic anecdote—that very instinct to find the connection with the brain, and not the eye.

The Only Solution

Giotto, the first Italian primitivist, seeks an outlet from the impasse of the portrait in his observations over nature; he was first to subjugate the surface to the wonder of perspective.

We really see the beginning of the approach to visual envelopment, to the expansion of vision and spatial perception in Leonardo da Vinci.

The Path to the Woman of the Individual "I"

In the *Mona Lisa*, the rendering of the person retained by itself a broad expanse of the eye on the path to a new measure. Here, the deceit of the landscape and the reality of the body is like a vast beautiful [thing] which had become swelled from having drunk the space around.

Working Hypothesis

Creative people create either an analysis of new phenomena, or a synthesis of all of those which were previous to them. Some are the researchers of everything that is new; others are the assessors of everything that has been discovered.

The Practice of the Hypothesis

We see how in vigorous, living art, Michelangelo pulled the entire great cycle of Greek art through himself with a strong power of synthesis.

The Yellow Spot

He already saw much more than the Greeks, but his art is the brilliant synthesis of that which had elapsed.

The Duck-Walk

The old Hollanders directed the narrow slit of their eye to every detail and, transferring it from object to object, they inevitably missed the overall connection. They dissected even the closest link between objects with the sharp ridges of the slit, and the same story of details that the eye narrates at the command of the brain, remains.

Bridled and Comprehended Cinema

Passing directly on to Rembrandt, we aim to find only that summation in the long-existing culture of organs of spatial perceptions—touch, sight, hearing and thought—which indicates convincingly the time in which the results were accumulated, the process of collecting them into one whole.

The Beginning of Impressionism

Rembrandt, assiduously studying his predecessors, understood the unusual connection of forms in the faces of Holbein, who saw the form of the head immediately in all of its details. He understood the aerial pillar in the pictures of Leonardo and Titian; he observed and made his sketches outdoors in a throng; it is perhaps even because of this that he began his broad aerial generalizations; passing along a perpendicularity of depth, he is the first to have placed his eye in the center of the visible, and, observing from the center, he captured expansively and painted aerial space with it, connecting all visible objects.

Learning by Means of Indicating the Uncomprehended

The trodden path was full of content—it taught everyone to look. Having created an unbelievable number of copies from nature—portraits of people and animals—artists were depicting what had previously been unseen. The artist teaches ordinary people to see. He shows a person what he has seen with his eye, that which is developing, teasing the philistine who drives away everything unusual.

Having learned to look, and teaching others, much too long has the artist filled life with static copies, which are not pressing.

The First Encounter with an Aerial Environment and an Extensive Field

The first free observers—the Barbizonartists—went outdoors. In the field, in the forest, on the street, the breadth of the earth enveloped them. Here, for the first time, they understood the mistake of their elders who looked upon the world through narrow slits of corridors.

The Impressionists stretched the eye. Encompassing a broad expanse with their eye, they happily recorded a new coloration; but they were not lucky to stretch their eye so much as to encompass the entire breadth of the earth at one time. They saw the shimmering surface, but not the body itself. They were exuberantly entrenched in the alteration of a higher means of transmitting light vibrations.

The First Victory over the Narrow-Sensory Perception of the Environment

The first to puncture a hole in the blue nook was Cézanne. He saw already not only with a stretched eye, but also with a totally passive resignation of the human sensory "I," so that nothing interfered with objective observation.

At first, all kinds of personal anecdotes and dictation to the eye by consciousness were conquered; extensively engulfing that which is seen, it ran over all of the rays of the perpendicular from the center, visibly absorbing in itself the essence of the envelopment of masses.

What remains is the joy of the young gorilla to scream wildly about the fact that it is necessary to perceive in great quietude beyond personal joys and sadness.

The Simultaneity of Spatial First Appearances in Art and in Sciences

Almost concurrently with Cézanne, Lobachevsky and Riemann stretched and twisted all of Euclid's parallels.

They were beginning to understand the earth in a new way. The coverlet had been pulled off and the earth had acquired a new understanding, a new depth, and had become clothed in the corpus of this depth—an infinity, as material as it is itself. It had already become the essence of everything and every kind of measure cannot be applied to it equally, just like the measurement of the interior in a living organism.

The First Flowers of a New Soil

The mistake of the Italian Futurists lies in their obligatory expression of surrounding movement. Their unusual attachment to skyscrapers, automobiles, factories, and all kinds of moving world wonders, is only an

inevitable transferral of a true internal acknowledgment of this movement. This is why Picasso analyzes moving surfaces and static ones, leaving depiction behind; and like an anatomist, dissects the whole into sections in order to find internal movement, disregarding the external expression of the visible whole.

Cubism and Futurism expose an internal world in all its visibility and embody that which the ordinary eye does not see and does not perceive. By breaking up surface and displaying the unseen sides of objects, by the same token, they show the creative force of nature which aims at expressing life, movement, in all its directions, in the most intensive manner.

The Only Solution

The eye has ceased to incorporate ordinary objectivity; the criteria of the completeness of the impression of the eye directed toward a single point (as if into an endless tunnel) has obstructed the desire of a single compact pupil which absorbs the vibration of all surfaces—frontal ones, end ones, side ones, upper and lower—in a single second, with an unusual power of full perception.

What is expanded vision? It is an extended field of vision, unfolded to its limits, at the moment when you look. Enriched by observations, it becomes fully saturated in such a way that, in an evolutionary manner, it expands its borders ever more.

This is the reason why it is necessary to learn how to see in a new way.

The Eyes are Postal Boxes: A Lot of Rubbish—Very Little Sense

It is long past the time to leave behind the stupid peculiarity of filling the eyes with one-sided absurdities. It is the same thing as looking at the world through a microscope.

The eye must be retrained not to clamor over the insignificant, and consciousness of the visible must be developed in it.

Recall how when you look in front of you, your vision always captures windows, trees, passers-by, without any sense of weight or volume in a fifty per cent measurement.

Man Still Has No Knowledge of Three-Dimensions

In nature, in the forest, in the fields, it is easier not to attach oneself to objectness. Nature is still not infused with large corridors of buildings; it is not ransacked and man still hasn't crumbled it away into buttons, automobiles, signboards, etc.; but even there, the majority sees only a small scrap before

itself, taking possession of another, almost always transferring the eye from a small sector of length onto a small one of width which remains in the narrow corridor. And if the observer of the corridor had not returned, he would always see a dimension and a half, believing to be seeing three.

My experience in looking in a new way leads to a new visuality and a new definition of the world.

What must one especially remember when looking in a new way?

There is no line. There are only the borders of objectness. Line is the trail of a dull habitual perception of the visible; every kind of surface transformed into a body, creates the sides of overlapping and not of line; this is the first discovery of form in space. Seeing it thus, one needs to run one's eyes over the volume just as soon as the consciousness of the volume and its borders appears, and not over its lines and features.

In the Workshop of Spatial Realism in the Academy of Art, I was doing such research with students who were working for me in 1920.

Towards Expanded Vision

A simple easel was placed to the side (in profile) two paces from the person who was observing it. On the legs of the easel, with whitewash, they affixed a letter or a note at eye level. Behind the easel they hung paper (30 cm x 20 cm). On the paper, there was a word of four letters; on the sides at a distance, were two red circles.

A Quick Shift and a Turn of the Visual Axes

He, who was observing, first looked at the note on the easel and saw only it; later, he turned his attention to the paper with four letters and, to his amazement, saw the entire paper and read the entire word through the easel; then again, he shifted his eyes and attention to the note on the easel, but, according to instructions, he was to look simultaneously at the more distant painted circles; then the phenomenon of the expression of the legs of the easel took place: the note doubled and, at the same time, the background four letters came into view at which time the easel did not remain in a calm state; at once, it contracted and expanded to unusual dimensions.

The Consolidation of Diurnal and Nocturnal Vision into One Effective Apparatus. The Animal Eye

If you wish to try to sense the space of a lower measure then try this: while traveling on a train sideways on the upper berth, try to look into the distance and simultaneously at the haystacks which pass by (now parallel to the axis of

your eyes); through this narrow slit of vision you will acquire that sense of space, which man-animal, who could not yet raise his head and did not stand on two legs, once had. Just as well as you see it now, he saw a small sector of the sky (which constantly rushes forward) that the earth's surface constantly inflates and limits.

Working Hypothesis

In nature, in the fields, the angle of vision is naturally wider because there are no skyscrapers there, or no tempestuous movement which involuntarily impedes viewing. On the street, it is especially hard to look expansively because the eye has become accustomed to corridors. Yet, buildings can assist the eye which has refused to look casually—if one is to learn to look from the center—encompassing an ever greater field of vision, and to look not at a point, but to absorb into itself the images which emerge on the entire retina.

Standing on a bridge where large buildings are reflected in the water, I strove to see all the buildings at once, even including the sky; not ceasing to see the buildings and the sky, I aimed at including their reflections at the edge of the sky which was becoming more distant. To see all of this at once, even if for a brief period, is very difficult.

This research proves how unprepared we still are for three dimensions.

Having learned to look widely in front of us, once needs to learn to capture the angle at 180 degrees, bringing the sides back together in order to glance behind one's own wall—the back.

The Back—A Limit

Why does the back obstruct and take away space from us? Why should we always take this wall into account? In order to rid ourselves of it, it is not enough to turn around; hence, if one turns around then so does the wall—the back—and again the iron hanging comes down over three-quarters of the entire visible world.

A new sense of space develops especially when one tries to see everything that moves all at once. Only then can one see a secret association of everything living: a separate motion which at first seemed abrupt, becomes objectively peaceful, totally dependent on the general movement; that which earlier was totally separate, unrelated to the visible—the automobile which speeds by in a wide angle of vision—flows momentarily into the chain of visibility in one general motion. By the same token, the concept of speed strangely disappears and the idea of relativity becomes absolutely clear.

Experience and the Examination of New Sensation

As you enter a large auditorium or church, you don't notice the portraits or the icons. You immediately see only the overall spatiality. This happens not because we carry from the outdoors an already expanded angle of vision which immediately covers the entire space of the dwelling (no matter how large the church or auditorium may have been). And, on the contrary, when you exit from an enclosed dwelling, your sector of vision no longer incorporates an open spatiality.

In the same way in nature we resemble an observer who in a large auditorium examines a knickknack, not seeing the main thing.

I was successful with the following exercise: walking along the peaceful broad edge of town, I turn immediately while in motion, aiming to perceive the entire landscape as intensively as possible, capturing as much of the sky as possible. Turning back on the original path, I look confidently before me, connecting everything that I see with everything that I have just seen—encircling myself with the surrounding sky and everything that I observed.

Here is the sensation of a new measure which grows particularly noticeable in the emergence of a new feeling of d e p t h — a n a b y s s.

I discovered this new feeling of space even more fully through an experience with motion. The following exercise was fruitful: while in motion, I clearly imagine for myself everything that remained in back of me (behind my back): the sky, the street, the buildings. Incorporating this entire complex impression, I see a person who is approaching me and attempt to remember him clearly, especially the rhythm of his movements and steps. Strongly clinging to the entire range of impressions, with great assertion of will, I approach the passer-by, uniting myself with him and his movements. We pass each other, like a single part of a whole, and when he is already behind me, I don't abandon him and as though I continue to see him, very confidently, not looking about, keep track of him rhythmically united with me, by the same token, I also try to look carefully before me in unison with the street and the sidewalk.

This totally new sensation of space simultaneously behind me and in front of me, evokes dizziness—one begins to stagger.

T h e p o s s i b i l i t y o f a n e w p e r p e n d i c u l a r.

The Unfastened Angle

These waverings destroyed the resistance of the three spatial coordinates at the point of my consciousness.

Observing, I understood that beauty of the foreground depends completely on the direct influence of the opposite plane.

When you see a fiery sunset which glows and instantaneously turns into a deep, purple-blue coolness, then you will understand and sense its mutual efficacy and will realize that both influence you jointly, and not separately. Essentially, we never see differently, we're just not conscious of this and assume that we only see half of it.

Working and observing, I understood that the stronghold in the dispatching point of three measures is incorrect; that it needs to be shaken up, displaced and to give pace to new feelings of space, leaving behind the conventional limits of the angle.

What great joy I felt having discovered the possibility of jarring the three unextended directions from a dead point.

I was standing, quietly observing in nature how the sides come together into a whole, and suddenly, I understood clearly that, the raylike direction emerging from me was going backwards.

The first question was: but didn't I extend backwards the ray which is emerging forward in front of me?

No? I clearly feel that I didn't extend it; I created a new direction which was absolutely unknown to me.

How the Old Concept Was Broken

From me, the ray traveled forward, into infinity. My will created a new direction for the ray to the absolutely opposite side.

To the right and the left, above and below, the term, "forward," I perceive as culture already given to me from the distant past, but, at the same time, "forward" and "backward" has not yet emerged in man's consciousness and this is because man with his body was hitherto [created] a boundary for the directions of front-behind, as earth is the boundary between above and below. I destroy the border that earth puts forth by creating a direction which passes through the earth by means of my antipode in a star.

From this I draw the conclusion that an entire sector of observations is insufficient for man. It is necessary to prevent this quadrat. Only then can we say that we know three full dimensions and will understand the meaning of depth.

A point moves from the center toward both sides at one time and creates a line.

A line seemingly drives itself from the center of its entire length also toward both sides together, creating with this movement, surface.

The surface, moving, seems to swell above and below simultaneously, creating a body with this movement.

Thus, the abstract concept of three measures, remaining, in essence, to be

the leading one, is displaced from a moot point and provides an opportunity and freedom for new spatial construction.

The displacement of the point atzlwhich the three coordinates are joined is in my consciousness.

The Form Is Constant; The Color Timid

At midday, I was sitting in an orchard, observing how a green bench directly in front of me was changing in its colors under the sun. A light lustrous blueness passed over its impressionable beauty, enveloped by a luxurious dense lilac tone. The shadows from the bench appeared to be violet. I just wanted to look closely, fixing my observation motionlessly; the enchantment of the fleeting vividness was disappearing and the fairy tale of color was suddenly ceasing.

In order to sense the living color, one does not need to record it with the eye for a long time—to accommodate vision to the color—but one needs to pass by it, capturing it with a slippery glance. Only then does the eye have an extraordinarily rich impression of the basic color and the bright ones supplementary to it.

Form Changes in Motion

Motion generalizes visibility into a whole; a train which speeds by, converts the fleeting separateness of the wagons into a compact mass.

The quicker you move along a dense orchard railing, the more distinctly you see the overall mass behind it.

While moving, one can observe in different ways: going up or down in an elevator, one can see only the grates of the elevator or the walls without grates, but one can switch it off and see the grates, the wall, the door, the stairs and the people all at one time.

The Beginning of Depth

Introducing much similar research and observing concentratedly, sometimes I would stand in the middle of the street and, looking into the distance, I tried to see all at once everyone who was walking and driving in front and in back, not stopping to look into the distance, trying not to miss those who walked by or drove past you, including everything behind your back. When you sense this motion in front and in back in all of its fullness and tension, then you will discover the feeling of depth, to the point of fear, as if before an abyss.

From this sensation an offshoot of new thought breaks through: if only we knew depth, we would not be afraid of height.

Obviously, the foreground plane still, for our vision, has no depth. By habit, we dig into it with our eyes as we do with our feet into the earth.

The Fear of Depth

In the mountains, before a chasm, or on the windowsill of any floor, the usual leaning of the eye onto the frontal plane is disturbed; an unrestrainable desire to lean on it is born—to hurl oneself in defiance on self-preservation in order to quell the changed feeling of balance.

The Support of the Paw Which Has Remained in the Hands of Man

Our eye is not very much more precise than the foot of a blindman: the horizontal surface for the foot is vertical for the eye. The foot treads on a solid wall; the eye glides over a transparent one. In both instances, losing our balance, we fall.

The artist's eye seeks new space and senses its future.

For him, the sky is not painted with the blue paint of a curtain, but is a continuous bottomless depth. The earth winds around, is enveloped in it by its sides. For him, the distance is not a joyful surface of quiet and beautiful satisfaction, but a moment of flight, restrained only by the general rule of gravity. The earth whirls by, together with the attached vapors and clouds and does not hang, as a painted canvas. The mountains, rocks, forests, buildings, the seas have not adhered to it, but have become devoured by it on the swift course of the flight. Mountains are the oldest protuberances of the earth; valleys, precipices are light wrinkles on its face; oceans and seas are that element in which all that is alive and moving was conceived and born.

The development of similar ideas appears as a result of long experience and observation of nature, motion, light, color, form, included in the angle of vision which becomes expanded ever more and more. The science of looking and recognizing everything that is replenished at one time around you, will change the entire concept of the visible. The span and circumference of the optical ray from the center will be immeasurably deeper and incomparably broader. From here will emerge a new feeling and perception of space which surrounds us with its infinity and new ways to greatest collective creativity.

Leningrad

La Nova kompreno de spaco M. Matuŝin

La eksperimentoj de nuntempaj ŝcienculoj sanceligas la certecon en la precizeso de niaj organoj, centroj, kiuj perceptas spacon.

La kvar formoj de perceptado laŭgrade subtiligas integriĝas kaj sintetiĝas, en la kompreno de homo.

Ili ankaŭ karakterizas la disvolviĝon de arto. Ĝi estas: palpado, aŭskultado, vidado kaj pensado.

Laŭgrade homo (ekzistas, sekve, artistoj) perceptadis unu-'du-aŭ trilinian movadon. Laŭgrade estis-perceptata ankaŭ homa korpo en la moviĝo.

Mikelo-Anĝelo estis sintezo de pasinta vojo.

Lobaĉevskij kaj Riman klinigis ĉiujn paralelojn de Eŭklido.

La unua venko super mallarĝesenta perceptado de cirkanaĵo apartenas al Sezan.

La tero ne estas plu sola perspektivo.

Naskiĝas la nova kompreno de profundeco.

La punkto moviĝas kune el la cento en du flankojn kaj faras linion.

La linio kvazaŭ sin pelas de la centro de ĉiu sia longeco ankaŭ en du flankojn, kreante per ĉi-tiu movo—plataĵon.

La plataĵo, moviĝante, kvazaŭ ŝveliĝâs samtempe supren kaj malsupren, kreante korpon.

Do, en la estonteco la ecoj de vid - radio el centro estos sen-kompare pli profunda, ol nun kaj pli larĝa.

De tio-ĉi kreiĝos la nova sento kaj nova percepto de spaco, kiu cirkaŭigas nin per sia senlimeco.

De tio-ĉi eketsigos novaj vojoj de la plej granda kolektivo kreado.

Notes

Introduction

1. "Notre époque à la recherche d'un nom (Enquête dirigée par Gaston Picard)," *La revue mondiale* (1 février 1928), pp. 231-44 and (15 février 1928), pp. 345-64.

2. Pierre Goemaere, director of *La revue belge*, was quoted as saying: "Je n'ose répondre. Je crois qu'il est fort perilleux d'étiqueter son propre siècle. Comment apprécier des courants dans lesquels nous sommes entrainés nous-mêmes? Quelle relativité nous permettra de dire l'importance et le sens de ses courants?" (Ibid., p. 236). Emile Zavie maintained that "we are poorly qualified to carve the epitaphs on our own tombstones." (Ibid. p. 244)

3. Ibid., p. 244.

4. "Yakym imenniam skharakteryzuvaty nashu epokhu?" *Nova generatsiia* (1928), p. 311. The editors of *Nova generatsiia* also remarked that no one had chosen the term "egoism," obviously overlooking Paul Souday's suggestion of the word "egocentrism." (Ibid., p. 43)

5. These included *V mire iskusstva* [In the World of Art] (1907-10), *Iskusstvo i pechatnoe delo* [Art and Printing] (1909-10), *Iskusstvo: Zhivopis, Grafika, Khudozhestvennaia pechat'* [Art: Painting, Graphics, Artistic Print] (1911-12), and *Iskusstvo v Yuzhnoi Rossii* [Art in South Russia] (1913-14), all of which were printed in Kiev.

6. Giovanni Papini, "Il mio futurismo," *Lacerba* (Florence 1914), as quoted in *L'esperienca futurista* (Florence: Vallechi, 1919), p. 139.

7. Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, Gino Severini, "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters 1910," published as a leaflet by *Poesia* (Milan), 11 February 1910, in Umbro Apollonio, ed., *Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), p. 25.

8. F. T. Marinetti, "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," *Le Figaro* (Paris), 20 February 1909, trans. R. W. Flint in Apollonio, *Futurist Manifestos*, p. 23.

9. Lunacharsky's comments had an air of condescension reflecting the controversy surrounding Marinetti's arrival in Russia in 1914. He obviously was taking sides, but that does not detract from the fact that he was, in fact, disseminating information about the noted promoter of the Italian avant-garde. See Vladimir Markov, *Russian Futurism: A History* (London: MacGibbon & Kee Limited, 1969), p. 149.

Chapter 1

1. For the most part, all biographical data on Mykhailo Semenko was relayed by his daughter, Iryna Mykhailivna Semenko, in an interview in Moscow in April 1978, and reconfirmed in *Mychajl' Semenko: Ausgewählte Werke*, ed., L. Kriger (Würzburg: Jal-reprint, 1979).

2. "Pochemu my raskrashivaemsia," by Ilya Zdanevich and Mikhail Larionov was published in the St. Petersburg journal *Argus* (1913).

3. Anatol' Cebro (pseud. M. Semenko), "Futuryzm v ukrains'kij poeziji (1914–1922)," *Semafor u majbutnie* 1 (May 1922), p. 40.

4. Cebro, "Futuryzm," p. 41.

5. Ibid.

6. See, for example, Benedikt Livshits, *The One and a Half-Eyed Archer*, translated, introduced, and annotated by John E. Bowlt (Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1977), ch. vii: "We and the West"; Graziella Lehrmann, *De Marinetti a Maiakovsky* (Zürich 1942); Nikolai Khardzhiev, "Maiakovsky i zhivopis," in *Maiakovsky: Materialy i issledovaniia* (Moscow 1940).

7. Mario Bétuda, "Looping the Loop," *Lacerba* (April 1, 1914), p. 104.

8. For more information on Pavlo Kovzhun, see *Ekslibris: zbirnyk asotsiatsii nezalezhnykh ukrains'kykh mysttsiv*. Pershyi vypusk (L'viv: Izmarahd, 1932); M. Fediuk, *Hrafika* (L'viv-Kiev 1924); M. Holubets', *Pavlo Kovzhun* (L'viv, 1939); S. Hordyn'skyi, *Pavlo Kovzhun, Monograph* (L'viv 1943); Obiednannia mysttsiv ukraintsiv v Amerytsi, *Vystavka tvoriv pomerlykh mysttsiv pershoi polovyny 20 stolittia* (New York, 16–30 October 1955); M. Strutyns'ka, "Zhadky pro mysttsiv," *Notatky z mystetstva*, No. 2 (June 1964), pp. 29–34; *Vystava-Ausstellung: Novakivsky, Kholodnyi, Trush, Kovzhun* (1942).

9. Narodnyi Komissariat Osvity [National Commissariat of Enlightenment]. This faction of the government was concerned with cultural affairs insofar as they benefited mass education.

10. With the issuance of the Ems Ukaz in 1876, tsarist restrictions largely prohibited Ukrainian printing in the Russian Empire. After the death of Alexander III some restrictions were abolished and several literary publishing houses were established in the Ukraine. While publications in Ukrainian began to emerge after this time, (e.g., *Siaivo* [Sunglow] Kiev, 1913–14, with 21 issues published) the visual arts were still discussed mainly in Russian publications. It was not until after the Revolution, when the first Ukrainian Academy of Art was established, that publications devoted exclusively to the pictorial arts were issued in the Ukrainian language.

11. For an expansive view of these publications and the groups which contributed to them, see George S. N. Luckyj, *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine 1917–1934* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956).

12. *Muzahet: misiachnyk literatury i mystetstva* (Kiev) 1–3 (January-February-March 1919). Because of its propagation of a theory of national culture, *Muzahet* was ultimately banned by Soviet authorities, and some of its contributors were threatened with arrest. See Luckyj, p. 31.

13. Cebro, "Futuryzm," p. 42.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., p. 43.

16. Ibid., p. 42.

17. Ibid.

18. One example of some of the controversy surrounding Semenko's efforts to form a Futurist group in Kharkiv occurred in 1921, when Semenko wanted to establish an "Udarna hrupa poetiv-futurystiv" [shock group of Futurist poets]. The group was to include, among others, Semenko, Yulian Shpol, and Vasyl' Ellan; the latter requested that the term "Futurist" be omitted from the group and to call it simply "the shock group of poets." This dissident view was not accepted by all, and Ellan eventually dropped out. The other two prepared an almanac which they entitled *Povstannia* [Revolt]. The group finally fell apart due to attrition: some members moved out of Kharkiv; others dragged on and added to the internal bickering until the already loose and disintegrating association finally crumbled.

19. Luckyj, *Literary Politics*, pp. 46 ff.

20. Ibid., p. 32.

21. M. Kachaniuk, "Materiialy do istorii futuryzmu na radians'kii Ukraini," *Literaturnyi arkhiv* III-IV (1930), pp. 312–14.

22. *Komunistychnyi Kosmos*. Declaration published in Kachaniuk, ibid., pp. 313–14.

23. Ibid.

24. Published in *Semafor u maibutnie* (May 1922), p. 12. This article, being a manifesto of ASPANFUT, was printed in English, and is copied here verbatim.

25. G. Shkurupii, "Manifest Marinetti i Panfuturyzm," *Semafor u maibutnie*, p. 9.

26. The editors, "Semafor u Majbutn'e: Aparat konstrukciji metamystectva," *Semafor u maibutnie* (May 1922), p. 1.

27. *Semafor u maibutnie* (May 1922), p. 2.

28. Myqail Semenko, "Manifest Panfuturyzmu," *Semafor u maibutnie* (May 1922), p. 4. (N.b. Semenko is here using Panfuturist transcription for his given name.)

29. Kachaniuk, "Materialy," IV, p. 315.

30. Ibid., p. 317.

31. For a translation of excerpts from Alexei Gan's *Konstruktivizm* (Tver 1922), see John E. Bowlt, ed. and trans., *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism 1902–1934* (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), pp. 214–25.

32. The second edition of M. Semenko *Kobzar*, issued in 1925, included the poezo-film *Step* [Steppe: A Poezo-film]. There were several other editions of Semenko's *Kobzar*. He constantly added to them, appending new poetry, but essentially these were republications of already printed works. In 1928, three years after the second edition of his *Kobzar*, Semenko published *Malyi Kobzar i novi virshi* [Small Kobzar and New Poems]. Then between 1929 and 1931, a three-volume publication of all of his compiled works, again under the title *Kobzar*, was published in Kharkiv.

33. *Semafor u maibutnie*, p. 51.

34. Ibid., p. 55.

35. The term "semaphore," denoting a visual and mechanical indicator such as a traffic light or the moving arms of a railroad signal, is meant here as a metaphor: a symbolic apparatus signaling a message or the start and path of an artistic journey.

Chapter 2

1. "Platform i otochennia livykh," *Nova generatsiia* 1 (October 1927), p. 39.
2. Editorial note, *Nova generatsiia* 3 (March 1928), p. 237.
3. Geo Shkurupii, "Syhnal na spolokh druziam—fal'shyva tryvoha," *Nova generatsiia* 11 (1928), p. 328.
4. Dougald McMillan, *transition 1927–38: The History of a Literary Era* (New York: George Braziller, 1976), p. 5.
5. Ibid., p. 3.
6. See, for example, Eugene Jolas, Elliot Paul, and Robert Sage, "First Aid to the Enemy," *transition* 9 (December 1927), pp. 161–76. In this article, the editors attack Mr. Lewis's *The Enemy*, in which the author criticizes *transition* for being Communist.
7. Eugene Jolas, *transition* 13 (Summer 1928), p. 182.
8. *transition* 13 (Summer 1928).
9. McMillan, *transition 1927–38*, p. 31.
10. Eugene Jolas, "Announcement," *transition* 19–20 (June 1930), p. 182.
11. Hervart Val'den, "Mystetstvo v Evropi," *Nova generatsiia* 9 (1928), pp. 170–77.
12. "Biuleten' novoho mystetstva," *Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv 'Novoi Generatsii'* a (January 1930), p. 97.
13. M.S., "Bloknot 'N.G.'," *Nova generatsiia* 11 (November 1928), p. 335.
14. "Biuleten' novoho mystetstva: *7 Arts* pro *Novu generatsiiu*," *Nova generatsiia* 6 (June 1928), p. 454.
15. *7 Arts* 2 (22 April 1928).
16. As quoted in "Biuleten' novoho mystetstva: *7 Arts* pro *Novu generatsiiu*," *Nova generatsiia* 6 (June 1928), p. 454.
17. Shkurupii, "Syhnal na spolokh druz'iam – fal'shyva tryvoha," p. 327.
18. Correspondence: "Mykhail Semenko Chan Zhanu (Kharkiv, 20 April 1928)," *Nova generatsiia* 5 (May 1928), p. 389.
19. Shkurupii, "Syhnal," p. 334.
20. V. Trenin, "Trevozhnyi signal druz'iam," *Novyi Lef* 8 (August 1928), pp. 30–36.
21. Shkurupii, "Syhnal," p. 334.
22. Mykhail Semenko, Response to a collective letter of thirteen students, "Shanovnyi Tovaryshu Semenko," (Moscow, 2 April 1928), *Nova generatsiia* 7 (July 1928), p. 61.
23. Correspondence: "Mykhail Semenko-Chan Zhanu (Kharkiv, 20 April 1928)" *Nova generatsiia* 5 (May 1928), p. 389.

24. Chan Zhan, ibid.

25. Shkurupii, "Syhnal," p. 334.

26. Semenko, "Shanovnyi Tovaryshu," p. 62.

27. Shkurupii, "Syhnal," p. 327.

28. Chan Zhan, Letter to M. Semenko from Leningrad (10 April 1928), *Nova generatsiia* 5 (1928), p. 389.

29. "Biuleten' novoho mystetstva," *Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv 'Novoi Generatsii'* a (January 1930), p. 96.

30. Ibid.

31. *Yugolef: zhurnal levogo fronta iskusstv yuga SSR* was published two to four times a month in Odessa by Yuzhnii Lef (Pivdennyi Lef, in Ukrainian), from September 1924 through January 1925. The contents of *Yugolef* included "Program, Theory, Practice, Chronicle, Reviews, Theatre, Literature, Painting, Criticism, Club Life, and Daily Life." Its chief editor was L. Nedolia-Honcharenko. The artistic designer was N. Danylov.

32. *Yugolef* 4 (December 1924), p. 16.

33. The staff of *Yugolef* included L. Nedolia, S. Kirsanov, Z. Barantsevych, N. Danylov, A. Es'kov-Vadetskyi, M. Sanin, A. Pshens'kyi, I. Mokeikov, N. Sokolov, S. Bondaryn, E. Prokudin. Alexei Kruchenykh wrote to the Yugoleftists, a correspondence published in *Yugolef* 4 (December 1924).

34. *Yugolef* 3 (October 1924), p. 2.

35. Title page, *Nova generatsiia*.

36. Valeriian Polishchuk, "Rozkvit ukrains'koi literatury," *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu* (Kharkiv, 1929), p. 65.

37. Walerjan Polischtschuk, et al., "Aufruf der Avangarde," *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu* (Kharkiv, 1929), p. 61.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu*, p. 25.

41. Ibid.

42. Polischtschuk, et al., "Aufruf der Avangarde," p. 61.

43. In order to demonstrate consistency, cohesiveness, and consecutiveness in the theories of Spiralism, when the group Avangard published its compilation of "Constructive-Dynamism" in *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu* in Kharkiv in 1929, it began numbering its pages with page 25, thus retaining the successiveness of pagination with its first major serial publication, *Biuleten' Avangardu*, the last of which ended on page 24.

44. *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu*, p. 73.

45. The term *"prosvitianstvo"* comes from *Prosvita*, the name of a Ukrainian pre-Revolutionary organization established for the education of the peasants. Although the term ordinarily refers to peasant enlightenment, here it is used in a derogatory sense, suggesting cultural provincialism.

46. The concept *"khatianstvo"* is derived from the Ukrainian word *"khata,"* which is the name given to the typical peasant hut or house. The quaintness of the Ukrainian village khata with its white-washed walls and thatched roof became a symbol of national identity and sentiment. Along with this nuance, reference might also be made here to the pre-Revolutionary literary group in the Ukraine which called itself Ukrains'ka khata, which embodied this same sense of local self-centeredness.

47. "Zaklyk hrupy myttsiv 'Avangard'," *Nazadnytstvo Hartu ta zaklyk hrupy myttsiv "Avangard"* (1926), p. 22.

48. *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu,* introductory page.

49. The literary group Hart was formed in January 1923. Its aim was "to unite proletarian writers of the Ukraine, including artists active in the field of theatre, art, and music, who, using Ukrainian language as a means of artistic expression, aim at the creation of one international, Communist culture, and who spread Communist ideology, and fight against the petit-bourgeois propertied ideology." (From A. Leites and M. Iashek, *Desiat' rokiv ukrains'koi literatury: 1917-1927* [Kharkiv 1928], quoted by George S. N. Luckyj, *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine 1917-1934* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1956], p. 47. Before joining with Hart, Polishchuk had (in 1921-22) been a member of the All-Ukrainian Federation of Proletarian Writers (Vseukrains'ka Federatsiia Proletars'kykh Pys'mennykiv), which prepared the soil for Hart. Eventually, he became discouraged with the association because it "merged more and more toward Kievan academism, the Neoclassics, and other spiritual backwardness, in forms as well as in themes, and finally led to the fact that talented youth began to flee from Hart fearing to lose their individuality." (Valeriian Polishchuk, "Chomu ya kynuv 'Hart': Do TsK 'Hartu' odvertyi lyst," in *Nazadnytstvo Hartu ta zaklyk hrupy myttsiv "Avangard"* [Kharkiv, 1926], p. 15. After a three-year association with the group, Polishchuk became disenchanted with its "lack of growth" and finally abandoned it. The major grievance of Avangard against Hart was that Hart was "choking on formal conservatism."

50. Other publications which came under this attack were a little-known journal entitled *Arena* and *Teatr, literatura, muzyka, balet, grafika, zhivopis, kino* [Theatre, Literature, Music, Ballet, Graphics, Painting, Film], an illustrated weekly that commenced on 9 September 1922. The Kharkiv Futurists, N. Aseev, Osip Mandel'shtam, Maximilian Voloshin, A. Gatov, and V. Polishchuk, contributed to it. Its beginning issues were filled with respectful obituaries to their Futurist comrade-in-arms, Velimir Khlebnikov, who died on 28 June 1922.

51. *Nova generatsiia* 1 (1929), p. 54.

52. Mykhail Semenko, "ENTREZ!" *Nova generatsiia* (1929), p. 360.

53. The Editorial Staff, *Avangard al'manakh* a (January 1930), pp. 1-2.

54. For the sake of convenience, "KXI" instead of "K.Kh.I." will be used in the text to denote the Kyivs'kyi Khudozhn'yi Instytut—the Kiev Art Institute. The founding of the Kiev Art Institute was ratified by the Central Rada which, on 5 December 1917 (old calendar), endorsed the statute of the Ukrainian Academy of Art. See *Mystets'ko-tekhnichnyi VYSh: Zbirnyk Kyivs'koho Khudozhn'oho Instytutu.* No. 1 (Kiev: Vydannia K.Kh.I., 1928), p. 7. This source will hereafter be cited as *MTV.*

55. D. Holubenko, "Molod'," *Avangard al'manakh proletars'kykh myttsiv "Novoi Generatsii"* a (January 1930), p. 42.

56. *MTV*, p.18.

57. Ibid.

58. "Nash zhurnal," *MTV*, p. 5.

59. Ivan Vrona, "K.Kh.I.," *MTV*, p. 9.

60. I. Terent'iev, "F1, F2, F3," *Nova generatsiia* 3 (1929), pp. 62–63. Terent'iev presented this evolution of form in an "F1, F2, F3" designation: F1 (the primal function), F2 (an abstract, formal intermediary level; in literature, represented by "zaum" or transrationality), and F3 (the secondary function).

61. Vrona, "K.Kh.I.," *MTV*, p. 16. In 1924, KXI began with only the architectural and the painting/sculptural faculties, but by 1928, five subdivisions were formed: (1) Architecture (with the rudiments of a section on urban planning); (2) Painting (which included three subsections: Studio, Monumental, and Tea-Kino-Foto [Theatre-Film-Photography]); (3) Graphics; (4) Sculpture; and (5) Artistic Pedagogy (with the inclusion of two sections: Socio-Professional Education and Political Education with a subsection on clubs and museum work).

62. Vrona, "K.Kh.I.," *MTV*, p. 13.

63. In the first year of its existence, the enrollment of KXI boasted 324 students, and by January 1929, the number of students had risen to 846. Many nationalities were represented at KXI, but the majority of the students (71%) was Ukrainian.

64. Vrona, "K.Kh.I.," *MTV*, p. 15.

65. Ibid., p. 17.

66. Holubenko, "Molod'," p. 42.

67. Ibid, p. 47.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., p. 80.

70. The series of monographs planned by *Nova generatsiia* were to be published by the firm "Proletaryi" in Kharkiv, and printed in "a large format on chalk paper," (*Nova generatsiia* 5 [May 1928], p. 384), indicating a fervent concern on the part of the New Generation for the visual appeal of their products.

71. "Monohrafii Novoi Generatsii," *Nova generatsiia* 5 (May 1928), p. 384.

72. "From the Editors," Prefatory note to Kazimir Malevich, "Maliarstvo v problemi arkhitektury," *Nova generatsiia* 2 (1928), p. 116.

73. For background on Malevich's essays prior to their appearance in *Nova generatsiia*, see "Malevich on New Art" in Troels Andersen, ed., *K. S. Malevich. Essays on Art 1915–1933* (Copenhagen: Borgens Forlag a-s, 1971) I, pp. 9–16.

74. Kazimir Malevich, "Analiza novoho ta obrazotvorchoho mystetstva (Pol' Sezann)," *Nova generatsiia* 6 (1928), pp. 438–47; trans. Xenia Glowacki-Prus and Arnold McMillin in Troels Andersen, ed., *K. S. Malevich: Essays on Art 1915–1933*, (Copenhagen: Borgens Forlag, 1971) II, p. 21. For the sake of contextual reference, quotations will be cited from this translated source hereafter simply denoted as *MEOA (Malevich Essays on Art)*. The original title as printed in *Nova generatsiia* will also be given.

75. Troels Andersen, ed., *K. S. Malevich: Essays on Art 1915–1933* (Copenhagen: Borgens Forlag a-s, 1968) I, Appendix: Letters, p. 244, n. 76.

76. For autobiographical data concerning Kazimir Malevich and his youth in the Ukraine, see Troels Andersen, ed., *K. S. Malevich. Essays on Art 1915–1933* (Copenhagen: Borgens Forlag a-s, 1968) II, Appendix I, pp. 147–54; also Kazimir Malevich, "Autobiography (1923)," in the catalogue, *Kasimir Malewitsch zum 100 Geburtstag* (Köln: Galerie Gmurzynska, 1978), pp. 11–19; and "Detstvo i yunost' Kazimira Malevicha: Glavy iz avtobiografii khudozhnika," in Nikolai Khardzhiev, *K istorii russkogo avangarda* (Stockholm: Almqvist Wiksell International, 1976), pp. 85–127.

77. Vasilii Rakitin, "Explanatory Note to Malevich's Essay: 'Architecture, Studio Painting, and Sculpture'," in the catalogue *Kasimir Malewitsch zum 100 Geburtstag*, pp. 61–62.

78. Kazimir Malevich, "Konstruktyvne maliarstvo rosiis'kykh maliariv i konstruktivizm," *Nova generatsiia* 8 (1929), pp. 47–57; *MEOA*, p. 78.

Chapter 3

1. E. K. Redin, *Ocherk dvizhenii iskusstva v Kharkove za 1897–98 god* (10 September 1898), p. 130.

2. *Otchet o deiatel'nosti "T-va Khar'kovskikh' Khudozhnikov" (1908–10)*, p. 5.

3. *Otchet pravlennia "T-va Khar'kovskikh' Khudozhnikov" za 1913 god.*

4. *Dvadtsatpiateletie Khar'kovskoi shkoly risovaniia M.D. Raevskoi-Ivanovoi s 1869 g. do 1894 g.* (Khar'kov, 1894).

5. *Slovnyk khudozhnykiv Ukrainy* (Kiev: Holovna Redaktsiia Ukrains'koi Radians'koi Entsyklopedii, 1973), p. 190.

6. M. D. Raevs'ka Ivanova, *Abetka maliuvannia dlia sim'i i shkoly*, [Kharkiv] 1879.

7. Redin, *Ocherk*, pp. 127–31.

8. Ibid. In the first year of its existence, the newly reorganized Kharkiv City School of Drawing and Painting had an enrollment of 73 students (52 males and 21 females) of which 54 went on to advanced classes. In the second year, there were 90 participants, and a class in life studies was added to supplement the already existing classes in perspective, watercolor, and architectural drafting. Those who taught there included academicians A. N. Beketov, A. I. Danilevsky, S. V. Dosekin, M. R. Pestrikov, and G. M. Shtorkh, among others.

9. N. P. Savvin, "Khudozhestvennaia zhizn' Khar'kova v posledniuiu chetvert' veka," *Kolos'ia* (Kharkiv) 9 (1919), pp. 13–14.

10. *XVI Vystavka "T-va Khar'kovskikh' Khudozhnikov" 1913*. Nos. 37–41 in the catalogue list David Burliuk's works, and Vasyl' Yermilov contributed a series of etchings (Nos. 66–74) and one portrait drawing (No. 75). *XVII Vystavka "T-va Khar'kovskikh' Khudozhnikov" 1914* lists Vasyl' Yermilov's etchings Nos. 31–36. Borys Kosariev's pastel studies, Nos. 126–33, and Mykola Myshchenko's studies, Nos. 146–48.

11. Autobiography of Vasyl' Yermilov, written in the form of a letter to B. D., dated 24 November 1964 (hereafter cited as the Yermilov autobiography). Archive of Z. Fogel', Kiev, Ukraine. Yermilov mentions the beginning of his attendance at the Steinberg-Grote Studio at the end of 1910. In his memoirs, Yermilov recalls that the evenings at the Studio were

spent in listening to Steinberg read the letters of van Gogh in German with simultaneous translations into Russian. By virtue of the ensuing discussions, Yermilov became "so entranced by the letters of van Gogh that he became for me greater than my father."

12. Interview with Borys Kosariev, Kharkiv, February, 1978.

13. Born in Kharkiv in 1879, Evgenii Agafonov studied at the School of Raevs'ka-Ivanova and at the Kharkiv Real School before leaving for the Academy. Together with D. P. Gordeev, they acknowledged a great debt to their Kharkiv instructor at the Real School, D. I. Bezperchii. See D. P. Gordeev, ed., *Materialy dlia khudozhestvennoi letopisi g. Khar'kova.* (Khar'kov: Pechatnoe delo, 1914), p. 3. Agafonov's diploma work at the Imperial Academy, entitled *Lomovyky* [Draymen], received a gold medal at the 1910 All-Russia Art Exhibit. Agafonov also worked as an art critic for Kharkiv daily newspapers. During World War I, he served in the army and emigrated in 1919. He made a stop in Australia before coming to the United States in 1923. He lived in Connnecticut, where, after a tragic death in an automobile accident, he was buried in Ansonia. He was mentioned in the New Haven Registrar for Sunday 6 June 1948.

14. I. A. Brodsky, *Repin-pedagog* (Moskva: Akademiia iskusstv, 1960), p. 94.

15. Information derived from one of the youngest students of Golubaia liliia, Pavel Fedorovych Obolentsev, in a biography of Agafonov drafted on 29 October 1969. Private archive, Kiev.

16. Budiak was opened on 1 December 1913 in the home of the artist, Nikolai Nedashkovsky. Materials concerning Budiak are housed in the archives of the Kiev State Museum of Ukrainian Art.

17. Savvin, "Khudozhestvennaia zhizn' Khar'kova," p. 13.

18. Kosariev interview. Because access to the works of these years is difficult (as they are scattered among Soviet museums and in storage), it is now virtually impossible to determine the accuracy of Kosariev's observations in regard to individual works of art of the Kol'tso members. Specifically, little is known about the interest of the Rondists. Mikhail Larionov mentioned the movement in his 1913 essay, "Luchistskaya zhivopis" [Rayist Painting], describing it as a parallel trend of Cubism which "arose of constructing according to the curve of the circle—rondism. The displacement of surfaces and construction according to the curve made for more constructiveness within the confines of the picture's surface." Mikhail Larionov, "Rayonist Painting, 1913," in John E. Bowlt, ed., *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism, 1902–1934* (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), p. 95.

19. All information regarding the Syniakov family and life at Krasna Poliana, unless otherwise indicated, was derived from an interview with Maria Syniakova and her sister, Oksana Syniakova Aseev in Moscow in April 1978. As recounted by the sisters, the surrounding area around Krasna Poliana was referred to as "Zmiiov" (of, or relating to, "serpentine"), a small settlement or *khutir* beyond the Donets River.

20. Vladimir Markov, *Russian Futurism: A History* (London: MacGibbon & Kee Limited, 1968), p. 245.

21. Ibid., p. 250.

22. Ibid., pp. 245–46.

23. Geo Shkurupii, "Dyktatura bohomaziv," *Nova generatsiia* 10 (October 1929), pp. 26–34. To demonstrate his point about the Boichukists only being artists in the service of the church, Shkurupii listed a number of projects carried out by Boichuk which involved decorating the

interiors of churches, restoring old icons, and even accepting commissions to make religious objects to be sold in church supply stores.

24. I. Malovichko, "Problema sobachoyi starosty," *Nova generatsiia* 12 (December 1929), p. 45.

25. Aleksander Shevchenko, *Neo-primitivizm. Ego teoriya. Ego vozmozhnosti. Ego dostizheniya* (Moscow, November 1913), in Bowlt, *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism*, pp. 41–54.

26. See A. Shevchenko, *Printsipy Kubizma i drugikh sovremennykh techenii v zhivopisi vsekh vremen i narodov* (Moskva, 1913); also A. V. Shevchenko, *Sbornik materialov* (Moskva: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1980).

27. "Soiuz 'Semi'," *Sbornik novogo iskusstva* (Kharkiv: Izdanie Vseukrainskogo Otdela Iskusstv Narodnogo Komissariatu Prosvity, 1919), p. 7.

28. Ibid., p. 8.

29. Vasyl' Yermilov joined the Union of Seven in 1917. At the time of its founding, Yermilov was drafted and sent to Persia. When wounded in 1918, he was demobilized and returned to Kharkiv where he finally took active part in the activities of the Union. See Zinovii Fogel', *Vasilii Ermilov* (Moskva: "Sovetskii khudozhnik," 1975), p. 16.

30. *Vystav "ka semi" pervaia. Katalog* (Kharkiv: "Sem'," 1917).

31. The collection, *Sem' plius tri* (Kharkiv: "Soiuz 'Semi'," 1918), was printed in an edition of 200 issues of which 50 were autographed. The cover and the title page of the album were executed by V. Bobryts'kyi, while the dedication page was rendered by B. Kosariev. The printing house of "Pechatnoe delo" was used for the text and reproductions, and the lithograhs and autolithographs were printed by the *Rabochyi tekhnikum* [Workers' Technicum]. The album was published in a quarto format with both monotone and color reproductions which formed the main content of the publication. Illustrations in *Sem' plius tri* were reproduced on chalk paper, while "papier vergé" was selected for the text proper.

32. Valeriian Polishchuk, *Ukrains'ke maliarstvo: Vasyl' Yermilov* (Kharkiv: "Rukh," 1931), p. 24. Elzevirian script or print was derived from the name of Louis Elzevir (1540?–1617), a famous Dutch printer. The Elzevir family, centered in Leyden, dominated Dutch printing for almost a century and a half, and were especially noted for a famous series of travel books which covered most of the European continent. However, what was known as Elzevir print was unlike anything ever used by any of the Elzevir family. Instead, the print was derived from a French line of type-cutters, particularly the work of Louis Luce who made such types in 1750. Elzevir print was ultimately introduced into the Russian Empire by M. O. Wol'f in the 1870s and adapted by Yermilov.

33. *Kolos'ia* 11 (1918), p. 15.

34. N. I. Kul'bin, "Svobodnoe iskusstvo kak osnova zhizni," *Studiia impressionistov* (St. Petersburg, 1910), pp. 3–14.

35. *Vystav "ka semi" pervaia.*

36. Kosariev interview.

37. "Soiuz 'Semi'," *Sbornik*, p. 12.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid. The Turkoman prayer rug with a typical Pindé pattern was reproduced in *Sem'plius tri*, and was designated as belonging to the Salor Tribes of Central Asia. It was bought by Miankal' in 1917 from the collection of Count Romanskyi.

40. Yermilov only spent a short time in Central Asia. After he was drafted in 1915, he defected and fled to Turkestan. Arrested, he spent time in Tashkent, Ashkhabad, and Merv, and then was sent to the front in Persia. Before returning to Kharkiv, he had been in Enzeli, Resht, Kazvin, Teheran, and Kermanshakh. See Vasilii Sontsvit (pseud. Valeriian Polishchuk), "Khudozhnyk industriial'nykh rytmiv," *Avangard* 3 (October 1929), p. 146.

41. Kazimir Malevich, "Nove mystetstvo i mystetstvo obrazotvorche (Pikasso, Brak)," *Nova generatsiia* 9 (1928), pp. 117–86; Troels Andersen, ed., *K.S. Malevich: Essays on Art* (MEOA), p. 42.

42. "Soiuz 'Semi'," *Shornik*, p. 11.

43. Soiuz 'Semi', "Pis'mo v redaktsiiu," *Sem'plius tri*.

44. *Vystav "ka semi."*

45. "Soiuz 'Semi'," *Shornik*, p. 9

46. Ibid.

47. Kazimir Malevich, "Prostorovyi kubizm," *Nova generatsiia* 4 (1929), pp. 63–67; *MEOA*, p. 57.

48. See Markov, *Russian Futurism*, p. 329.

49. "Soiuz, 'Semi'," *Shornik*, p. 10.

50. Ibid., p. 11.

51. Ibid.

52. Kazimir Malevich, "Sproba vyznachennia zalezhnosty mizh kol'orom ta formoiu v maliarstvi," *Nova generatsiia* 6 (1930), pp. 64ff; *MEOA*, p. 136.

53. K. Malevich, "Futuryzm dynamichnyi i kinetychnyi," *Nova generatsiia* 11 (1929), pp. 74–80; *MEOA*, p. 95.

54. Soiuz 'Semi', "Pis'mo v redaktsiiu," *Kolos'ia* 6–7 (1918), p. 23.

55. *Sem' plius tri.*

56. "Soiuz 'Semi'," *Shornik*, p. 11.

57. Published in two editions in Russia in 1913 (See E. Nizen, trans. *O Kubisme* [St. Petersburg, 1913], and M. Voloshin, trans. *O Kubisme*, [Moscow, 1913]). A. Gleizes's and J. Metzinger's *Du Cubisme* was known to the Union of Seven artists most likely through their contact with Syniakova, who in turn, as a Union of Youth member, would have been familiar with M. Matyushin's translation of excerpts of *Du Cubisme* in an article for the journal *Union of Youth* in March 1913. See M. Matyushin, "O knige Metsanzhe-Gleza 'Du Cubisme'," *Soiuz molodezhi* III, pp. 25–34.

58. *Vystav' ka semi' pervaia.*

59. Kazimir Malevich, "Maliarstvo v problemi arkhitektury" *Nova generatsiia* 2 (1928), pp. 116–24; *MEOA*, p. 16.

60. *Kolos'ia*, No. 11 (1918), p. 15.

61. Included in the collection, *Sem' plius' tri*, for example, were two articles devoted to stage decor. In these, Bobryts'kyi and Kosariev were the subject of discussion. The focus was on two plays for which these two artists had executed designs: the production of *Branda*, a collaborative effort of both artists, and the Boillier mystery, *Again on the Earth*, for which Bobryts'kyi executed designs. Technical questions regarding the implementation of the designs on the stage, as well as the production of the plays themselves, were explored.

62. "Soiuz 'Semi + tri'," *Teatral'nyi vestnik* (Kharkiv) 1-2 (1919), p. 7.

63. *Sbornik novogo iskusstva* (Kharkiv: Izdanie Vseukrainskogo Otdela Iskusstv Narodnogo Komissariatu Prosvity, 1919).

64. F. I. Shmit, "*Sbornik Novogo Iskusstva*, Izdanie Vseukr. Otdela Iskusstv Nar. Kom. Pros., Kiev-Kharkiv. 1919). Folio 24 pages. 20 rubles," *Puty tvorchestva: Literaturno-khudozhestvennyi ezhemesiachnyk* 6-7 (1920), pp. 95-96.

65. Ibid. Similar directions, often featuring the same characters, had been demonstrated in Kiev in the miscellany, *Muzy* [Muses].

66. For a translated extract of Burliuk's essay, "Golos Impressionista — v zashchitu zhivopisi," see Bowlt, *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism*, pp. 8-11.

67. Unless otherwise acknowledged, all biographical data on Alexandra Exter is taken from Andrei B. Nakov, *Alexandra Exter* (Paris: Galerie Jean Chauvelin, May-June 1972). It should be noted, however, that based on Nakov's biography of Exter the artist's birthplace has erroneously been accepted as being "the outskirts of Kiev," when, in fact, according to the archives of the artist, she was born in Bilostok of the Grodno region. Her father then moved the family to Kiev. See Dmytro Horbachov, "Vchytel'ka bahat'okh," *Ukraina* 45 (Listopad [November], 1984), p. 13.

68. Paris, Champ de Mars, "Artistes Indépendants, 30e Exposition (1 March-30 April 1914). See Donald E. Gordon, *Modern Art Exhibitions 1900 1916* (München: Prestel-Verlag, 1974) II, pp. 804-5.

69. Nakov, *Alexandra Exter*, p. 10.

70. F. Ya. Syrkina, *I. Rabinovich* (Moskva: "Sovetskii khudozhnik," 1972), p. 5.

71. Organizational Committee, "First Exhibition of Pictures of the Group of Artists of the City of Kiev, Kol'tso, Organized by the Circle Art at the Kiev Polytechnical Institute and by Invited Artists, 1914, pp. 3-5.

72. All quotations of O. Bohomazov are taken from this source, unless otherwise indicated.

73. Oleksander Bohomazov, "Osnovni zavdannia rozvytku mystetstva maliarstva na Ukraini," n.d. Manuscript, Bohomazov Archive, The Kiev State Museum-Archive of Literature and Art.

74. See section two of the general part of Kandinsky's theory, "On the Spiritual in Art." The idea of movement continued to possess Kandinsky even throughout the 1920s when he drew up his program of Physico-Psychological Research for the Moscow Inkhuk and the Academy of Artistic Sciences.

75. N. Kul'bin, △, *Salon: Mezhdunarodnaia khudozhestvennaia vystavka* (Odessa: 1910-11), p. 19.

76. Kazimir Malevich, "Sproba vyznachennia zalezhnosty mizh kol'orom ta formoiu v maliarstvi," *Nova generatsiia* 6 (1930), pp. 64 ff.; *MEOA*, pp. 128-29.

77. Kazimir Malevich, "Kubo-futuryzm," *Nova generatsiia* 10 (1929), pp. 58–67; *MEOA*, p. 86.

78. M. Matyushin, "Sproba novoho vidchuttia prostorony," *Nova generatsiia* 11 (1928), pp. 311–22.

79. Matyushin's original essay was entitled "The Artist's Experience of the New Dimension," in keeping with his early theoretical ventures into non-Euclidean geometry. Charlotte Douglas offers a translation of this text from galley pages only partially corrected by Matyushin in her article "The Universe: Inside and Out: New Translations of Matyushin and Filonov," *The Structurist* 15 16 (1975 76), pp. 74–77. The original, unpublished Russian text, "Opyt khudozhnika novoi mery" (Central Archives of Literature and Art in Moscow), is reprinted as Appendix I in *Nikolaj Chardžiev: The Russian Avant-Garde* (Stockholm, Sweden: Hylaea Prints, 1976), pp.159–87.

80. Alla Povelikhina, "Matyushin's Spatial System" (trans. John E. Bowlt), *The Structurist* 15 16 (1975 76), pp. 64, 70 n. 2. It is also interesting to note that the Lithuanian theorist Waldemars Matvejs (Vladimir Markov) also spoke of the "secret rhythm . . . behind the outer covering of every object," in his essay, "The Principles of the New Art" in 1912. (See W. Matvejs, "Printsipy novogo iskusstva," *Soiuz molodezhi* 11 (1912), p. 16, translated and paraphrased by John E. Bowlt in his article on "Pavel Filonov: His Painting and His Theory," *The Russian Review* XXXIV, No. 3 (July 1975), p. 283 n. 6). Needless to say, the concept of "inner and outer" stems from the major essay of Vasilii Kandinsky, "Content and Form," which was published in Odessa in 1910 and formed the basis of Kandinsky's famous tract, "On the Spiritual in Art," read by Nikolai Kul'bin at the All-Russian Congress of Artists in St. Petersburg in December of 1911. In 1914, the Russian text of "On the Spiritual in Art" was published in Petrograd. (See John E. Bowlt, "Vasilii Kandinsky: The Russian Connection," in John E. Bowlt and Rose-Carol Washton-Long, *The Life of Vasilii Kandinsky in Russian Art: A Study of "On the Spiritual in Art"* about what is modern art [Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1980], p. 1.)

81. Bohomazov, "Osnovni zavdannia," unpaginated.

82. Ya. Tugendkhol'd, *Kievskaya mysl'* 351 (18 December 1916).

83. Bowlt-Long, p. 69. See also V. Kandinsky, "Kuda idet 'novoe iskusstvo'," *Odesskie novosti* (Odessa 1911), p. 3.

84. Bowlt-Long, *Vasilii Kandinsky*, p.71.

85. Bohomazov, *The Art of Painting*, p. 157.

86. Bowlt-Long, *Vasilii Kandinsky*, pp. 73–74.

87. Bohomazov, *The Art of Painting*, p. 128.

88. Ibid.

89. *Muzy: zhurnal literatury, iskusstva i teatra*, ed. I. K. Palei (Kiev, 1913–14).

90. See also M. Burachek, "Mystetstvo v Kyievi," *Muzahet* (Kiev) 1–3 (1919), pp. 114ff.

91. "Vystavka v gorodskom muzeiu" [Exhibition in the City Museum] was held in the present-day Kiev State Museum of Ukrainian Art.

92. See Benedikt Livshits, *Polutoraglazyi strelets*, trans. and ed. John E. Bowlt, *The One and a Half-Eyed Archer* (Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1977), ch. i: "Hylaea."

93. The Association of South Rus' Artists (Tovarishchestvo yuzhno-russkikh khudozhnikov), although Russian in name, did not identify itself with Russia proper, but rather with "Rus'"—the medieval geographic territory of the Ukraine. Throughout the existence of the Russian Empire, Odessa and the area north of the Black Sea, even though inhabited by Ukrainians, was, however, considered to be the southern tip of the Empire. The political realities notwithstanding, the composition of the Society was largely Ukrainian.

94. See V. A. Afanas'iev, *Tovarystvo pivdenno-rosiis'kykh khudozhnykiv* (Kiev: Mystetstvo, 1961).

95. See the individual catalogues of the exhibitions, *Vystavka kartyn "Tovarishchestva yuzhno-russkikh khudozhnikov"* (Odessa), especially exhibitions IX (1898) and XII-XXI (1901-10).

96. Gordon, *Modern Art Exhibitions*, pp. 356, 401.

97. The distinction between "realist modernism" and "formalist modernism" is motivated by the fact that in terms of the history of Slavic art, realism, introduced by the Peredvizhniki [Wanderers] in the 1870s, was really the first glimmer of artistic modernism to take shape in the Russian Empire. Along with this modernism was included the idea of secession, or determining different directions for art, and experimentation of various kinds. At that stage, however, it did not take into account strictly formal pursuits.

98. See Afanas'iev, *Tovarystvo*, pp. 80–83 and 124–28 nn. 18–20.

99. Munich, Moderne Galerie, Neue Künstlervereinigung, II Ausstellung (1–14 September 1910); Gordon, *Modern Art Exhibitions*, p. 422; see also G. Buchheim, *Der Blaue Reiter und die Neue Künstlervereinigung* (München: Feldafing, 1959), pp. 49ff.

100. Munich, Thannhauser, Der Blaue Reiter: die Erste Ausstellung der Redaktion" (18 December 1911–1 January 1912), Gordon, ibid., p. 523; Cologne, Gereons Club, "Der Blaue Reiter: Erste Ausstellung" (23–31 January 1912), Gordon, ibid., p. 547; Berlin, "Der Sturm": "Erste Ausstellung: Der Blaue Reiter" (12 March—before 12 April 1912), Gordon, ibid., p. 557. From 20 September–1 December 1913, Burliuk was also represented in the "Erster deutscher Herbstsalon" at "Der Sturm" in Berlin. Gordon, ibid., pp. 738, 795. The latter lists Burliuk's continued participation with Der Blaue Reiter in Helsingförs (February–March 1914), Trondheim (April–May 1914), and Goteborg (June–July 1914). In the previous year, Burliuk took part in the Hungarian exhibit of post-Impressionists "Nemzetkozi Postimpresszionista Kiallitas" in Budapest at the Muveszhaz (April–May 1913), Gordon, ibid., p. 702.

101. The essay was originally entitled "Slovo k russkim khudozhnikam (po povodu s'ezda) [A Word to Russian Artists on the Occasion of the Congress]. For the English translation of "Die wilden Russlands," see "The 'Savages' of Russia," *The "Blaue Reiter" Almanac*, edited by Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, in the English edition, Klaus Lankheit, ed., (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), pp. 72–80. Burliuk's essay was transformed and somewhat shortened by Kandinsky. (See Nikolai I. Khardzhiev, ed., *K' istorii russkogo avangarda* [Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksel, 1978], p. 74.)

Chapter 4

1. A. Gastev, "O novom v iskusstve," *Shornik novogo iskusstva* (1919), p. 16.

2. See autobiographical data of Vasyl' Yermilov written by the artist to B. D. in a letter dated 24 November 1965, presently in the Yermilov archives in the possession of Zinovii Fogel' in

Kiev. All information on Trakal's Art Trade School Workshop of Decorative Painting (Khudozhestvennaia remeslennaia uchebnaia masterskaia dekorativnoi zhivopisi) is taken from this source.

3. In a summary of the Kharkiv Art Guild's declaration of purpose, printed in 1919, its spokesman reported that "the Khar'kovskii Khudozhestvennyi Tsekh had already existed for five years." In addition, it is known that Ivan Ivanov, former Union of Seven member, had professed membership in the Kharkiv Art Guild in 1916. *Slovnyk khudozhnykiv Ukrainy* (Kiev: Ukrains'ka radians'ka entsyklopediia, 1973), p. 91.

4. I. Rabinovich, "*Tvorchestvo—Zhurnal Khudozhestvennago Tsekha*', Khar'kov, 1919, No. 1," *Puty tvorchestva: Literaturno-khudozhestvennyi ezhemesiachnyk* (Khar'kov) 1–2 (1919), pp. 55–56.

5. I. Erenburg and Mané-Katz, "Vystavka Khudozhestvennago Tsekha v otsenke eia uchastnykov," *Tvorchestvo* (Kharkiv) 1 (1919), p. 30.

6. Os-in, "*TVORCHESTVO: Zhurnal khudozhestvennago Tsekha* IV. Mai. Khar'kov. Ts. 12 rub.," *Mysl': dvukhnedelnyi nauchnyi marksistskii zhurnal* (Khar'kov) 13 (1 June 1919), p. 587.

7. Ibid.

8. For information on the Union of Leftists (Professionalnyi Soiuz Deiatelei Levogo Iskusstva v Khar'kove), see *Khudozhestvennaia zhizn' Khar'kova v posledniuiu chvert' veka* (Khar'kov: Soiuz iskusstv, 1919); also, "Professionalnyi Soiuz Deiatelei Levogo Iskusstva v Khar'kove," *Puty tvorchestva* (Kharkiv) 1–2 (1919), p. 58.

9. A. Liubimov (Chairman) and A. Prokopenko (Secretary), "Khar'kovskii Soiuz Iskusstv," *Puty tvorchestva* (Kharkiv) 1–2 (1919), p. 57.

10. Bernard Mykhailovych Kratko (1884–1960) was born in Warsaw and trained as a sculptor at the Warsaw School of Fine Arts (1901–6). In 1916 he moved to St. Petersburg and then to the Ukraine. From 1920–25 he taught at the Kharkiv Art Institute and then at the Kiev Art Institute from 1925–35.

11. Bernard Kratko, "Yermilov oformliuie novyi pobut," *Avangard* (Kharkiv) 3 (October 1929), p. 158.

12. Oleksander Veniaminovych Khvostenko-Khvostov (1895–1968) studied at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1907–17). After the Revolution he returned to the Ukraine and worked on UkrROSTA, the Ukrainian chapter of the Russian Telegraph Agency, as did Kosariev, Yermilov, and Yu. Ganf.

13. Zhosefina Kostiantynivna Dindo (1902–53) was born in Warsaw. From 1920–26 she studied at the Kharkiv Art Institute mostly under Bernard Kratko, and in 1927 joined the Association of Revolutionary Art of the Ukraine (ARMU) to which belonged both V. Yermilov and M. Boichuk.

14. Marko Abramovych Novosel'skyi (1900–37) studied at the Kharkiv Art Institute.

15. Paraphrased in Valeriian Polishchuk, *Ukrains'ke maliarstvo: Vasyl' Yermilov* (Kharkiv: "Rukh," 1931), p. 14.

16. Kratko, "Yermilov," p. 158.

17. Vasilii Sontsvit, "Khudozhnyk industrial'nykh rytmiv," *Avangard*, 3 (October 1929), p. 149.

18. Ibid., p. 146.

19. In 1907, A. Kozlov was in Paris where he participated in the Salon d'Automne. He joined the Mir Iskusstva group in Russia and then came to Kiev, where together with M. Murashko and others, he organized an art school in Kiev. Fazin had also been to Paris and frequented Picasso's ceramic factory.

20. In 1926, Yermilov became part of a four-man brigade commissioned to decorate the interior of the Artem Social Museum in Kharkiv. The group of artists called themselves "TsYeK'l'," an acronym derived from the initial letters of the surnames of the four artists of the brigade: *Ts*apok, *Ye*rmilov, *K*osariev, and levada (as an assistant, Levada was only allotted a lower case letter). "TsYeK'l'" was commissioned to do a series of scenes for the museum which centered on ethnographic and paleontological subjects.

21. *Vasyl' Dmytrovych Yermilov. Katalog. Vystavka tvoriv z nahody 50-richchia mystets'koi diial'nosti* (Kharkiv: Muzei obrazotvorchoho mystetstva, Kharkivs'ke oblasne tovarystvo khudozhnykiv, 1962), p. 5.

22. Vasyl' Sedliar, "Maister Vasyl' Yermilov," *Avangard* 3 (October 1929), pp. 156–57.

23. *Shornik materialov po Vseukrainskomu Komitetu Izobrazitelnykh Iskusstv* (Khar'kov: Izdanie Vseukrkomizo, 1920), p. 5. Hereafter referred to as *Shornik Vseukrkomizo*.

24. Ibid.

25. Vol. Yasel'da, "Robota molodi i vystavka Khudozhn'oho Tekhnikuma," *Mystets'ka trybuna* (1930). The Kharkiv Art Technicum began with 14 teachers and 28 students, ranging from the age of 14 to 20 years. It also had its own special series of exhibitions.

26. Ibid.

27. Maria Kotliarevs'ka (b. 1902) studied at the Kharkiv Art Technicum and later at the Kharkiv Art Institute from 1922–29 under O. Marenkov and I. Padalka.

28. Oleksander Dovhal' (1904–61), very active in the avant-garde throughout his student days, completed the Kharkiv Art Institute in 1929.

29. Kratko, "Yermilov," p. 159.

30. Polishchuk, *Yermilov*, p. 20.

31. Vasilii Sontsvit "Khudozhnyk," p. 154.

32. Kazimir Malevich, "Prostorovyi kubizm," *Nova generatsiia* 4 (1929), pp. 63–67.

33. Walerjan Polischtschuk, Raissa Trojanker, Sergij Tassin, Viktor Jarina, Leonid Tschernow, Wassil Jermilow, Valentin Borissow, Olexander Lewada, "Aufruf der Avangarde," *Mystets'ki materiialy Avangardu* (Kharkiv), 1929, p. 63.

34. "O novykh techeniiakh v russkom iskusstve," *Shornik novogo iskusstva*, p. 3.

35. Sontsvit, "Khudozhnyk," p. 151.

36. Ibid., p. 148.

37. O. Mandel'shtam, "Gosudarstvo i ritm," *Puty tvorchestva: Literaturno-khudozhestvennyi ezhemesiachnyk* (Khar'kov) 6–7 (1920), p. 75.

38. Sontsvit, "Khudozhnyk," p. 148.

39. E. Jaques-Dalcroze, *Eurythmics, Art, and Education* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1935), p. 3.

40. Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856–1915) was employed as a laborer in the Midvale Steel Company in Philadelphia, where he studied and measured the operating methods at the factory, and systematically reformulated his principle of scientific management.

41. The greatest preservation of time and energy to produce the maximum efficiency in labor was the topic of many essays and books during this time, not excluding, for example, K. Bucher's *Work and Rhythm*. The organic and natural sense of inherent rhythms underwent an almost clinical observation. Processes such as inhaling and exhaling, which ultimately decided the uniformity of the working rhythms of a laborer, were carefully studied. On a practical level, specific labors and activities were carefully analyzed. In the case of cutting metals, for instance, the depth of the cut, the shape of the cutting tool, and the speed with which the cut was facilitated were all taken into account. Ultimately, Taylor analyzed the repetition of this action in mass production and determined its efficacy by specially calculated lines of movement. See N. Kolesnikov, "Sotsializm i sistema Teilora," *Mys'l: ezhenedel'nyi nauchnyi marksistskii zhurnal* (Khar'kov) 6 (February 1919), pp. 188–92.

42. Sontsvit, "Khudozhnyk," p. 148.

43. See Zinovii Fogel', *Vasilii Ermilov* (Moskva: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1975), p. 9.

44. V. D. Yermilov, *Detskie gody. Avtobiograficheskie zametki.* Manuscript. Private archive, Kiev.

45. See Polishchuk, *Yermilov*, p. 8.

46. Mandel'shtam, "Gosudarstvo," p. 76

47. Kosariev interview.

48. See A. A. Smirnov, "Ritm i tanets," *Tvorchestvo* (Khar'kov) 3 (April 1919), pp. 32–35.

49. Gastev, "O novom v iskusstve," pp. 15–16.

50. *Germes': ezhegodnik' iskusstva i gumanitarnago znannia* (Kiev), ed. Vladimir Makkaveiskii, Sbornik pervyi (April 1919). There was only one known issue published of *Germes'*.

51. See V. Mangiari, "Sistema Zhaka Dal'kroze (k' vystuplenniiam' peterburgskoi shkoly Zh. Dal'kroza v Kieve)," *Muzy* (Kiev) 1 (1913), pp. 27–28.

52. *Les' Kurbas: Spohady suchasnykiv* (Kiev: "Mystetstvo," 1969), p. 7.

53. Orysia Steshenko, Interview, Kiev, October 15, 1977.

54. O. O. Murashko, one of the organizers of the Kiev Association of Artists, studied at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts in 1906 and, during 1902–4, worked in Paris. He exhibited in Venice, Berlin, Paris, Vienna, and Amsterdam, and in Munich in 1909, he received a gold medal for his painting, *Caroussel*. For biographical data on O. O. Murashko, see A. Shpakov, *Oleksander Oleksandrovych Murashko* (Kiev, 1959) and N. A. Prakhov, *Stranitsy proshlogo: Ocherki-vospominaniia o khudozhnikakh* (Kiev: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo obrazotvorchoho mystetstva i muzychnoi literatury URSR, 1958).

55. Prakhov, *Stranitsy*, p. 284. O. Murashko was a relative of M. Murashko, the master of the Kiev Drawing School. O. Murashko's directorship at the Kiev Art School was superseded by F. Krychevs'kyi in 1914, and in 1917, when Krychevs'kyi became the head of the Ukrainian Academy of Art, M. Kozyk (1879–1947) replaced him as the head of the Kiev Art School. See P. Musiienko, *Fedir Hryhorovych Krychevs'kyi* (Kiev: Mystetstvo, 1966), p. 24.

56. The only major comprehensive work on the history of Ukrainian art, *Istoriia ukrains'koho mystestva,* confuses the date of the formation of the Ukrainian Academy of Art and lists it as 1919 (see vol. V, p. 12). The error of the 1919 date is immediately established by an investigation into the biographies of the professors who comprised the initial teaching staff of the Academy - Fedir and Vasyl' Krychevs'kyi, Heorhii Narbut, Mykola Burachek, Mykhailo Zhuk, Mykhailo Boichuk, and Abram Manevych (1881-1942)—all of whom were known to be in Kiev, engaged by the Academy in 1917.

57. The catalog, *Heorhii Narbut: Posmertna vystavka tvoriv* (Kiev: Vseukrains'kyi istorychnyi muzei, 1926), p. 57, mentions that Narbut left for Kiev in March 1917, and in October took over the graphics workshop at the Academy of Art. See also *Katalog vystavki proizvedenii G. I. Narbuta* (Petersburg, 1922) and Volodymr Sichns'kyi, *Yurii Narbut: Monograph.* Krakiv-L'viv, 1943.

58. For specific commentary relating to the differences between Boichuk and Krychevs'kyi, see Musiienko, *Fedir Hryhorovych Krychevs'kyi,* p. 24; also *Fedir Krychevs'kyi: Spohady, Statti, Dokumenty* (Kiev: Mystetstvo, 1972).

59. Oleksander Bohomazov, "Osnovni zavdannia rozvytku mystetstva maliarstva na Ukraini." The unpublished document is presently in the Bohomazov Archive of the Kiev State Museum-Archive of Literature and Art.

60. Vadym Meller, "Shliakhy novoi shkoly v mystetstvi." Unpublished text of the speech delivered at the Conference of the Association of Contributors to the Plastic Arts of the Ukraine. Kiev, Shcherbakivs'kyi Archive, Fond 9, Sprava 226.

61. Ibid.

62. Opened on 22 November 1917, the Ukrainian Academy of Art was located on the present site of the Kiev State Conservatory. Musiienko, *Fedir Hryhorovych Krychev'skyi,* p. 29.

63. *Yevreis'ka khudozhnia vystava: skul'ptura, hrafika ta maliunky. Kataloh* (Kiev: Khudozhnia Sektsiia "Kul'tur-Liga," February-March, 1920).

64. V. Afanas'iev, *Stanovlennia sotsialistychnoho realizmu v ukrains'komu obrazotvorchomu mystetstvi* (Kiev: "Mystetstvo," 1967), pp. 69 ff.

65. Ibid., pp. 86 ff.

66. *Kataloh yuvileinoi vystavky: 10 rokiv Zhovtnia* (Kharkiv, Kiev, Odessa: Vydannia Narkomosu UkrSSR, 1927), p. 8.

67. Ibid.

68. Vystavka "Mystets'kyi Kyiv—Zakhidnii Ukraini," (Kiev: Kartynna Galeriia, December 1927-January 1928).

69. "Pro Vseukrains'ku vystavku obrazotvorchoho mystetstva," *Nove mystetstvo,* 9 (18) (2 March 1926), p. 1.

70. "10 rokiv Zhovtnia: 1917-1927" [Ten Years of October]. Due to popular demand, there were three editions issued of the catalogue all in the same year.

71. *Kataloh "10 rokiv Zhovtnia,"* pp. 26-27.

72. Ibid.

73. V. K. "Ukrains'ki khudozhnyky v Paryzhi," *Nove mystetstvo,* 21 (62) (1927), p. 7.

74. *Persha vseukrains'ka vystavka Asotsiiatsii Revoliutsiinoho Mystetstva Ukrainy: ARMU (Berezen' - Kviten'* [March-April] 1927) Kataloh (Kharkiv: Sotsiial'nyi muzei im. Artema) pp. 1–3, 25–26.

75. Ivan Vrona, "Vseukrainskaia khudozhestvennaia vystavka '10 let Oktiabria,'" *Sovetskoe iskusstvo* 1 (1928), p. 20.

76. V. Sedliar, *AKhRR ta ARMU* (Kiev: Vydannia Ts. B. "ARMU," 1926), p. 24.

77. *Katalog Yubileinoi Vystavki Iskusstva Narodov SSR* (Moskva: Izdanie Gos. Akad. Khudozh. Nauk,1927), p. 3. There were three divisions to the exhibition which was being held concurrently in three different locations: (1) the visual arts, theatre and film (held at the Vkhutemas building); (2) belles-lettres; and (3) folk art and artistic industry.

78. Iv. Vrona, "Kyivs'kyi Khudozhnii Instytut (yoho suchasnyi stan i robota)," *Mystets'ko-tekhnichnyi VYSh: Zbirnyk Kyivs'koho Khudozhn'oho Instytutu* 1 (Kiev: Vydannia K.Kh.I., 1928), p. 16.

79. *Katalog*, pp. 8–10, 18–19, 21–23, 26–27, and 29.

80. See *Kataloh druhoi vseukrains'koi khudozhn'oi vystavky NKO UkrSSR: Maliarstvo, Hrafika, Skul'ptura, Foto-Kino, Teatral'ne oformlennia* (Kiev, Odessa, Donbas, Dnipropetrivs'ke, Kharkiv: Vydannia Narkomosu U.S.S.R., 1929); also *Kataloh tret'oi vseukrains'koi khudozhn'oi vystavky NKO UkrSSR: Maliarstvo, Hrafika, Skul'ptura, Teatral'ne oform., Oformlennia pobutu, Studiini roboty Khudozhnikh Vyshiv UkrSSR* (Kharkiv, Donbas, Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovs'ke, Kiev, Odessa, Mykolaiv: Vydannia Narkomosu U.S.S.R., 1930–31).

81. *Persha khudozhnia vystavka ARMU: Kyivs'ka filiia. Kataloh* (Kiev: Vydannia Ts.B. "ARMU," January 1927).

82. *Persha vseukrains'ka vystavka ARMU*, p. 7.

83. E. Kholostenko, "Iskusstvo sovetskoi Ukrainy: Asotsiatsia Revoliutsionnogo Iskusstva Ukrainy ARMU," *Zhizn' iskusstva* 33 (16 August 1927), p. 6.

84. "Z potochnykh notatok: Vystavka ARMU," *Zhyttia i revoliutsiia* 1 (January 1927), p. 109.

85. "Khronika VYSh: Mystets'ke zhyttia v SRSR," *MTV*, p. 70.

86. "Ukrains'ki khudozhnyky na vystavtsi v Holiandii," *Nova generatsiia*, p. 165.

87. On the occasion of this exhibition, an article by Henri Librekht, "L'Exposition des Arts Graphiques Modernes en Ukraine—Le Livre et la Gravure ukrainiens," was issued in a museum publication. See "Khronika VYSh: Z zakordonu," *MTV*, p 73.

88. M. Hodkevych, "Mizhnarodnia vystavka 'Pressa' v Kel'ni," *Krytyka* 6 (July 1928), p. 10.

89. Ibid.

90. *Nova generatsiia* 4 (1928), p. 307; *Nova generatsiia* 7 (1928), p. 108–9; also "Vystavka presy v Kel'ni," *Vsesvit* 24; 29.

91. "Uchast' ukrains'kykh arkhitektoriv u mizhnarodnomu konkursi," *Nova generatsiia*, p. 165.

92. V. Khmurii, "Ukrains'ki khudozhnyky na venetsiians'kii vystavtsi," *Dekada* 27, 28 (November 1930), pp. 12, 15.

93. Khmurii, *Dekada*, p. 12.

94. "Ukrains'ke mystetstvo na vsesvitnii vystavtsi u Venetsii," *Nova generatsiia* 10 (November–December 1930), p. 30.

Chapter 5

1. Paul Renner, *mechanisierte grafik: Schrift, Typo, Foto, Film, Farbe* (Berlin: Verlag Hermann Reckendorf, 1930).
2. Guillaume Apollinaire, "Alexandre Archipenko," *Der Sturm* (March 1914).
3. Professor Hans Hildebrant, *Alexander Arkhipenko* (Berlin: Ukrains'ke slowo, 1923), p. 15.
4. Originally, *Kablepoema za okean* was begun in Kiev in 1920 and completed in Kharkiv in 1921. There are two published editions of the poem. It was first printed in the journal, *Semafor u maibutnie* in 1922, and then in the two Kiev editions of Semenko's *Kobzar* (1924–25).
5. Myqail Semenko, "Poezomaliarstvo," *Semafor u maibutnie* (May 1922), p. 35.
6. F. T. Marinetti. "Destruction of Syntax-Imagination without Strings Words-in-Freedom," (11 May 1913), published in *Lacerba* (Florence), 15 June 1913, trans. R. W. Flint in Umbro Apollonio, ed., *Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1937), p. 97.
7. F. T. Marinetti, "Geometric and Mechanical Splendour and the Numerical Sensibility," published in two parts in *Lacerba* (Florence) 15 March 1914, and 1 April 1914, with two different titles and as a leaflet by Direzione del Movimento Futurista, 18 March 1914, trans. R. W. Flint in Apollonio, *Futurist Manifestos*, p. 157.
8. F. T. Marinetti, "Destruction of Syntax-Imagination," p. 96.
9. Ibid, p. 98.
10. Semenko, "Poezomaliarstvo," p. 34.
11. *Kablepoema za okean*, Card Six.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., Card Seven.
14. Ibid., Card Five.
15. Ibid., Card Eight.
16. Myqail Semenko, "De-iaki naslidky destruktsii," *Semafor u maibutnie*, p. 15.
17. Benedikt Livshits, *Polutoraglazyi strelets* (Leningrad, 1933), trans. John E. Bowlt, *The One and a Half-Eyed Archer* (Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1977), p. 15.
18. Semenko, "Poezomaliarstvo," p. 36.
19. *Moia mozaika* was included as part of a complete body of Semenko's collection of poetry entitled *Kobzar*, published in Kiev in 1924.
20. Semenko's own "Asian" features, particularly his slanted eyes, were always singled out by those who knew him (see fig. 1-1).
21. Aleksei Gan, *Konstruktivizm* [Extracts], Tver, 1922, in John E. Bowlt, ed. and trans., *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism 1902–1934* (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), p. 224.
22. Semenko, "Poezomaliarstvo," pp. 31–36.
23. F. T. Marinetti, "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," *Le Figaro* (Paris), 20 February 1909, trans. R. W. Flint in Apollonio, *Futurist Manifestos*, p. 23.

24. *Mytrophan Dovhalevs'kii. Poetyka: Sad poetychnii*, trans. I. V. Ivan'o, (Kiev: "Mystetstvo," 1973), p. 23.

25. Ibid, p. 240.

26. Ibid, pp. 270 ff.

Chapter 6

1. A. Shpakov, *Khudozhnyk i knyha* (Kiev: "Mystetstvo," 1973), p. 19.

2. *Jan Tschichold: Asymmetric Typography*, from *Typographische Gestaltung* (Basle, 1935), trans. Ruari McLean (London: Faber & Faber Limited, 1967), pp. 28–29.

3. *Jan Tschichold. Leben und Werk des Typographen.* With an introduction by Werner Klemke. (Dresden: Verglag der Kunst, 1977), pp. 11–12.

4. Ruari McLean, *Jan Tschichold: Typographer* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1975), p. 36.

5. László Moholy-Nagy, *Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919–1923* (Munich: Albert Langen, 1923).

6. *Jan Tschichold: Asymmetric Typography*, p. 43.

7. Ibid. p. 88.

8. S. V.-ch, "Pro velyki litery," *Nova generatsiia* 6 (1930), pp. 87–88.

9. Ibid., p. 87.

10. *Offset Buch-und Werbekunst: Bauhaus-Heft* (Leipzig, July 1926) as quoted in the catalogue, *Jan Tschichold: An Exhibition at the St Bride Printing Library* (9 April–30 May 1975), p. 7.

11. *Jan Tschichold: Asymmetric Typography*, p. 38.

12. It has been stated that Narbut's idea about creating the "Ukrainian alphabet" originated in 1916, at a time when he was still actively involved with *Mir iskusstva* graphics in St. Petersburg. He devoted himself to the alphabet with full abandon, and during 1917 completed fifteen compositions. With the Revolution, he returned to Kiev, where he became co-organizer and professor of graphics of the newly-formed Ukrainian Academy of Art. Today, Narbut's individual letter designs for *Ukrains'ka abetka* [Ukrainian Alphabet] exist as separate folios of printer's proofs or wash drawings. They are located in the Lenin State Library, the Kiev State Museum of Visual Art, and the Kharkiv Art Museum. See P.O. Bilets'kyi, *Heorhii Narbut: Al'bom* (Kiev: "Mystetstvo," 1983), pp. 17–18.

13. S.V.-ch, "Pro veliky litery," pp. 87–88.

14. Ibid., p. 88.

15. *Jan Tschichold: Asymmetric Typography*, p. 82.

16. David Burliuk, *Manifesto. Radio-Style* (1926), pp. 2–3.

17. *David Burliuk: Years of Transition 1910–1931* (Southhampton, New York: The Parrish Art Museum, 24 June–23 July 1978), p. 11.

18. Edvard Strikha pro Edvarda Strikhu, "Takyi lyst do redaktsii, shcho yoho mozhna nadrukuvaty zamist' feiletonu," in Yury Šerech, ed., *Edward Strikha. Parodezy.*

Zozendropija. Autoexecution (New York: "Slovo," 1955), p. 93; also "Lystuvannia z redaktsiieiu: 'Edvard Strikha pro Edvarda Strikhu' (Paryzh-Moskva, 27. IV. 1928)," *Nova generatsiia* 6 (June 1928), p. 461.

19. "Maksymum vymahaiemo Bezlich damo!" *Nova generatsiia* 3 (1927).

20. Edvard Strikha, "Avtoekzekutsiia (Paris, 15 April 1930)" in Šerech, *Edward Strikha*, p. 197.

21. "Edvard Strikha pro Edvarda Strikhu," *Nova generatsiia* 6 (1928), p. 460; see also Šerech, ibid., p. 94.

22. Mykhail Semenko, Letter to Edvard Strikha, *Nova generatsiia* 3 (1928); Šerech, ibid., p. 188.

23. Edvard Strikha, Letter written to M. Semenko (14 April 1928), *Nova generatsiia* 5 (1928); Šerech, ibid., pp. 72–73.

24. Ibid., p. 73.

25. Edvard Strikha, Letter written to M. Semenko (25 May 1928), *Nova generatsiia* 6 (1928); Šerech, ibid., p. 81.

26. *Nova generatsiia* 10 (1928).

27. *Avangard* 3, p. 180, as quoted by Strikha in "Avtoekzekutsiia," reprinted in Šerech, *Edward Strikha*, p. 192.

28. Edvard Strikha, "Do knyhy sto trydtsiat' vos'moi," (September 1929), in Yury Šerech, *Edward Strikha*, p. 137.

29. The collection, *Zustrich na perekhresti*, was a declaration of the Futurists written in the style of a conversation between Semenko, Shkurupii, and Mykola Bazhan, and was largely directed against the Ukrainian literary group, the Neoclassics.

30. Tatlin maintained an active contact with the Ukrainian Futurists. In a letter written by Edvard Strikha to M. Semenko, dated 24 March 1928, when Strikha was living in Moscow, the author mentioned the following: "The famous artist Tatlin sends his greetings to you and asks that you send the journal, i.e., *Nova generatsiia*, to his address at 21 Miasnyts'ka Street, Apartment 97, Moscow." Šerech, *Edward Strikha*, p. 67.

31. Z. B. Kucherenko, *Vadym Meller* (Kiev: "Mystetstvo," 1957), pp. 6 ff.

32. Kucherenko, p. 12. The author maintains that Meller debuted at the Salon des Indépendants and subsequently was invited to become a member of the "Association internationale de l'art et l'architecture." She also states that Meller exhibited in the Salon d'Automne. To date, no evidence has been found to substantiate Kucherenko's claims.

33. V. S. Vasyl'ko, ed., *Les Kurbas: Spohady suchasnykiv* (Kiev: "Mystetstvo," 1969), p. 341.

34. See *Little Review*, Special Theatre Number on the International Theatre Exposition, New York (27 February–15 March, 1926).

35. Vadym Meller's comment in a discussion after Dmytro Shcherbakivs'kyi's lecture on Ukrainian folk art at the Ukrainian Academy of Art in Kiev. "Dopovid' Shcherbakivs'koho: Natsional'nyi moment: Styl'," Instytut Arkheolohii Akademii Nauk Ukrains'koi SSR (Kiev), Fond 9, Sprava 184.

36. Vadym Meller, "Shliakhy novoi shkoly v mystetstvi," unpublished speech, Arkhiv D. M. Shcherbakivs'koho, Instytut Arkheolohii Akademii Nauk Ukr SSR (Kiev), Fond 9, Sprava 226.

37. V. Meller, "Vrazhinnia vid nimets'koho mystetstva," *Chervonyi shliakh* 9–10 (1927), pp. 180–93; "Zakordonne vidriadzhennia t. Mellera," *Chervonyi shliakh*, p. 232; also, "Maliars'ka maisternia prof. V. Mellera," *Chervonyi shliakh* (1923), 6–7, pp. 221–22.
38. *Nova generatsiia* 7, 1928.
39. Ibid.
40. *Nova generatsiia* 10, 1928.
41. *Nova generatsiia* 6, 1928.
42. *Nova generatsiia* 10, 1928.
43. *Nova generatsiia* 3, 1929.
44. Ibid.
45. *Nova generatsiia* 6, 1929.
46. *Nova generatsiia* 1, 1929.
47. The following works by Moholy-Nagy were reproduced in *Nova generatsiia* 3 (1929), pp. 9–11: "Fotoplastyka" (1925) and "Fotomontage: 'Mass hypnosis.' "
48. "Kino-foto viddil' K.Kh.I. 'Material'nyi dobir'," *Nova generatsiia* 7 (1928), p. 16.
49. The cinema posters reproduced included: "Pogonia"; "Kino-pliakat: 'Avto 23,'" *Nova generatsiia* 8 (1929), pp. 9–10.

Appendix A

1. Semenko uses the peculiar Panfuturist system of transliteration in printing his name, i.e., Myqail, instead of Mykhail. Published in *Semafor u maibutnie* (Kiev, May 1922).
2. The word "farvater" is used in the original to signify literally the image of "the navigable part of the river," (i.e., waterway), but also to indicate the active mainstream of art.

Appendix B

1. "Platforma i otochennia livykh," *Nova generatsiia* 1 (October 1927), pp. 39–43.
2. Ukrainian Leftism.
3. "Universal" may here refer to declarations of Ukrainian independence which were issued in 1917–18 in Kiev, but may also be generic in nature, i.e., a call to change.
4. The concept of "great nation" has to do with the position assumed by Russia in its politics toward and cultural hegemony over the Ukraine, for whom Russia adopted the name "Little Russia."
5. The term "khvyl'ovizm" was coined in ca. 1925–26 to describe the literary direction adopted by the Ukrainian communist writer, Mykola Khvyl'ovyi (pseud. of M. Fitilov, 1883–1933), which, although socialist in orientation, was vehemently antithetical to the Muscovite-Bolshevik brand of communism and promoted a Ukrainian communist literature, separate and distinct from its Russian contemporaries.
6. VAPLITE—Vil'na Akademiia Proletars'koi Literatury [Free Academy of Proletarian Literature] was the organization formed by M. Khvyl'ovyi in 1925 with the aim of

promoting a Ukrainian proletarian literature as a reaction to and struggle against any intervention of the Communist Party. See George S. N. Luckyj, *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine: 1917–1934* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), ch. iv.

7. One of the mottoes of "khvyl'ovizm" was "Away from Moscow!" Advanced in its stead was a deliberate orientation toward Europe in order to rid Ukrainian literature from any association whatsoever with Russian literary or cultural influences.

8. The Neoclassics ["Neo-kliasyky"] in Ukrainian literature were a nonproletarian group of Ukrainian writers that came into being in 1917–18. The group consisted of poets and critics who had close ties with the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences located in Kiev. Included in this group were Mykola Zerov, Maksym Ryl's'kyi, Mykhailo Drai-Khmara, Pavlo Fylypovych, and O. Burkhardt (pseud. Yurii Klen). Luckyj, *Literary Politics*, p. 34, clarifies that "the name given to them was not very appropriate. The poets in this group, apart from Zerov, wrote neither in the tradition of the Greek and Roman masters, nor of the French Parnassians of the nineteenth century, but rather in that of Romanticism and Symbolism."

9. The phrase "asiatic renaissance" was used by M. Khvyl'ovyi to indicate that pure communism, one unspoiled by Russia, could only come about in the Asiatic countries because of their distance from Moscow. In aiming at a pure, national, and communist culture in the Ukraine, therefore, the "asiatic renaissance" symbolized an attainable cultural utopia, which the Ukraine, by its example, would play a major role in effecting.

10. Kamianets-Podil'sk is an ancient provincial city in the Ukraine, near the Galician borders.

11. VUSPP—Vseukrains'ka Spilka Proletars'kykh Pys'mennykiv [All-Ukraine Union of Proletarian Writers] was organized by the Party at the end of 1926 to establish clear-cut and centralized Party directives for Ukrainian literature as a counter-offensive against Khvyl'ovyi's VAPLITE.

12. Molodniak [Youth] was formed toward the end of 1926 by former members of Hart. It gathered young writers who were affiliated with the Communist Youth League, the Komsomol. The association also published a journal under the same name.

13. Berezil– the Ukrainian avant-garde theatre, founded by Les' Kurbas.

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